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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	3369	Press.
B.P. No.		Mis.
Dated	15-6-1877	197 .

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DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.
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197 .

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC DEPARTMENT.

29th May 18. 6,739.

Wild Plants.

Read the following paper:—

No. 98. From Surgeon-Major W. E. COGNISH, F.R.C.S., Sanitary Commissioner for Madras, to the Officiating Chief Secretary to Government, dated 9th May 1877, No. 441.

I have been favored by Dr. Shortt with the enclosed letter and list of wild plants and vegetables used as food by the people in famine times, and I have much pleasure in submitting the same for the consideration of His Grace in Council, with the recommendation that, if the Government see fit, copies of Dr. Shortt's remarks may be circulated to all Collectors and Officers engaged in famine relief.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From Surgeon-Major J. SHORTT, M.D., Inspector of Vaccination, Madras Presidency, to the Sanitary Commissioner of Madras, dated 3rd May 1877, No. 263.

I have the honor to submit a list of most of the wild plants, their roots, leaves, fruits or seeds that are eaten by the poor during seasons of drought and famine. I give both the scientific and Tamil names in the list, believing that it may prove of interest just now.

2. I commenced the collection first during a visit to Tanjore in 1870, and have to thank G. H. Ellis, Esq., and J. G. Thompson, Esq., the then Collector and Judge of that district, who kindly at my request procured for me several specimens for identification. Since I have been adding to the number, and during a tour to the Bellary, Kurnool and Cuddapah Districts in December 1876, at the onset of the present famine, I collected further information.

3. The list is alphabetically arranged; many of the leaves and young shoots of those used as greens are much more frequently used as *Chutney Aaray* or mixed greens. This is a favorite mode of using them at all seasons, and they are in great repute even among well-to-do people. Women collect the wild greens both as an amusement and occupation, adding at the same time an additional dish to the family fare. Many European and East Indian families are partial to them, as they are said to be healthy and to have a slight laxative action on the bowels that they will frequently send their female servants out to collect them.

4. The tender leaf-bud of the Hedge Aloe is only eaten by the poor from great pressure of hunger, as it is unwholesome and causes dysentery and diarrhoea.

5. Some of the Arum tribe that are used on these occasions are not only unwholesome but poisonous; to avoid their deleterious effects they are repeatedly boiled ere eating. Of the various fruits they are eaten ripe as they come into season. The Banian, Fig, and country fig furnish food not only to the poor people but to cattle also. The kernel of the mango and the tamarind stone are converted into meal and cooked into porridge or baked into cakes, but as they contain a large proportion of tannin they are not healthy and are only resorted to during seasons of scarcity. The bamboo seed furnishes a kind of rice, which is generally collected by the poor during the season at all times to keep them in food. In most jungles there is always a succession of bamboo in seed every year. The fruit of the prickly-pear is eaten ripe; sometimes the green fruits are boiled. The tender leaves would furnish good vegetable for curry, but is not often resorted to as the prickly-pear possesses anti-acid or anti-scorbutic properties; it is very beneficial to the health both of man and beast. To Mr. H. S. Thomas, the Collector of Tanjore, the credit is due of first suggesting and subsequently demonstrating practically its value as cattle fodder by feeding his own cattle on it and exhibiting the same in public, thus proving its utility. It has

not met with general acceptance in consequence of the trouble and difficulty of finding the leaves of their respective species. But there is a small variety of the latter, known as *Nepenthes*, which is met with about Madras.

NOTE.—This variety of *Quercus* was introduced many years ago by the late Dr. James Anderson to feed the colonial forest. Dr. Anderson used to supply Her Majesty's ships-of-war in the Madras roads with the green leaves, which in those days were used as an anti-scorbutic, after being boiled as an ordinary green vegetable.

