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M.R.O. 1—20,002—12-8-65.

(1) Number of Pages 30

(2) Date of repair 19-12-66

(3) Initials of the Referencer

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	1144	Press
~~B.P. No.~~		Mis.
Dated	7-9-1874 ~~196~~ .	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

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Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
7th September 1874.

No. 82. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 13th August 1874, No. 2,228 :—

Read again Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 8th April 1874, No. 781.

Read also the following letters :—

From W. S. FOSTER, Esq., Acting Collector of the Godavery District, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Cocanada, 19th June 1874, No. 186.

Referring to the Board's Proceedings of the 8th April last, No. 781, I have the honor to report that I cannot recommend the importation of skilled tobacco growers and curers from other parts to instruct the native agriculturalists. The measure would, I think, be productive of but little effect. Natives have an inveterate dislike to abandon the customs to which they have been accustomed for years, unless they have had the means of seeing that the change would be greatly beneficial to them.

2. I would, however, suggest that some inducement might be given to these skilled tobacco growers to come down to this country and cultivate tobacco, by giving them Lankas (Islands in the river) for cultivation for periods longer than one year, or by making them to cultivate on behalf of Government. After these persons settle themselves in the country and carry on the cultivation for some years, the natives will personally see and come to know the benefits of adapting the new mode of cultivation and curing. They may then try to employ the skilled growers in curing the tobacco, and thus gradually learn the best modes of culture and curing.

3. It may be said that the Lankas would be liable to be washed away every year, and that it would not be possible to rent them out for periods exceeding one year; but these are matters connected with the detailed arrangements, and I am of opinion that they can be settled after the proposal is approved of.

4. I have no other suggestions to make. Copies of reports received from the Head Assistant and General Duty Deputy Collectors are enclosed.

Enclosure No. 1.

From R. SEWELL, Esq., Acting Head Assistant Collector, to W. S. FOSTER, Esq., Acting Collector of the Godavery District, dated Tamku, 26th May 1874, No. 144.

In reply to your letter, No. 137, dated 8th May 1874, calling on me to report on paragraph 3 of the Proceedings of the Government of India regarding tobacco, I have the honor to state that, in my opinion, it would be very desirable to introduce some skilled workmen from the principal tobacco-growing countries into this district, to show the natives how best to improve the system of cultivation ; but I doubt whether any good would result, unless the Government were prepared to take up (say) one of the Lankas for the experiment. There would be no good done by merely teaching the natives unless by practical experiments. When they see the improvement, and can be sure that such improvement will benefit their own pockets, then they may appreciate and adopt it.

2. I would suggest that, in order to render the success certain, the soil of the land to be taken up should be previously subjected to a close examination, and definite instructions given for its preparation, so as to provide the necessary amount of potash, and assimilate it as nearly as possible to the soil of the best lands on which tobacco is grown in other countries.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) W. S. FOSTER,
Acting Collector.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.

From P. PUNDARKAKSHUDU, Ag. Deputy Collector, on General Duty, to W. S. FOSTER, Esq., Acting Collector of the Godavery District, dated Narsapur, 10th June 1874, No. 106.

WITH reference to your letter of the 8th ultimo, No. 91, I have the honor to state that I consider it certainly necessary to improve the mode of cultivating and curing tobacco in India, so as to secure a better quality of the article.

2. I do not think that I should suggest the importation of a skilled tobacco grower from Manilla or elsewhere. It is difficult to secure the services of so many skilled men as the Presidency requires; and, supposing that they could be had, it is very expensive, without any real benefit commensurate with the expense.

3. I would beg to suggest that clear and concise instructions be obtained from the most skilled tobacco growers on the cultivation and preparation of tobacco and curing it. Translations of these instructions in the ordinary vernacular of the district should be supplied to those who wish to undertake to improve the method of cultivating tobacco. Some inducement should be given them to undertake the duty voluntarily by giving them a piece of land rent free, or offering them a reward for the article. The best Godavery Lanka land should be selected; and during the process of raising the crop, the intelligent Government Officer in the neighbourhood should be made to superintend and assist the tobacco grower. When these ryots know that the improved quality of the article is remunerative to them, I have little doubt that his brethren would soon follow him and try to improve the article. If, however, the instructions should not be found on experiment to work with very great favorable results, we can then apply for a skilled person, whose time then will not be taken up as much as it would be now.

4. I have no other remarks to offer on the subject. I beg to return the printed report received from the Head Assistant Collector a week or ten days ago.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) W. S. FOSTER,
Acting Collector.

From F. BRANDT, Esq., Acting Collector of Trichinopoly, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 28th May 1874, No. 121.

IN compliance with the request contained in Board's Proceedings, No. 781, dated 8th April 1874, I have the honor to state that, agreeing with the conclusions arrived at by the writer of the "Report on the production of Tobacco in India," as to the great future which may reasonably be expected for the tobaccos of this Presidency at all events, if only the processes of cultivation, and still more, of curing, be conducted on more scientific principles, I do think it is desirable for the Government to afford direct assistance in the matter to native cultivators and to preparers of the leaf.

2. And I do not think there can be a better way of doing this than that suggested by Mr. O'Connor, namely, of securing the services of experienced curers from America and other great tobacco-growing countries.

3. I suppose it is too much to expect that one man should be found to unite in himself sufficient knowledge and ability, both to *grow* tobacco on approved principles suited, not only to the place where he may have been educated, but to the place to which he might be sent in India, and also to understand thoroughly the curing of tobacco.

4. Should such a person be forthcoming, or should there be persons, some skilled in cultivation, others skilled in curing, who could work together, I would even go so far as to suggest that Government should lease, or otherwise possess themselves of some of the best tobacco lands, and either exclusively, or by inviting native cultivators to engage in the joint-undertaking, with promise of division of profits, carry on both the cultivation and manufacture. Success in such an undertaking would be the clearest demonstration of the superiority of scientific agriculture and curing,

and other native manufacturers would then be only too ready to adopt the same processes. I doubt if they would be ready to allow even Government curers to make what they would consider experiments on crops grown by them.

5. I have left out of consideration the Model Farms as places where tobacco might be grown: for, at present, that at Sydapet is, I believe, the only one where tobacco can be grown in the way it ought to be grown, and there the space is limited, and the soil is so utterly unlike the soils in which the best tobaccos are grown, that it would be subjecting the experiment to uncalled-for difficulties to begin with tobacco grown there.

6. I should like to see such an experiment as has been suggested tried, one in the North Division for the Lanka tobacco, and another in the South for the so-called Trichinopoly tobacco.

7. I have always taken a great interest in this subject; and from considerable observation and personal experience, and being a smoker myself, I have little doubt that, if even the tobaccos at present grown in this Presidency were carefully cured and prepared, they would very soon establish a place in the European market: it might, therefore, be sufficient for the present for Government to undertake the curing and making only.

8. The truth is, that, as soon as a firm or a manufacturer has fairly earned a reputation for the excellence of their cheroots (with the *cultivation* of which they have had nothing to do), the demand is so great, that there is temptation, not generally overcome, to buy and make up before it is fit, good tobacco; to substitute bad; to hurry over the preparation, in order to realize large profits quickly, on the strength of the reputation fairly earned in the first instance.

9. All this might be perhaps obviated, if the scheme which I have suggested were carried out: it may be that it is crude and impracticable. I offer it only for consideration along with, and as one development of that suggested by Mr. O'Connor; if it is considered no improvement on his, I should certainly recommend his proposal being given a fair trial.

From W. McQUHAE, Esq., Collector of Madura, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Dindigul, 6th July 1874, No. 191.

WITH reference to the Board's Proceedings, dated 8th April 1874, No. 781, I have the honor to submit copy of a report, dated 24th June 1874, No. 241, from the Sub-Collector, in whose division tobacco is chiefly grown in this district.

