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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.
B.P. No.

375

~~Press~~
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Dated

24. 2. 1875 196 .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 13th November 1873.

Read the following letter from the Hon. D. ARBUTHNOTT, Collector of Tanjore, to H. E. STOKES, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Vallam, 16th October 1873, No. 358:—

As promised in paragraphs 4, 5, and 7, of my letter, dated 14th June last, No. 212, printed in the Board's Proceedings, under date the 17th July following, No. 1,310, I have the honour to submit my further report on the result of the experiments made with Manilla tobacco seed.

2. The seed (half ounce) entrusted to the Tahsildar of Shealli was sown by one Sabapathi Padiachi, of Alakudi village, in twenty-five gulies of land, and the produce cut was $2\frac{1}{4}$ Indian maunds of tobacco (40 seers each). The smallness of the outturn is attributed to want of sufficient rain. Two seers of this tobacco are herewith forwarded as samples of the produce.

3. The Mirassidar of Atchanur, who, the Deputy-Collector, Tanjore Division, reported would be successful in his experiment, has falsified the prediction. His tobacco-plants, after transplantation and when they had four leaves each, were destroyed by insects, notwithstanding all the precautionary measures adopted by him.

4. The Mirassidar of Sambangudi, in the Combaconum Taluq, cut $\frac{3}{4}$ ths Indian maund of tobacco on the 10th May 1873, and the curing process was finished in about two months. I forward herewith, for analysis, 3 seers of this tobacco.

5. I beg, also, to enclose, for the Board's perusal, copy of a report submitted by the Deputy-Collector, Mannargudi Division, on the cultivation of Manilla tobacco in the Tritrapundi Taluq, which shows, in detail, the method adopted in the cultivation of this plant. About $7\frac{1}{2}$ seers of the outturn are herewith sent.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

A Statement showing the Process of Manilla Tobacco-cultivation and the Quantity of Crop harvested therefrom.

In the month of Arpisy, which is generally the season of sowing in these parts, the fields, where water is not apt to remain during the wintry days, were chosen in the villages of Vetharaniem and Thettagudi Therkusetti, and dug half yard deep, and seed-beds, one yard long and one yard broad, were prepared therein. The beds, also, were manured two inches high with rich moulds formed of decayed leaves and other vegetable substances which were made wet by the pouring of water and stamped and levelled. On the 10th idem, the seeds were sown broad-cast in them within 7 o'clock in the morning, upon which some earth was sprinkled over the beds, and the seeds were screened from sight, while, at the same time, they were all covered with loose straw and grass to keep off the glare of the sun, and some water was sprinkled over them. From the next day, for five successive days together, the water was sprinkled upon the beds both morning and evening. On the seventh day the germs rose, when the beds were cleared of straw, etc., with which they were covered. At first they were seen only with two lobes to the size of a gingelly seed. Now, to prevent the earth being carried away by water, straw ropes were placed in beds, and they were also put one over another in order that each bed may hold water to the height of an inch. Henceforward, they were watered only twice a-day for a fortnight, within which time another couple of lobes, to the size of a paddy and a little longer than the first pair, were seen to grow.

Afterwards, in the course of a fortnight, one couple to the size of a two anna piece and another resembling a quarter rupee in its dimension grew. These lobes were somewhat black. There having been no showers of rain at the time several sprouts faded and died, and as we had not got the same sample of seed ready for resowing, the loss was not compensated for, and the sprouts that flourished were, therefore, only 375 in number. Again, in process of the ensuing fortnight, one lobe as broad as half a rupee and another as wide as a rupee appeared. Thus the germs grow, and they were found fit and pulled up for transplantation on the fiftieth day of sowing.

