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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	1391	Press	
B.P. No.		Mis.	
Dated	3. 4. 1874 ~~196~~		

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 18. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 28th September 1874, No. 2,789 :—

Read the following letter from W. R. ROBERTSON, Esq., Superintendent of Government Farms, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Sydapet, 15th July 1874 :—

I HAVE the honor to submit my Annual Report for the year ending 31st March 1873. I regret exceedingly that I was unable to submit it earlier.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.—Report on Government Experimental and Model Farms for the year ending 31st March 1873.

MR. ROBERTSON'S report for the year ending 31st March 1873, will be submitted for the information of Government. The report contains much interesting information the value of which, however, is greatly diminished by the delay which has occurred in its submission.

2. Not only was the rain-fall for the year under notice excessive, but it was also unseasonable and unfavorable to agriculture. In his remarks on season Mr. Robertson points out that the publication of the rain-fall returns monthly is misleading and of not the slightest use for agricultural purposes, and recommends the substitution of weekly returns. From page 42 it appears that a daily register of rain-fall is kept up at the farm, and it is presumed that Mr. Robertson wishes to have similar information for the whole Presidency. With this object a form was prescribed by the Board in 1871, on a representation from Mr. Robertson, and monthly returns showing the rain-fall day by day are received in the Board's Office, but do not appear to have been communicated to the Superintendent of Government Farms. This will be done for the future. A duplicate of the return submitted to the Board is sent to the Government Astronomer; the publication of monthly average only in the *Fort Saint George Gazette* is, therefore, not due to lack of the information requisite for a more detailed statement.

3. The educational results cannot be considered satisfactory. None of the apprentices of either class have shown any real aptitude for acquiring a knowledge of the higher branches of agriculture, but as the whole question of agricultural education is now before Government, it is unnecessary to enlarge upon the subject.

4. In treating of sub-soil drainage, Mr. Robertson observes that the agriculture of the country so far as he has observed, suffers more from an excess than from a deficiency of water, and goes on to point out that irrigation and drainage must proceed together. It is not very easy to determine how far Mr. Robertson's remarks refer to sub-soil drainage and how far to main surface drainage. For the proper provision of the latter, the Government is as much responsible as for the provision of the means of irrigation, whilst the former is an operation which must be performed by the land-holder or his tenant. Mr. Robertson has, however, fallen into such grievous error in his statements as to the supposed effects of over-irrigation that his conclusions on this subject must be received with caution. Mr. Robertson's tours having as yet been rather restricted owing to his duties in

connection with the farm, he has not had opportunities for extensive personal inspection and he has fallen into error from a want of local knowledge.

5. Mr. Robertson writes that the ryots instead of moderately irrigating their land, persist in inundating it and converting it into a marsh fit only for the production of indigenous paddy; "*with these crops the land is sown again and again until it is rendered unfit even for their growth, when it is abandoned and turned over to the State;*" the advantages of irrigation are said to be so abused as to produce disease, death and bankruptcy, and it is asserted that "*a large tract of country has thus been rendered unproductive by the abuse of irrigation in the absence of proper drainage.*"

6. It is difficult to imagine what part of the country Mr. Robertson had in his mind when he penned the above remarks, but so far from land which has been sown again and again with indigenous paddy under the influence of inundation, as Mr. Robertson terms it, being "rendered unfit for its growth, abandoned and turned over to the State," it would probably be impossible to find a single acre under any of the large Irrigation works abandoned from that cause. Thousands of acres, irrigated from the Cauvery and Tambrapurni, as well as from many other rivers and from the great tanks in Southern India, have produced two crops of paddy annually for centuries under the influence of flooding, and that without any special arrangements for drainage; it is doubtful whether a single acre could be found which has been abandoned from over-irrigation. It will be easy to find land abandoned owing to its having been submerged by the construction of Irrigation Works, and a certain area of land under recently constructed works, will be found injured by the development of '*Soudu*,' but that is not from the abuse of irrigation; so far from its having been used by the ryot through want of judgment in such a manner as to produce disease, death, bankruptcy and financial loss to the country, the very opposite in every respect is the case.

7. Apart from these errors, Mr. Robertson's remarks on sub-soil drainage and on the experiments made for this purpose on the Farm are worthy of every consideration. There can be no doubt that in many parts of the country it would have a most beneficial effect, especially in respect of land injured by '*Soudu*' in the Kistna and Godavery Districts. Sub-soil drainage of these tracts would no doubt assist to carry off the injurious salts which now rise to the surface by upward percolation, and remaining there destroy vegetation. The Board recommend that experiments to that end be instituted.

8. Mr. Robertson's suggestion that Government should undertake the drainage of lands requiring it, charging an extra assessment of about Rupees 3 an acre, is quite impracticable; schemes of this nature must be left to private enterprise which, however, might fairly be aided by advances under the Land Improvement Act. It is possible that some of the '*Manavari*' lands of Chingleput, where the means of irrigation do not exist, might be successfully treated in this way; they closely resemble the fields at the Experimental Farm, which have been drained by Mr. Robertson.

9. *Live-stock.*—The use of ground-nut cake as a food for cattle has continued to prove most successful, and, although the price has considerably increased, it was still found to be profitable as well as nutritious. The difficulty of procuring suitable animals, however, seriously interfered with the fattening of cattle for the market.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
3rd November 1874.

The sheep breeding experiment continued successful, the Sydapet variety being clearly a very useful, hardy breed. The value of the wool in the English market also exceeded the expectation formed concerning it.