2. I think the tobacco trade in this district has outgrown the stage in which it could be legitimately assisted with public money. Messrs. Campbell and Co. and native merchants are doing their best to improve the existing system of cultivation and curing. No doubt, any of these merchants would be glad to have a skilled tobacco grower and curer from Manilla or elsewhere placed at their disposal by Government, but it would be a simple plan to lend them money, deficiency of capital being one of the chief impediments to their operations. Messrs. Campbell and Co. are already making cheroots which sell for four times the old bazaar price of similar cheroots, and they are finding a market in Bombay, Bengal, and Foreign countries. The example will be followed readily enough by the native merchants if it pays, but we have not yet got a cheroot which would suit the English market. In Madras the demand for improved tobacco is limited, because so many smokers have become accustomed to the rank, strong-flavored Trichinopoly cheroot. The consumers as well as the growers and curers require to be educated.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From H. W. BLISS, Esq., Sub-Collector, to W. McQUHAE, Esq., Collector of Madura, dated Virupakshi, 24th June 1874, No. 241.

I HAVE the honor to submit the report called for in your letter, No. 802, dated 26th May 1874, on the suggestions for the improvement of tobacco culture in this country contained in Mr. O'Connor's monograph on the subject, and in the Resolution thereon of the Government of India.

2. So far as I am informed, and I have seen a good deal of tobacco cultivation in this division which is peculiarly celebrated for it, native tobacco growers have little to learn on the subject

of cultivation of the plant. They devote to it, as it is, great attention, and are fully alive to the value of manure and to the necessity of a thorough pulverization of the soil before planting and of keeping it clean and free from weeds afterwards, which are the points usually most insisted on, and in the observance of which, in the case of other crops, natives frequently fail. A native tobacco garden is, in fact, about as good a specimen of careful culture as I have any where seen, and I can suggest no change for the better in the native method, except perhaps in the matter of manure. That now used is usually sheep's droppings, whereas I understand that tobacco requires potash (as a general rule, in the form of wood-ashes) to a greater extent than animal manures are likely to furnish. Natives, again, too commonly sacrifice quality to quantity, and do so in the case of tobacco more than with most other crops, not intentionally, I think, nor because they know no better, but because it pays them better to grow heavy crops of somewhat inferior quality, that they can never fail to sell, than lighter ones of superior quality for which they may very easily fail to obtain such an enhanced price as may recompense them not only for loss of quantity, but for the additional trouble and expense they have been put to in growing them.

3. For this latter error in the native system of tobacco culture, I can see only one remedy, viz., that prices of superior tobacco should rise to that point at which it would pay better to grow a small quantity of superior than a large quantity of inferior leaf; but this is not a result, as it seems to me, that can be promoted by any action on the part of Government short of the establishment of such a monopoly as exists in the Philippine Islands, by which the Government having the whole trade in its own hands, could, no doubt, secure the growth of such qualities as they desired by the payment of high prices for their production. I believe that from a fiscal point of view, there would be a good deal to be said for such a monopoly, as much as there is to be said for the existing opium one; but, as no such scheme seems likely to be adopted, the improvement of the quality of native-grown tobacco must be left to time and to the gradually increasing demand for a better article which the increasing prosperity and wealth of the country will, no doubt, in time promote.

4. In the matter of manure, it would not be so difficult for Governmental action to affect the native system of tobacco culture. Natives are not backward in following any example when they see that it pays to do so; and, if Government Experimental Farms were established in tobacco-growing tracts, such as the Dindigul Taluq, and were found to produce crops which would sell at better prices than the native-grown leaf, I imagine that the native cultivators would not be slow to adopt a system which produced such results. The establishment of such a farm would not, however, be an easy matter, or a mere question of the expenditure of money in the purchase and cultivation of a good block of land. The difficulty would be that, whereas such a farm must be big enough if it is to pay (say, not less than 200 acres) to employ the whole time of a competent Superintendent, lands accounted fit for tobacco culture are found but in small patches of perhaps a few acres. Five acres is a good size for a tobacco garden, and even in a garden no larger than that, it not unfrequently happens that only a portion of it produces well-flavored leaf, the growth of the rest being often very inferior and comparatively worthless. These difficulties might, however, be overcome by judicious selection of lands and subsequent scientific use of the proper manures; but any experiment of the kind would be costly, good tobacco land fetching high prices, and the expense of constructing and working wells, which are necessary for the irrigation of tobacco, being great. If such an experimental farm were started, I doubt whether it would do much more than pay its expenses.

5. Presuming, however, good tobacco to be grown, there remains the business of properly curing it, and the Government of India suggest that the services of an experienced curer from Manilla or elsewhere might be secured to instruct native growers in approved methods of preparing their produce for the market.

6. My own impression is, that the inferior curing of tobacco grown in this country is due not so much to the ignorance of the curers (empiric though their rules and methods are) as to their poverty which debars them from the erection of proper curing-houses, and to the nature of the climate, which is so dry in the months immediately following the cutting of the crop, *i.e.*, in the

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
7th September 1874.

1144/3

months of February, March, and April) as to interfere very seriously with that gradual process of drying and seasoning, which appears to be essential to the production of a well-flavored and well-colored leaf.

7. Even so, however, I think the services of an experienced curer might be very beneficial if sufficient funds were provided to enable him to try the experiment of buying the green leaf from a number of gardens and curing it himself in properly-constructed curing-houses, from which the direct rays of the sun and the blasts of the hot winds could be excluded, and a proper degree of atmospheric moisture maintained by artificial means.

8. But I must point out that, if it be determined to try such an experiment, it is of importance that it should not be tried perfunctorily. It will, in my opinion, be of no use to send a professional curer to Dindigul for a few months; for, before he can be of any good, it is essential that he should have time not only to learn the language, of which (as well, very likely, as of English) he will be ignorant, but also to acquire a thorough knowledge of the native methods of growth and of curing, before he proceeds to suggest improvements in them. I do not think that two or three years will be too long a period to assign for the stay of such a man in the Dindigul Taluq alone, to plan and effect therein improvements in the customs of generations.

9. There are, however, important tobacco-growing tracts in other districts as well as in this, though not, perhaps, except in the case of the Islands in the Godavery, of the same present celebrity, and these also should be attended to if tobacco culture throughout the country generally is to be improved, as it is, no doubt, of great importance it should be. The cost, therefore, of working the whole country in the manner I recommend and believe essential to success will be very heavy, and the question arises—Is the game worth the candle? I do not say it is not, but before any expensive measures for the improvement of Indian tobacco culture are undertaken, it will be well to remember that six pence a pound is a fair price at Home for good, ordinary, dry leaf tobacco in bond, and that natives can now sell locally any reasonable quantity of good samples at Rupees 50 per *pothi* of about 250 lbs. (dry). This comes to about five pence a pound which, I should imagine, left too narrow a margin of profit to make it worthwhile to export to Europe. The outturn of tobacco fit for export might of course increase, and under the influence of such measures as are discussed above probably would do so; but, at the same time, local demand would probably greatly increase too, there being an immense market open for the sale of good country-made cheroots in the Bengal and Bombay Presidencies, where they are now despised, and pipes or Manilla cheroots smoked instead, partly, of course, at the dictate of fashion, but mainly, I imagine, because good country-made cheroots are not readily obtainable. Such an increased local demand would, no doubt, in time be met and exceeded, and export to Europe would then become possible and profitable; but this result must not be looked for for many years, nor should disappointment be felt if it is ultimately found to be unattainable.

10. The copy of Mr. O'Connor's monograph is herewith returned as requested.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) W. McQUHAE,
Collector.

From A. WEDDERBURN, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 17th June 1874, No. 141.

In reply to Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 8th April 1874, No. 781, requesting remarks and suggestions in reference to paragraph 3 of the Resolution of the Government of India, in which there is a suggestion of procuring a skilled tobacco grower and curer from Manilla or elsewhere to instruct native agriculturalists, and supervise in a better system of cultivating and curing than at present obtains, I have the honor to state that no officer in this district has any remarks or suggestions to make, and to state that it is my firm conviction that the importation of skilled parties would end in failure, as there is no means to compel their teaching to be attended to, and that the true mode of improving the manufacture of tobacco is by the trade being taken up by intelligent persons like Captain Campbell and others for profit. The improve-

ment in the manufacture of South of India cheroots, since he entered the trade, is most evident, and this is the result of natural competition, and not of official tuition, which would end in failure.