2. It is not necessary in these parts to plough the transplantation fields, inasmuch as the soil is not (sic) but full of light sands. As is usually the case here, the fields were manured with cowdung, the river moulds, and withered leaves of jungle plants and trees, then hoed half yard deep, and left open for a time that the substances thrown in them to fertilize the soil may all get intermixed and decay. When the plants were found ready for being transplanted, they were once more dug a quarter of a yard deep and levelled, and beds were also made in them. Upon the fields having been thus prepared, the plants were plucked up from the nursery towards evening and replanted in the new fields within 7 o'clock at a distance of a yard from each other. These plants were each covered around with large green leaves to defend them against the sun. They were well watered, and the rain, too, nourished them; but some of them perished on account of heavy downpour of rain, while the others, in a fortnight from the day of transplantation, struck roots in the earth, began to flourish, and were properly fed. Now the rain-water that happened to lodge in the beds having drained, the plants were watered, and, within a period of fifteen days, they were found to grow with four leaves, each having been one span long and of black colour. Again, in course of two weeks, five or six leaves began to appear in them, and in a couple of weeks afterwards the plants grew to the height of from one to one and-a-half feet, with four more flourishing and thick leaves, each one span wide and from one and-a-half to two spans long. At this time, a space of eight inches around the bottom of each plant having been left, the ground was once more hoed eight inches deep, turned into dust, and left open to the sun for a day; after which it was watered in beds (each so small as to occupy only four plants) through the medium of water-channels bounded by ridges half foot wide and four inches high. The next fortnight the plants grew two or two and-a-quarter feet high, and three additional leaves were seen. From this time forward, the plants were vigilantly guarded against the blight of insects. During the following fifteen days, the tobacco grew to the height of two and three-quarters or three feet, with two more additional leaves and blossomed. Now the lateral shoots were pinched off. In course of the ensuing month, the brown leaves at the bottom of plants were nipped off, while the fresh green ones were placed one over another and tied with straw or other similar fibres. At this time, the whole ground was once more redug one foot deep, the beds and ridges having been levelled to the ground, and left open for a couple of days. Great care was also taken not to hurt the roots of the plots by leaving a space one and-a-half span around the bottom of each plant not dug. On the third day, the beds were made and rendered smooth and even the ridges and water-courses were made so as to hold water to the height of seven or eight inches, and earth, also, was heaped up one span high round the root of each plant. The leaves were then untied, and fields were watered. Care also was taken to nip off the tender shoots at the bottom of leaves, and take off the insects that may happen to fall upon the plants. Now the leaves grew flourishingly, spreading downwards, and their colour was a mixture of green and brown. Owing to heavy rain and wind, the leaves did not grow long, and the roots also did decay.

3. At the end of the fourth month, from the day of transplantation, the leaves turned out brown and yellow here and there with golden spots, when they were thought fit for being cut down. Accordingly, on the 120th day or thereabouts the plants were each cut down, a small part of stalk being left behind, and each being placed upside down in its own place. The ensuing morning they were overturned and put down with their stems towards the west and the leaves towards the east, and thus exposed to the sun, whereupon the leaves all became a little white. They were then shaken and placed with the other side above in order that it might also bask in the sun-light.

After 9 o'clock they were all heaped up in the garden and covered from the sun; and at 2, they were again placed separately and left to bask. The next day the same process was thrice repeated within 12 o'clock, and when the leaves became faded, they were taken to sheds, where each was hung on ropes upside down. After five or six days the leaves got dry in the shady air, and, at a time when the bottom of the leaves were yet green, they were each separated from the stalks with knives, leaving to each the stem three-quarters or one span long, and arranged according to the rate. They were then tied with strong filaments of palmyrah-leaves in bunches of not less than five or six tobaccoes, which bunches are again tied into larger ones, each consisting of five smaller bunches. They were then carried to and heaped up in a close and nonventilated room, on the floor of which were spread the pieces of stems that were cut from the plants; the third rate bunches being placed at the bottom, upon which the first rate ones were put, while the second rate were placed above all and around. These were closely covered with mats for ten days, after which the leaves, having been fully heated, become very warm and turned out black with red veins, whereupon each large bunch was taken singly and placed in a ventilated spot with its stems downward and the leaves upward. The following day each smaller bunch was taken separately, and having been tied in two, was hung on the roof in order that it may take the air. Within two days' exposure to air made them dry, and they were then taken down again, tied into larger bunches, and heaped up as before.

4. The quantity of crop harvested from 23 gullies comes up to sixteen days. The cultivators attribute the failure of crops to an unfavourable weather in this year. They say that, were the season to be good, the quantity might have come up to forty-six days.

(Signed) Y. ALAGASINGARY,
Deputy-Collector.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) D. ARBUTHNOTT,
Collector.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.—Samples of Tobacco.

SUBMITTED to Government in continuation of Board's Proceedings, dated
13th August 1873, No. 1,557.

(True Copies and Extract.)

H. Pitkin

Acting Sub-Secretary.

To the Acting Secretary to Government, Revenue Department,
with samples of Tobacco.

Copy to the Collector of Tanjore.
„ to the Government Quinologist.
„ to the Superintendent of Government Farms.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

Clar: 1873: 20 Apr

43746

1873.

Board of Revenue,
MADRAS.

28 Nov

PROCEEDINGS, 13TH NOVEMBER 1873, No. 2,302.

Supp. 20 Nov 73 -
Encl. 1

Received *21st Nov*

RECORDED.

NOVEMBER.

No. 2,302.

Manilla Tobacco Seed.—Further report
from Collector of Tanjore on result of experi-
ments made with — submitted to Government.

1873/75

24 Feb 75