The poultry reared on the Farm still maintain their character.

10. *Manure and Crops.*—Mr. Robertson's remarks on the subject of manure are well worth attention, and some interesting experiments with cotton and other crops are recorded.

11. *Implements.*—The experiments with ploughs of different descriptions seem to show that ploughs of improved construction, notwithstanding greater actual dead weight, are, when supplied with wheels, of much lighter draught than the ordinary native plough, and it is to be hoped that the use of the former will be gradually extended. The experiments with the Double Mhote are also of great value.

The Implement Workshops are clearly very valuable adjuncts to the Farm.

12. The Model Farm seems to have suffered considerably from the cyclone and other causes. The expenditure in connection therewith exceeded the income by Rupees 1,772-2-2, the amount advanced from General Funds, but the Balance sheet at paragraph 61, in which the estimated value of the live-stock, implements, growing crops, etc., is set off against the loans from General Funds since the establishment of the Model Farm, shows a deficiency of Rupees 342-5-8 only on the 31st March 1873.

13. The report for 1871-72 was not submitted until it was nine months overdue, and on that occasion the Government remarked that there could be no good reason for so great delay. The report now under consideration is, however, seventeen months late, and that for the past year 1873-74 is already long overdue. No further delay in its submission should be allowed to occur.

No. 19. ORDER THEREON, 3rd November 1874, No. 1,391.

Miscellaneous.

THE Board forward the report of the Superintendent of Government Farms for the year 1873, and the Governor in Council must, at the outset, express his extreme dissatisfaction at learning that it was not submitted until seventeen months after it was due. Mr. Robertson fails to afford any grounds for this remarkable unpunctuality, and the Board should insist upon there being in future no such unreasonable delay which precludes the report being reviewed to any advantage.

2. The Governor in Council is disposed to concur in the main with the remarks of the Board in paragraphs 4—7 of their Proceedings, but desire that the experiment which appears to be still in progress be carefully prosecuted, and its details and results fully recorded.

3. The Government notice that the various experiments carried on with manures and in feeding stock, etc., are reported on with Mr. Robertson's usual care, and will doubtless prove useful to the agricultural public.

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Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
3rd November 1874.

4. The Double Mhote is an old invention that was revived or rediscovered some years ago, and a water-lift of this description was for a long time in use at the Botanical Gardens in Madras. The Board might consider the propriety of making and distributing a number of models which should be made to scale and be large enough to allow of the details being thoroughly and easily comprehended.

5. The subject of agricultural education is being dealt with in connection with other papers, and the Government do not propose to notice it now further than to remark that the use of the opportunities afforded them seems to have been left too much to the choice of the apprentices.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Board of Revenue.

Exd. G. A. Turton.

No. 2,789.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 28th September 1874.

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(A true Copy and Extract.)

Acting Sub-Secretary.

To the Acting Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, with printed report.
" the Superintendent of Government Farms.

Exd. G. A. Turton.

I have the Honor to forward Report of the Experimental Farm at Sydapet for the 2 Crops raised thereon during the year 1872-73.

With the Report I have the honor to forward a Copy of the Proceedings of the Board of Revenue in which the Report is noticed, and to solicit the favor of your Excellency's Orders thereon.

I have &c.
(Signed) [illegible]
Secretary to the Board of Revenue.

(11) 1391

4-0 13 June 71 No 144-45
22 Sept 71 299-305
20 Decemb 71 114 Mis
21 June 72 207 G

No 2580

Rec'd 1874. Sept

Board of Revenue.

MADRAS.

PROCEEDINGS, 28TH SEPTEMBER 1874, No. 2,789.

Dept 7 Oct 1874

Encl. 1

No Ode 1391 - 3 November 187

Received 8 Oct.

SEPTEMBER.

No. 2,789.

Farms—Government Experimental and Model—at Sydapet, in Chingleput District.—Report on — for the year ending 31st March 1873, submitted to Government with remarks.

For orders.

(13)

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

No. 3580

The Board of Revenue.

Dated 28th September 1874.

FOR ORDERS.

I think that in Sumine the Rs
should be directed to submit upon
reasonable punctuality & due
notice the annual report of
Mr Robertson's Land. It is
scarcely worth while renewing the
report when that for the following year
is already overdue. Mr. R has
failed to report any reasonable ground
for this unpunctuality.

I agree generally with the
views of the Board as stated in Para
4, & 26 of their proceedings. But I
desire that experiment should be

understanding in progress in
agronomy prosecuted.

It might remark that these
of the various experiments carried on
with manures, in feeding stock
&c are needed with much
care and with great caution by
the agricultural public.

The teaching of agriculture
must be by "deal with
in other papers & needs not be in
cidentally noticed here I think
the fact that the class of men sent
out from Colleges cannot be made
instructive farmers - they are getting
the usual training of farm over
seers - but high Scientific
instruction cannot be im-

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parted & such material
17/10 1902

Revenue Department.

No. 1391.

Proceedings of the Madras Government
Under date the 3rd ~~October~~ November 1874

Read the following

Ppr: of the Bd. of Rev.

Subt. with remarks Report on Govt. Experimental and model Farms at Aydapet in Chingleput District for the year ending 31st March 1873 } H.C. 28th Sept. 74 No. 2769

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L. D.S

2/11

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12/10/74

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(10)
1891

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of

of the apprentices.

To the Board of Ordn. 12 Nov

C 20/40/74.
R 24/40/74.
M 3/11/94

18–19.