From Messrs. CAMPBELL and Co., to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Dindigul, 15th July 1874.

WITH reference to your questions about the advisability of getting from abroad persons able to improve the cultivation and subsequent curing of tobacco, we have the honor to remark that few tobacco gardens in South India are of greater extent than two acres, and that the greater number of gardens are of less than one acre in area.

2. Again, these gardens are, as a rule, far apart, often miles have to be travelled between each garden.

3. The reason for gardens being in such small lots and so far apart is, that the area of a tobacco garden is limited by the capacity of its well, as in Southern India tobacco is all grown under irrigation from wells.

4. Gardens being so scattered, it would be a difficult thing, without some settled plan or organization, for any one man, or even a small staff of men, to exercise the supervision necessary to insure the faithful performance by the cultivators of rules in culture and in curing which, no doubt, would be viewed by them as empirical.

5. We speak from experience, as we have for years been making the attempts, you now suggest, to procure a uniformity of sample of leaf over a large area.

6. We would suggest that a large block of land be taken up for cultivation by tobacco by Government in contiguous acres near some Railway Station, where town-sweepings (ashes) are procurable in quantity. These are one of the finest manures for tobacco; and while improving the staple, the use of these ashes would encourage native cultivators to make use of their own house-sweepings.

7. We have already improved the leaf grown on some native gardens by the simple plan of burning the weeds and scrub around them, and during the hours of irrigation of keeping a boy to throw the ashes into the running water; those dissolving are rapidly made use of by the plants.

8. In South India climate is much against the methodical curing of tobacco, which ripens just as the atmosphere gets dry and parched; the consequence is, the curing has to be hurried to prevent the leaf becoming brittle, and what, no doubt, the ordinary cultivator fears more, to prevent loss of weight by the rapid evaporation of the moisture in the leaf.

9. The curse of tobacco growers in these districts is this hot parching atmosphere in February, April, and May; but for it, Southern India might compete successfully with Cuba; hasty, slurred-overcuring ruins our leaf.

10. We ourselves have in a small way remedied this by bringing in half-cured leaf from native gardens and slowly curing it in vaults built at considerable cost below ground where we could produce an artificial atmosphere.

11. As this artificial atmosphere is absolutely necessary for the successful curing of tobacco in Southern India, we would suggest the erection of curing sheds in suitable localities where the produce of native gardens might be brought and slowly and methodically cured.

12. The difficulty would be, that native gardeners would not bring their leaf unless it was purchased. Government might not care probably to make such large purchases. Moreover, intimate knowledge of the localities is necessary, as the leaf grown in the vast proportion of native gardens is of no use whatever for burning; moreover, however carefully cured, the leaf will not burn, the soil in which it was raised and the water in the well by which it was irrigated being deficient in the necessary "salts." This leaf is used for chewing, and there is a great demand for it.

13. Coffee planters seldom cure their own produce. The berry from perhaps a hundred different estates goes to the same curer on the coast. Tobacco should be treated in the same way. The cultivator has not sufficient time to devote to the curing of his produce. Curing should be

quite a different and separate industry. It would then be slowly and carefully undertaken and attended to.

14. In South India cultivators of gardens irrigated by wells get usually three crops off their soil in one year; the consequence is, that no sooner has the tobacco been cut than the roots are torn up, the ground ploughed and grain sown; until this is done and finished, the tobacco is forsaken, and at its most critical moment the curing is neglected.

15. Often have we heard the native gardener grudge the time that tobacco curing requires; again, where is there a native gardener who will go to the expense of building "pucka," to enable him to produce an artificial atmosphere?

16. Now, as the tobacco gardeners in Southern India cultivate remarkably well, but fail in the curing, we have long recognized the fact, that, as in Indigo planting, so with tobacco, the produce should be raised by natives, and the curing should be done by Europeans.

17. Indigo planters build factories in the native centres of cultivation, watch the culture, and carry the produce to the factories where European supervision has raised Indian indigo to its present high standing.

18. So must it be with tobacco and with assistance to the pioneers of the new industry from Government. We fear not that South India may some day see the factories of the European tobacco planters.

19. We believe that in America, tobacco is taken by the cultivators to Government factories or warehouses classified and branded there.

20. If in a country so advanced in civilization as America is, such a step is adopted by its Government, we think that the Government of India may successfully interfere to aid the tobacco cultivator and tobacco purchaser, as it has already done with cotton.

21. The adoption of our first suggestion, viz., that Government should have a large tobacco plantation of its own in contiguous acres would be a sure means of procuring carefully recorded results of experiments in cultivation of tobacco in South India, and in the use of manures, etc., a sure foundation of facts would be secured.

22. Our second suggestion for the erection of curing factories in the centres of the present tobacco-growing industries would be a source of immediate benefit both to the cultivators and to the purchasers of tobacco.

23. Without the adoption of either of these suggestions, or of both, we fail to see the use of the introduction of foreign experts.

24. With their adoption, however, we think that skilled foreign labor could most successfully be introduced. A base for their operations, an intelligible plan would then be secured; and under intelligent and skilled supervision, their services would be promptly brought into use.

From Messrs. ROBERTS and Co., to C. A. GALTON, Esq., Acting Sub-Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Cocanada, 27th June 1874.

As requested in your favor, dated 13th instant, we have now the pleasure to convey to you our ideas about the present state of the tobacco cultivation on the Lankas, and also what we think advisable to adopt for improvement.

2. The Lankas are of a warm, rich, light, sandy soil, and heavily manured by nature. Every year the alluvial matter deposited on the most favorable Lankas being fully two inches, which is a great consideration in the working expenses, yet the negligence shown by the cultivator is most deplorable. The art of agriculture is altogether ignored; they simply sow and wait patiently the result.

3. The high price of Lanka tobacco now ruling has a great tendency to encourage them in carelessness.

4. The Lankas have sold, we believe, for less this year than in 1865, and cooly-hire no dearer, yet in 1865 we could buy short leaf at from Rupees 25 to Rupees 28 per candy of 525 lb. and long leaf at from Rupees 40 to 45. This, and for the last two years, we have paid Rupees 45 to 50 for short, and Rupees 90, 95, and 100 for long. This enormous advance in price is owing to

the great demand for Burmah and Mauritius market, and averaging Rupees 75 to 80 for a mixed quality ; thus the cultivator finds that growing for these markets pay him an enormous interest without giving any trouble, the process of curing only lasting from five to seven days.

5. We have offered the cultivators on several occasions Rupees 20 and 25 per candy, above the highest market rate, if they would grow and cure tobacco for us according to our instructions, and we have also shown them plans of sheds for drying and curing, and offered to erect them. The only answer we receive is, too much trouble ; our own system pays us well. We are now receiving large orders from England for our cheroots ; but from the gross carelessness in curing, we cannot execute the orders to our satisfaction, the only complaint against them being roughness and unevenness in color. Our cheroots are retailed in England at 21 Shillings per box of 100, and we have not the slightest hesitation in stating that, if the Lankas were properly cultivated, and a system of curing adopted, the same as in Manilla, that the raw leaf would in a very short space of time find its way to many European markets and be sold at a price highly remunerative to the grower.

6. We would also suggest the importation of good seed, either Cuba, Manilla, or Shiraz. We have applied for a Lanka this year, and, if obtained on our terms, will be glad. If Government will give us a few maunds of good Cuba, Manilla, or Shiraz, or any other good seed, we will attempt to grow it, and, if successful, will send you samples both of the leaf and cigars; if not, we shall then be able to give reasons for its failure.

7. We could only buy a sufficient quantity of tobacco selected from last year's crop to keep us in work for nine months; and this year, we shall think ourselves very fortunate if we succeed in buying even a moderate quality to keep us in work six months.

8. The only way in which we think the thorough system of growing and curing tobacco on the Lankas could be carried out is either by Government taking the whole of the Lankas into their own hands, or leasing them out to Europeans at a nominal rent for a few years under strict conditions ; that, say, 100 acres per year had to be cultivated under the approved system, and to be managed by a skilled tobacco grower and curer from Manilla, or any other noted tobacco-growing country.

9. The cultivators here are past redemption, and will never listen to, or rather act on, any advice given.

P.S.—We also send you a sample of the best long leaf tobacco procurable from this season's crop.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.—Samples of Tobacco.

THE Board of Revenue were called upon to furnish the Government with an expression of their views on the suggestions made in a report on the "Production of Tobacco in India" by Mr. O'Connor and in the Resolution of the Government of India thereon. The letters above recorded are the replies of the gentlemen consulted.

2. The Collector of the Godavery District is of opinion that no good would result from the importation of skilled tobacco growers and curers to instruct the native agriculturists, as they are too closely wedded to their own customs, but suggests that the former might be induced to come to this country and cultivate tobacco by giving them Lankas (Islands in the river), or by engaging them to cultivate on behalf of Government, so that the natives may have an opportunity of judging for themselves of the advantages arising from a different mode of cultivation and curing.

3. Messrs. Roberts and Co., a firm engaged in the manufacture of cheroots at Cocanada, state that, as long as the present high prices rule, there is little prospect of the native growers of tobacco taking any steps to improve the quality of the article. Messrs. Roberts and Co. have offered higher prices for a better quality of tobacco, and have shown plans of sheds for drying and curing, and have even offered to erect them, but the invariable reply is, that it is too much trouble, and that the present system pays well enough. They suggest the importation of good seed, either Cuba, Manilla, or Shiraz, for distribution for experimental cultivation, and that, with the view of introducing a better system of growing and curing, the Government should take the whole of the

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
7th September 1874.

Lankas into their own hands, or lease them out to Europeans at a nominal rent for a term of years, on condition that a certain area shall be cultivated on approved principles under the management of a skilled grower and curer from some noted tobacco-producing country.

4. The Collector of Trichinopoly makes a similar suggestion, namely, that Government should lease some of the best tobacco lands and carry on both the cultivation and manufacture, so as to demonstrate the superiority of a scientific process, one experiment being tried in the north with the Lanka tobacco, and another in the south with the so-called Trichinopoly tobacco. If successful, he believes the natives would not be slow to follow.

5. The Collector of Coimbatore, on the other hand, expresses his firm conviction that the importation of skilled growers and curers would end in failure, as there is no means of compelling attention to their teaching, and thinks that the only prospect of improvement is the embarkation in the trade of intelligent manufacturers for profit.

6. The Collector of Madura is of opinion that the tobacco trade has outgrown the stage in which it could be legitimately assisted with public money. Messrs. Campbell and Co. and native merchants are doing their best to improve the system at present in vogue, and, if it pays, their example will be readily followed by others; but he is of opinion that, as long as the taste for coarse cheroots at a lower price continues, there is not sufficient encouragement for the production of a better article. The Sub-Collector, within whose division the plant is largely cultivated, is of opinion that the ryots have little to learn in the matter of cultivation, except perhaps on the subject of the manures best suited to the crop, and states that the real cause of the present inferiority is the fact that quantity pays better than quality, and that improvement can only be looked for from an increased demand for a better article. The institution of an experimental farm might lead to improvement, if it could be demonstrated that the crops grown thereon fetched higher prices than the native-grown leaf, but there would be a difficulty in procuring sufficient land of a suitable description in one block, as soil fit for tobacco culture is found only in small patches.

As to curing, Mr. Bliss is of opinion that the defects are due not so much to ignorance as to poverty, which debars the curers from the erection of proper houses, and that the services of a professional curer might be utilized in trying experiments in properly-constructed curing-houses with native-grown leaf. He further points out that any experiments of the nature suggested would be costly, and doubts whether the prices at present ruling are sufficiently high to hold out inducements for export to Europe.

7. Messrs. Campbell and Co. are of opinion that no good would result from the introduction of foreign experts, unless the Government are prepared to set on foot an experimental farm, where experiments in the cultivation of tobacco could be undertaken, and the results carefully recorded, and to establish curing factories in the centres of the present tobacco-growing districts, to which the produce raised by the native cultivators could be taken to be cured. They point out that, owing to the hot-parching atmosphere at the time when the crop is cut, the curing is hurried to prevent the leaf becoming brittle, and to obviate loss of weight from the rapid evaporation of moisture in the leaf. Consequently an artificial atmosphere is absolutely necessary for successful curing, and the only remedy for the existing state of things is the erection of curing-vaults where the produce of native gardens could be slowly and methodically cured.

Messrs. Campbell and Co. remark : "As the tobacco gardeners in Southern India cultivate remarkably well, but fail in the curing, we have long recognized the fact that, as in indigo planting, so with tobacco, the produce should be raised by natives, and the curing should be done by Europeans."

8. From the opinions above recorded, it is clear that the present inferiority of the tobacco grown is due mainly to the fact that there is a great demand for coarse tobacco, and that it is believed to pay better to grow a large quantity of inferior leaf than a smaller quantity of superior. To secure an improvement in this respect, it must be demonstrated that the production of a better article will secure higher profits, and the natives will not be slow to follow. This can only be effected with any immediate prospect of tangible results by the establishment of Government

Farms, as private enterprise is not likely to influence the trade to any appreciable extent for years to come. The experiment will be costly, and may prove a failure.

9. As regards curing, it is evident that existing defects arise from want of capital. An artificial atmosphere is essential in this part of India to the proper treatment of the leaf; and to secure this, vaults or sheds must be constructed at considerable expense. This can only be done by Government, or by means of European Capitalists engaging in the trade. As long, however, as there is so much doubt regarding the profitableness of the speculation, not much is to be expected from the latter quarter, and the question remains—Is the intervention of Government likely to prove beneficial?

10. The Board are of opinion that all that is wanted is that capitalists should take up the industry, and they are averse to Government interference, which has not been found necessary with indigo or coffee, and which was relinquished when tea culture had made much less progress than tobacco has at the present time. The Board would give the greatest publicity to all that has been written on the subject, and leave the rest to private enterprise.

11. Replies to this reference have not yet been received from the Government Quinologist and the Superintendent of Government Farms, but the Board will not delay their report on this account. Their communications when received will be duly submitted to Government.

No. 83. ORDER THEREON, 7th September 1874, No. 1,141.

Miscellaneous.

ORDERED that the foregoing Proceedings be communicated to the Government of India with the intimation that His Excellency the Governor in Council entirely concurs with the Board of Revenue in considering the interference of Government in this matter to be unnecessary.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) C. G. MASTER,
Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

Exd. A. Grubert.

1144/6

Govt. of India, 1874, Madras

REVENUE.

To

THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

Dated September 7th.

Recd.

Encl.

G. O., 7th September 1874, No. 1,144.

SEPTEMBER.

Nos. 82-83.

Tobacco Cultivation.—Ordering the transmission to the Government of India of the Revenue Board's Proceedings on the subject of importing a skilled tobacco grower and curer from Manilla or elsewhere to instruct native agriculturists, etc., in —, with the intimation that Government entirely concur with the Board in considering Government interference unnecessary.

No. 2,228.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 13th August 1874.

Read again Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 8th April 1874, No. 781.

Read also the following letters :—

From W. S. FOSTER, Esq., Acting Collector of the Godavery District, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Cocanada, 19th June 1874, No. 186.

REFERRING to the Board's Proceedings of the 8th April last, No. 781, I have the honor to report that I cannot recommend the importation of skilled tobacco growers and curers from other parts to instruct the native agriculturalists. The measure would, I think, be productive of but little effect. Natives have an inveterate dislike to abandon the customs to which they have been accustomed for years, unless they have had the means of seeing that the change would be greatly beneficial to them.

2. I would, however, suggest that some inducement might be given to these skilled tobacco growers to come down to this country and cultivate tobacco, by giving them Lankas (Islands in the river) for cultivation for periods longer than one year, or by making them to cultivate on behalf of Government. After these persons settle themselves in the country and carry on the cultivation for some years, the natives will personally see and come to know the benefits of adapting the new mode of cultivation and curing. They may then try to employ the skilled growers in curing the tobacco, and thus gradually learn the best modes of culture and curing.

3. It may be said that the Lankas would be liable to be washed away every year, and that it would not be possible to rent them out for periods exceeding one year ; but these are matters connected with the detailed arrangements, and I am of opinion that they can be settled after the proposal is approved of.

4. I have no other suggestions to make. Copies of reports received from the Head Assistant and General duty Deputy Collectors are enclosed.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From R. SEWELL, Esq., Acting Head Assistant Collector, to W. S. FOSTER, Esq., Acting Collector of the Godavery District, dated Tamku, 26th May 1874, No. 144.

IN reply to your letter, No. 137, dated 8th May 1874, calling on me to report on paragraph 3 of the Proceedings of the Government of India regarding tobacco, I have the honor to state that, in my opinion, it would be very desirable to introduce some skilled workmen from the principal tobacco-growing countries into this district, to show the natives how best to improve the system of cultivation ; but I doubt whether any good would result, unless the Government were prepared to take up (say) one of the Lankas for the experiment. There would be no good done by merely teaching the natives unless by practical experiments. When they see the improvement, and can be sure that such improvement will benefit their own pockets, then they may appreciate and adopt it.

2. I would suggest that, in order to render the success certain, the soil of the land to be taken up should be previously subjected to a close examination, and definite instructions given for its preparation, so as to provide the necessary amount of potash, and assimilate it as nearly as possible to the soil of the best lands on which tobacco is grown in other countries.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) W. S. FOSTER,
Acting Collector.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.

From P. PUNDARKAKSHUDU, Acting Deputy Collector, on General duty, to W. S. FOSTER, Esq., Acting Collector of the Godavery District, dated Narsapur, 10th June 1874, No. 106.

WITH reference to your letter of the 8th ultimo, No. 91, I have the honor to state that I consider it certainly necessary to improve the mode of cultivating and curing tobacco in India, so as to secure a better quality of the article.

2. I do not think that I should suggest the importation of a skilled tobacco grower from Manilla or elsewhere. It is difficult to secure the services of so many skilled men as the Presidency requires; and, supposing that they could be had, it is very expensive, without any real benefit commensurate with the expense.

3. I would beg to suggest that clear and concise instructions be obtained from the most skilled tobacco growers on the cultivation and preparation of tobacco and curing it. Translations of these instructions in the ordinary vernacular of the district should be supplied to those who wish to undertake to improve the method of cultivating tobacco. Some inducement should be given them to undertake the duty voluntarily by giving them a piece of land rent free, or offering them a reward for the article. The best Godavery Lanka land should be selected; and during the process of raising the crop, the intelligent Government Officer in the neighbourhood should be made to superintend and assist the tobacco grower. When these ryots know that the improved quality of the article is remunerative to them, I have little doubt that his brethren would soon follow him and try to improve the article. If, however, the instructions should not be found on experiment to work with very great favorable results, we can then apply for a skilled person, whose time then will not be taken up as much as it would be now.

4. I have no other remarks to offer on the subject. I beg to return the printed report received from the Head Assistant Collector a week or ten days ago.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) W. S. FOSTER,
Acting Collector.

From F. BRANDT, Esq., Acting Collector of Trichinopoly, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 28th May 1874, No. 121.

IN compliance with the request contained in Board's Proceedings, No. 781, dated 8th April 1874, I have the honor to state that, agreeing with the conclusions arrived at by the writer of the "report on the production of tobacco in India," as to the great future which may reasonably be expected for the tobaccos of this Presidency at all events, if only the processes of cultivation, and still more, of curing, be conducted on more scientific principles, I do think it is desirable for the Government to afford direct assistance in the matter to native cultivators and to preparers of the leaf.

2. And I do not think there can be a better way of doing this than that suggested by Mr. O'Connor, namely, of securing the services of experienced curers from America and other great tobacco-growing countries.

3. I suppose it is too much to expect that one man should be found to unite in himself sufficient knowledge and ability, both to *grow* tobacco on approved principles suited, not only to the place where he may have been educated, but to the place to which he might be sent in India, and also to understand thoroughly the curing of tobacco.

4. Should such a person be forthcoming, or should there be persons, some skilled in cultivation, others skilled in curing, who could work together, I would even go so far as to suggest that Government should lease, or otherwise possess themselves of some of the best tobacco lands, and either exclusively, or by inviting native cultivators to engage in the joint-undertaking, with promise of division of profits, carry on both the cultivation and manufacture. Success in such an undertaking would be the clearest demonstration of the superiority of scientific agriculture and curing, and other native manufacturers would then be only too ready to adopt the same processes. I doubt if they would be ready to allow even Government curers to make what they would consider experiments on crops grown by them.

5. I have left out of consideration the Model Farms as places where tobacco might be grown: for, at present, that at Sydapet is, I believe, the only one where tobacco can be grown in the way it ought to be grown, and there the space is limited, and the soil is so utterly unlike the soils in which the best tobaccos are grown, that it would be subjecting the experiment to uncalled-for difficulties to begin with tobacco grown there.

6. I should like to see such an experiment as has been suggested tried, one in the Northern Division for the Lanka tobacco, and another in the South for the so-called Trichinopoly tobacco.

7. I have always taken a great interest in this subject; and from considerable observation and personal experience, and being a smoker myself, I have little doubt that, if even the tobaccos at present grown in this Presidency were carefully cured and prepared, they would very soon establish a place in the European market: it might, therefore, be sufficient for the present for Government to undertake the curing and making only.

8. The truth is, that, as soon as a firm or a manufacturer has fairly earned a reputation for the excellence of their cheroots (with the *cultivation* of which they have had nothing to do), the demand is so great, that there is temptation, not generally overcome, to buy and make up before it is fit, good tobacco; to substitute bad; to hurry over the preparation, in order to realize large profits quickly, on the strength of the reputation fairly earned in the first instance.

9. All this might be perhaps obviated, if the scheme which I have suggested were carried out: it may be that it is crude and impracticable. I offer it only for consideration along with, and as one developement of that suggested by Mr. O'Connor; if it is considered no improvement on his, I should certainly recommend his proposal being given a fair trial.

From W. McQUHAE, Esq., Collector of Madura, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Dindigal, 6th July 1874, No. 191.

WITH reference to the Board's Proceedings, dated 8th April 1874, No. 781, I have the honor to submit copy of a report, dated 24th June 1874, No. 241, from the Sub-Collector, in whose division tobacco is chiefly grown in this district.

2. I think the tobacco trade in this district has outgrown the stage in which it could be legitimately assisted with public money. Messrs. Campbell and Co. and native merchants are doing their best to improve the existing system of cultivation and curing. No doubt, any of these merchants would be glad to have a skilled tobacco grower and curer from Manilla or elsewhere placed at their disposal by Government, but it would be a simple plan to lend them money, deficiency of capital being one of the chief impediments to their operations. Messrs. Campbell and Co. are already making cheroots which sell for four times the old bazaar price of similar cheroots, and they are finding a market in Bombay, Bengal, and Foreign countries. The example will be followed readily enough by the native merchants if it pays, but we have not yet got a cheroot which would suit the English market. In Madras the demand for improved tobacco is limited, because so many smokers have become accustomed to the rank, strong-flavored Trichinopoly cheroot. The consumers as well as the growers and curers require to be educated.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From H. W. BLISS, Esq., Sub-Collector, to W. McQUHAE, Esq., Collector of Madura, dated Virupakshi, 24th June 1874, No. 241.

I HAVE the honor to submit the report called for in your letter, No. 802, dated 26th May 1874, on the suggestions for the improvement of tobacco culture in this country contained in Mr. O'Connor's monograph on the subject, and in the Resolution thereon of the Government of India.

2. So far as I am informed, and I have seen a good deal of tobacco cultivation in this division which is peculiarly celebrated for it, native tobacco growers have little to learn on the subject of cultivation of the plant. They devote to it, as it is, great attention, and are fully alive to the value of manure and to the necessity of a thorough pulverization of the soil before planting and of keeping it clean and free from weeds afterwards, which are the points usually most insisted on, and in the observance of which, in the case of other crops, natives frequently fail. A native tobacco garden is, in fact, about as good a specimen of careful culture as I have any where seen, and I can suggest no change for the better in the native method, except perhaps in the matter of manure. That now used is usually sheep's droppings, whereas I understand that tobacco requires potash (as a general rule, in the form of wood-ashes) to a greater extent than animal manures are likely to furnish. Natives, again, too commonly sacrifice quality to quantity, and do so in the case of tobacco more than with most other crops, not intentionally, I think, nor because they know no better, but because it pays them better to grow heavy crops of somewhat inferior quality, that they can never fail to sell, than lighter ones of superior quality for which they may very easily fail to obtain such an enhanced price as may recompense them not only for loss of quantity, but for the additional trouble and expense they have been put to in growing them.

3. For this latter error in the native system of tobacco culture, I can see only one remedy, viz., that prices of superior tobacco should rise to that point at which it would pay better to grow a small quantity of superior than a large quantity of inferior leaf; but this is not a result, as it seems to me, that can be promoted by any action on the part of Government short of the establishment of such a monopoly as exists in the Philippine Islands, by which the Government having the whole trade in its own hands, could, no doubt, secure the growth of such qualities as they desired by the payment of high prices for their production. I believe that from a fiscal point of view, there would be a good deal to be said for such a monopoly, as much as there is to be said for the existing opium one; but, as no such scheme seems likely to be adopted, the improvement of the quality of native-grown tobacco must be left to time and to the gradually increasing demand for a better article which the increasing prosperity and wealth of the country will, no doubt, in time promote.

4. In the matter of manure, it would not be so difficult for Governmental action to affect the native system of tobacco culture. Natives are not backward in following any example when they see that it pays to do so; and, if Government Experimental Farms were established in tobacco-growing tracts, such as the Dindigul Taluq, and were found to produce crops which would sell at better prices than the native-grown leaf, I imagine that the native cultivators would not be slow to adopt a system which produced such results. The establishment of such a farm would not however, be an easy matter, or a mere question of the expenditure of money in the purchase and cultivation of a good block of land. The difficulty would be that, whereas such a farm must be big enough if it is to pay (say not less than 200 acres) to employ the whole time of a competent Superintendent, lands accounted fit for tobacco culture are found but in small patches of perhaps a few acres. Five acres is a good size for a tobacco garden, and even in a garden no larger than that, it not unfrequently happens that only a portion of it produces well-flavored leaf, the growth of the rest being often very inferior and comparatively worthless. These difficulties might, however, be overcome by judicious selection of lands and subsequent scientific use of the proper manures; but any experiment of the kind would be costly, good tobacco land fetching high prices, and the expense of constructing and working wells, which are necessary for the irrigation of tobacco, being great. If such an experimental farm were started, I doubt whether it would do much more than pay its expenses.

5. Presuming, however, good tobacco to be grown, there remains the business of properly curing it, and the Government of India suggest that the services of an experienced curer from Manilla or elsewhere might be secured to instruct native growers in approved methods of preparing their produce for the market.

6. My own impression is, that the inferior curing of tobacco grown in this country is due not so much to the ignorance of the curers (empiric though their rules and methods are) as to their poverty which debars them from the erection of proper curing-houses, and to the nature of the climate, which is so dry in the months immediately following the cutting of the crop, *i.e.*, in the months of February, March, and April) as to interfere very seriously with that gradual process of drying and seasoning, which appears to be essential to the production of a well-flavored and well-colored leaf.

7. Even so, however, I think the services of an experienced curer might be very beneficial if sufficient funds were provided to enable him to try the experiment of buying the green leaf from a number of gardens and curing it himself in properly-constructed curing-houses, from which the direct rays of the sun and the blasts of the hot winds could be excluded, and a proper degree of atmospheric moisture maintained by artificial means.

8. But I must point out that, if it be determined to try such an experiment, it is of importance that it should not be tried perfunctorily. It will, in my opinion, be of no use to send a professional curer to Dindigul for a few months; for, before he can be of any good, it is essential that he should have time not only to learn the language, of which (as well, very likely, as of English) he will be ignorant, but also to acquire a thorough knowledge of the native methods of growth and of curing, before he proceeds to suggest improvements in them. I do not think that two or three years will be too long a period to assign for the stay of such a man in the Dindigul Taluq alone, to plan and effect therein improvements in the customs of generations.

9. There are, however, important tobacco-growing tracts in other districts as well as in this, though not, perhaps, except in the case of the Islands in the Godavery, of the same present celebrity, and these also should be attended to if tobacco culture throughout the country generally is to be improved, as it is, no doubt, of great importance it should be. The cost, therefore, of working the whole country in the manner I recommend and believe essential to success will be very heavy, and the question arises—Is the game worth the candle? I do not say it is not, but before any expensive measures for the improvement of Indian tobacco culture are undertaken, it will be well to remember that six pence a pound is a fair price at Home for good, ordinary, dry leaf tobacco in bond, and that natives can now sell locally any considerable quantity of good samples at Rupees 60 per *pothi* of about 250 lbs. (dry.) This comes to about five pence a pound which, I should imagine, left too narrow a margin of profit to make it worth while to export to Europe. The outturn of tobacco fit for export might of course increase, and under the influence of such measures as are discussed above probably would do so; but, at the same time, local demand would probably greatly increase too, there being an immense market open for the sale of good country-made cheroots in the Bengal and Bombay Presidencies, where they are now despised, and pipes or Manilla cheroots smoked instead, partly, of course, at the dictate of fashion, but mainly, I imagine, because good country-made cheroots are not readily obtainable. Such an increased local demand would, no doubt, in time be met and exceeded, and export to Europe would then become possible and profitable; but this result must not be looked for for many years, nor should disappointment be felt if it is ultimately found to be unattainable.

10. The copy of Mr. O'Connor's monograph is herewith returned as requested.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) W. McQUHAE,
Collector.

From A. WEDDERBURN, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 17th June 1874, No. 141.

In reply to Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 8th April 1874, No. 781, requesting remarks and suggestions in reference to paragraph 3 of the Resolution of the Government of India, in which there is a suggestion of procuring a skilled tobacco grower and curer from Manilla or elsewhere to instruct native agriculturalists, and supervise in a better system of cultivating

and curing than at present obtains, I have the honor to state that no officer in this district has any remarks or suggestions to make, and to state that it is my firm conviction that the importation of skilled parties would end in failure, as there is no means to compel their teaching to be attended to, and that the true mode of improving the manufacture of tobacco is by the trade being taken up by intelligent persons like Captain Campbell and others for profit. The improvement in the manufacture of South of India cheroots, since he entered the trade, is most evident, and this is the result of natural competition, and not of official tuition, which would end in failure.

From Messrs. CAMPBELL and Co., to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Dindigul, 15th July 1874.

WITH reference to your questions about the advisability of getting from abroad persons able to improve the cultivation and subsequent curing of tobacco, we have the honor to remark that few tobacco gardens in South India are of greater extent than two acres, and that the greater number of gardens are of less than one acre in area.

2. Again, these gardens are, as a rule, far apart, often miles have to be travelled between each garden.

3. The reason for gardens being in such small lots and so far apart is, that the area of a tobacco garden is limited by the capacity of its well, as in Southern India tobacco is all grown under irrigation from wells.

4. Gardens being so scattered, it would be a difficult thing, without some settled plan or organization, for any one man, or even a small staff of men, to exercise the supervision necessary to insure the faithful performance by the cultivators of rules in culture and in curing which, no doubt, would be viewed by them as empirical.

5. We speak from experience, as we have for years been making the attempts, you now suggest, to procure a uniformity of sample of leaf over a large area.

6. We would suggest that a large block of land be taken up for cultivation by tobacco by Government in contiguous acres near some Railway Station, where town-sweepings (ashes) are procurable in quantity. These are one of the finest manures for tobacco; and while improving the staple, the use of these ashes would encourage native cultivators to make use of their own house-sweepings.

7. We have already improved the leaf grown on some native gardens by the simple plan of burning the weeds and scrub around them, and during the hours of irrigation of keeping a boy to throw the ashes into the running water; those dissolving are rapidly made use of by the plants.

8. In South India climate is much against the methodical curing of tobacco, which ripens just as the atmosphere gets dry and parched; the consequence is, the curing has to be hurried to prevent the leaf becoming brittle, and what, no doubt, the ordinary cultivator fears more, to prevent loss of weight by the rapid evaporation of the moisture in the leaf.

9. The curse of tobacco growers in these districts is this hot-parching atmosphere in February, April, and May; but for it, Southern India might compete successfully with Cuba; hasty, slurred overcuring ruins our leaf.

10. We ourselves have in a small way remedied this by bringing in half-cured leaf from native gardens and slowly curing it in vaults built at considerable cost below ground where we could produce an artificial atmosphere.

11. As this artificial atmosphere is absolutely necessary for the successful curing of tobacco in Southern India, we would suggest the erection of curing sheds in suitable localities where the produce of native gardens might be brought and slowly and methodically cured.

12. The difficulty would be, that native gardeners would not bring their leaf unless it was purchased. Government might not care probably to make such large purchases. Moreover, intimate knowledge of the localities is necessary, as the leaf grown in the vast proportion of native gardens is of no use whatever for burning; moreover, however carefully cured, the leaf will not burn, the soil in which it was raised and the water in the well by which it was irrigated being deficient in the necessary "salts." This leaf is used for chewing, and there is a great demand for it.

13. Coffee planters seldom cure their own produce. The berry from perhaps a hundred different estates goes to the same curer on the coast. Tobacco should be treated in the same way. The cultivator has not sufficient time to devote to the curing of his produce. Curing should be quite a different and separate industry. It would then be slowly and carefully undertaken and attended to.

14. In South India cultivators of gardens irrigated by wells get usually three crops off their soil in one year; the consequence is, that no sooner has the tobacco been cut than the roots are torn up, the ground ploughed and grain sown; until this is done and finished, the tobacco is forsaken, and at its most critical moment the curing is neglected.

15. Often have we heard the native gardener grudge the time that tobacco curing requires; again, where is there a native gardener who will go to the expense of building "pucka," to enable him to produce an artificial atmosphere?

16. Now, as the tobacco gardeners in Southern India cultivate remarkably well, but fail in the curing, we have long recognized the fact, that, as in Indigo planting, so with tobacco, the produce should be raised by natives, and the curing should be done by Europeans.

17. Indigo planters build factories in the native centres of cultivation, watch the culture, and carry the produce to the factories where European supervision has raised Indian indigo to its present high standing.

18. So must it be with tobacco and with assistance to the pioneers of the new industry from Government. We fear not that South India may some day see the factories of the European tobacco planters.

19. We believe that in America, tobacco is taken by the cultivators to Government factories or warehouses classified and branded there.

20. If in a country so advanced in civilization as America is, such a step is adopted by its Government, we think that the Government of India may successfully interfere to aid the tobacco [illegible] with cotton.

21. The adoption of our first suggestion, viz., that Government should have a large tobacco plantation of its own in contiguous acres would be a sure means of procuring carefully recorded results of experiments in cultivation of tobacco in South India, and in the use of manures, etc., a sure foundation of facts would be secured.

22. Our second suggestion for the erection of curing factories in the centres of the present tobacco-growing industries would be a source of immediate benefit both to the cultivators and to the purchasers of tobacco.

23. Without the adoption of either of these suggestions, or of both, we fail to see the use of the introduction of foreign experts.

24. With their adoption, however, we think that skilled foreign labor could most successfully be introduced. A base for their operations, an intelligible plan would then be secured; and under intelligent and skilled supervision, their services would be promptly brought into use.

From Messrs. ROBERTS and Co., to C. A. GALTON, Esq., Acting Sub-Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Cocanada, 27th June 1874.

As requested in your favor, dated 13th instant, we have now the pleasure to convey to you our ideas about the present state of the tobacco cultivation on the Lankas, and also what we think advisable to adopt for improvement.

2. The Lankas are of a warm, rich, light, sandy soil, and heavily manured by nature. Every year the alluvial matter deposited on the most favorable Lankas being fully two inches, which is a great consideration in the working expenses, yet the negligence shown by the cultivator is most deplorable. The art of agriculture is altogether ignored; they simply sow and wait patiently the result.

3. The high price of Lanka tobacco now ruling has a great tendency to encourage them in carelessness.

4. The Lankas have sold, we believe, for less this year than in 1865, and cooly-hire no dearer, yet in 1865 we could buy short leaf at from Rupees 25 to Rupees 28 per candy of 525 lbs., and long leaf at from Rupees 40 to 45. This, and for the last two years, we have paid Rupees 45 to 50 for short, and Rupees 90, 95, and 100 for long. This enormous advance in price is owing to the great demand for Burmah and Mauritius market, and averaging Rupees 75 to 80 for a mixed quality; thus the cultivator finds that growing for these markets pay him an enormous interest without giving any trouble, the process of curing only lasting from five to seven days.

5. We have offered the cultivators on several occasions Rupees 20 and 25 per candy, above the highest market rate, if they would grow and cure tobacco for us according to our instructions, and we have also shown them plans of sheds for drying and curing, and offered to erect them. The only answer we receive is, too much trouble; our own system pays us well. We are now receiving large orders from England for our cheroots; but from the gross carelessness in curing, we cannot execute the orders to our satisfaction, the only complaint against them being roughness and unevenness in color. Our cheroots are retailed in England at 21 Shillings per box of 100, and we have not the slightest hesitation in stating that, if the Lankas were properly cultivated, and a system of curing adopted, the same as in Manilla, that the raw leaf would in a very short space of time find its way to many European markets and be sold at a price highly remunerative to the grower.

6. We would also suggest the importation of good seed, either Cuba, Manilla, or Shiraz. We have applied for a Lanka this year, and, if obtained on our terms, will be glad. If Government will give us a few maunds of good Cuba, Manilla, or Shiraz, or any other good seed, we will attempt to grow it, and, if successful, will send you samples both of the leaf and cigars; if not, we shall then be able to give reasons for its failure.

7. We could only buy a sufficient quantity of tobacco selected from last year's crop to keep us in work for nine months; and this year, we shall think ourselves very fortunate if we succeed in buying even a moderate quality to keep us in work six months.

8. The only way in which we think the thorough system of growing and curing tobacco on the Lankas could be carried out is by [illegible] their own hands, or leasing them out to Europeans at a nominal rent for a few years under strict conditions; that, say, 100 acres per year had to be cultivated under the approved system, and to be managed by a skilled tobacco grower and curer from Manilla, or any other noted tobacco-growing country.

9. The cultivators here are past redemption, and will never listen to, or rather act on, any advice given.

P.S.—We also send you a sample of the best long leaf tobacco procurable from this season's crop.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.—Samples of tobacco.

THE Board of Revenue were called upon to furnish the Government with an expression of their views on the suggestions made in a report on the "Production of Tobacco in India" by Mr. O'Connor and in the Resolution of the Government of India thereon. The letters above recorded are the replies of the gentlemen consulted.

2. The Collector of the Godavery District is of opinion that no good would result from the importation of skilled tobacco growers and curers to instruct the native agriculturists, as they are too closely wedded to their own customs, but suggests that the former might be induced to come to this country and cultivate tobacco by giving them Lankas (Islands in the river), or by engaging them to cultivate on behalf of Government, so that the natives may have an opportunity of judging for themselves of the advantages arising from a different mode of cultivation and curing.

3. Messrs. Roberts and Co., a firm engaged in the manufacture of cheroots at Cocanada, state that, as long as the present high prices rule, there is little prospect of the native growers of tobacco taking any steps to improve the quality of the article. Messrs. Roberts and Co. have offered higher prices for a better quality of tobacco, and have shown plans of sheds for drying and curing, and have even offered to erect them, but the invariable reply is, that it is too much trouble, and that the present system pays well enough. They suggest the importation of good seed, either Cuba, Manilla, or Shiraz, for distribution for experimental cultivation, and that, with the view of introducing a better system of growing and curing, the Government should take the whole of the Lankas into their own hands, or lease them out to Europeans at a nominal rent for a term of years, on condition that a certain area shall be cultivated on approved principles under the management of a skilled grower and curer from some noted tobacco-producing country.

4. The Collector of Trichinopoly makes a similar suggestion, namely, that Government should lease some of the best tobacco lands and carry on both the cultivation and manufacture, so as to demonstrate the superiority of a scientific process, one experiment being tried in the north with the Lanka tobacco, and another in the south with the so-called Trichinopoly tobacco. If successful, he believes the natives would not be slow to follow.

5. The Collector of Coimbatore, on the other hand, expresses his firm conviction that the importation of skilled growers and curers would end in failure, as there is no means of compelling attention to their teaching, and thinks that the only prospect of improvement is the embarkation in the trade of intelligent manufacturers for profit.

6. The Collector of Madura is of opinion that the tobacco trade has outgrown the stage in which it could be legitimately assisted with public money. Messrs. Campbell and Co. and native merchants are doing their best to improve the system at present in vogue, and, if it pays, their example will be readily followed by others; but he is of opinion that, as long as the taste for coarse cheroots at a lower price continues, there is not sufficient encouragement for the production of a better article. The Sub-Collector, within whose division the plant is largely cultivated, is of opinion that the ryots have little to learn in the matter of cultivation, except perhaps on the subject of the manures best suited to the crop, and states that the real cause of the present inferiority is the fact that quantity pays better than [illegible] the native-grown leaf, but there would be a difficulty in procuring sufficient land of a suitable description in one block, as soil fit for tobacco culture is found only in small patches.

As to curing, Mr. Bliss is of opinion that the defects are due not so much to ignorance as to poverty, which debars the curers from the erection of proper houses, and that the services of a professional curer might be utilized in trying experiments in properly-constructed curing-houses with native-grown leaf. He further points out that any experiments of the nature suggested would be costly, and doubts whether the prices at present ruling are sufficiently high to hold out inducements for export to Europe.

7. Messrs. Campbell and Co. are of opinion that no good would result from the introduction of foreign experts, unless the Government are prepared to set on foot an experimental farm, where experiments in the cultivation of tobacco could be undertaken, and the results carefully recorded, and to establish curing factories in the centres of the present tobacco-growing districts, to which the produce raised by the native cultivators could be taken to be cured. They point out that, owing to the hot-parching atmosphere at the time when the crop is cut, the curing is hurried to prevent the leaf becoming brittle, and to obviate loss of weight from the rapid evaporation of moisture in the leaf. Consequently an artificial atmosphere is absolutely necessary for successful curing, and the only remedy for the existing state of things is the erection of curing-vaults where the produce of native gardens could be slowly and methodically cured.

Messrs. Campbell and Co. remark: "As the tobacco gardeners in Southern India cultivate remarkably well, but fail in the curing, we have long recognized the fact that, as in indigo planting, so with tobacco, the produce should be raised by natives, and the curing should be done by Europeans."

8. From the opinions above recorded, it is clear that the present inferiority of the tobacco grown is due mainly to the fact that there is a great demand for coarse tobacco, and that it is

believed to pay better to grow a large quantity of inferior leaf than a smaller quantity of superior. To secure an improvement in this respect, it must be demonstrated that the production of a better article will secure higher profits, and the natives will not be slow to follow. This can only be effected with any immediate prospect of tangible results by the establishment of Government Farms, as private enterprise is not likely to influence the trade to any appreciable extent for years to come. The experiment will be costly, and may prove a failure.

9. As regards curing, it is evident that existing defects arise from want of capital. An artificial atmosphere is essential in this part of India to the proper treatment of the leaf; and to secure this, vaults or sheds must be constructed at considerable expense. This can only be done by Government, or by means of European Capitalists engaging in the trade. As long, however, as there is so much doubt regarding the profitableness of the speculation, not much is to be expected from the latter quarter, and the question remains—Is the intervention of Government likely to prove beneficial?

10. The Board are of opinion that all that is wanted is that capitalists should take up the industry, and they are averse to Government interference, which has not been found necessary with indigo or coffee, and which was relinquished when tea culture had made much less progress than tobacco has at the present time. The Board would give the greatest publicity to all that has been written on the subject, and leave the rest to private enterprise.

11. Replies to this reference have not yet been received from the Government Quinologist and the Superintendent of Government Farms, but the Board will not delay their report on this account. Their communications when received will be duly submitted to Government.

(True Copies and Extract.)

Acting Sub-Secretary.

To the Acting Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

21 July 1874 No 1162
23 Ditto — 1215 do

,, to the Collector of Madura.
,, to the Collector of Coimbatore.
,, to Messrs. Campbell and Co., Dindigul.
,, to Messrs. Roberts and Co., Cocanada.
,, to the Superintendent, Government Farms.
,, to the Government Quinologist.

Extd. A. Grubert.

No 2562
Rec 1874. Dept

Board of Revenue
MADRAS.

PROCEEDINGS, 13TH AUGUST 1874, No. 2,228.

Received 26 Aug 1874
Encl.

AUGUST.
No. 2,228.

Tobacco cultivation.—Replies to Board's Proceedings, 8th April 1874, No. 781, on subject of importing a skilled tobacco grower and curer from Manilla or elsewhere to instruct native agriculturists, etc., in —, submitted to Government with remarks.—Replies from Government Quinologist and Superintendent, Government Farms, will be submitted to Government when received.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

No.

From The Board of Revenue

Proceedings Dated 13 Aug 1874

FOR ORDERS.

In forwarding
the Board's Report
on the
"Production of Tobacco
in India"
the Government of
India is asked that
Government whether
they would
recommend the
"importation of a
skilled tobacco-g

See Resolution in P.P.
21 July 74 No 230.

and cover "to
instruct the native
agriculturists" &
supervise "a better
" " planting
& more especially
of cotton"
They also asked for
"any other suggestions
which the local
authorities may
have to offer on
the subject"
The matter was
referred to the Board
who after consulting
various Collectors
& others
"are averse to

Government interference
orders are requested
as to whether the
Government concur
in this view of the
matter?

Sd

1144
13

I think that for the present we should
not encourage
a great circulation
which exception may perhaps be
made in favour of a valuable Rice
under
are kept - & private correspondence
(Except perhaps in part I think it safer
to make no exceptions but one
Ker in writing)

95/8

I do not consider that the Board is interference with is necessary. We know that first rate tobacco can be grown and made - and that private enterprise is taking up the matter now. If our model farms are established, tobacco will be grown scientifically in the other districts & then Circulate will be

I don't think interference necessary - this Special matter at present - We know the improvement of agriculture is a duty of the State

28/8 MM

1144

Revenue Department.

No. 1144

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Under date the 7th September 1874.

READ the following Pro: of the Bd of Revenue.

Subject replies to Board's Pro: on subject of importing a skilled tobacco grower and curer from Manilla or elsewhere to instruct native agriculturists, &c in Tobacco cultivation } H. E. 13th August 1874 No 2228

Ordered that the foregoing Proceedings be communicated to the Govt of India with the intimation that His Excellency the Governor in Council entirely concurs with the Board of Revenue in considering the interference of Govt in this

this matter to be unnecessary.

E/LL

L. E. O'Brien
Dec 19-9-74

63-68

Glas

Tories & Whigs in the Aberdeen Parliament

Cr

Dubbed C

@ 2/2/64
D 9/9/74

Contents of Pkt. Right hand Pkt