W. R. C.

The *Guazuma tomentosa*, or Bastard Oak, was introduced into Southern India from America very many years ago, to be cultivated for supplying cattle with fodder: they are now with about Madras. The woody seeds are sweet from containing sugar and they are eaten by the poor during seasons of scarcity, but cattle are partial to both leaves and fruit. This tree yields good fibre, and its extensive cultivation into the several districts is well worthy of attention with a view to supply fodder for cattle during seasons of scarcity. The leaves of which there are two varieties, from the fleshy corolla of which most of the semi-wild tribes distil an attack, the flowers being sweet tasted are eaten raw, boiled or roasted, and the fruit during the season. The kernels furnish a coarse oil which is used as fuel. The palyra root is well known for the various useful products it furnishes. The fusiform root or the germinating stems is boiled and sold in the bazaars during the season as the palyra tubers or *Pandit* root, and this is also converted into meal, and the stems of the fruit are carefully collected and put down to germinate for the purpose of securing the roots.

I will not extend these remarks further as the parts used and the mode in which they are prepared are given opposite each plant.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.

A List of PLANTS the various parts of which are used as Food by the Poor, during seasons of Distress, to appease the cravings of Hunger.

Scientific Names.	Tamil Names.	Remarks.
<i>Acalypha Indica</i> ..	Koopay Maynd	Grows wild, leaves used as greens.
<i>Achyranthes Aspera</i> ..	Nali Ooroorie Keeray	Do. do. do.
<i>Acorum lunata</i> ..	Kunpolay Keeray	Do. and cultivated, the leaves eaten.
<i>Aschynomene Aspera</i> ..	Sadday Keeray	Grows wild, the leaflets used as greens.
<i>Alice Vulgaris</i> ..	Kulhalay	Grows wild, the leaf-bud or calyx eaten.
<i>Alternanthera Sessilis</i> ..	Poonanghucunay Keeray	Grows wild, leaves used as greens.
<i>Amaranthus Canpestis</i> ..	Siva Keeray	Do. and cultivated used as greens.
„ <i>Primitivaceous</i> ..	Poonng Keeray	Do. and cultivated, leaves used as greens, and the seeds converted into meal.
„ <i>Spinosus</i> ..	Mooloo Keeray	Grows wild, leaves eaten as greens.
„ <i>Tenuifolius</i> ..	Kattoo Siroo Keeray	Do. used as greens.
„ <i>Triatis</i> ..	Kuppei Keeray	Do. do. greens.
<i>Amorphophallus Campanulatus</i> ..	Kurrama Kalung	Do. about 1 lb. and the tubers boiled and eaten.
<i>Apocynon Monestachyon</i> ..	Kotae Kalungu	Grows wild, found in tanks, and the roots are eaten after careful boilings.
<i>Arum lyratum</i> ..	Koodai Kala	Grows wild, used as greens.
<i>Asystasia Coremandaliana</i> ..	Milchey Keeray	Do. do. greens.
<i>Althoea Heteranthera</i> ..	Thoyab Keeray	Do. do. greens.
<i>Bambusa Arundinacea</i> ..	Mungai Arisea	Seeds of the bamboo furnish food (rice) to the poor.
<i>Passia longistylis</i> ..	Elloopei	Grows wild, the deciduous fleshy corolla are eaten either raw or roasted and the fruit when ripe.
„ <i>latifolia</i> ..	Qat Elloopei	Do. do. do.

A List of PLANTS the various parts of which are used as Food, &c.—(Continued).

Scientific Names.	Tamil Names.	Remarks.
<i>Bergia Kanigü</i> ..	Karaway Pillay	Grows wild, is also cultivated, fruits eaten.
<i>Boerhavia procumbens</i> ..	Mockaretti Keeray	Grows wild, leaves and tender shoots used as greens.
<i>Boerhavia repanda</i> ..	Mockaretti Keeray	Do. do. do.
<i>Borassia flabelliformis</i> ..	Pannet	Fruits and leaf-bud or the cabbage is eaten, as also the fusiform roots.
<i>Bryonia tostrata</i> ..	Appa Keeray	Grows wild, fruits and leaves eaten.
<i>Byttneria herbacea</i> ..	Aree Keeray	Do. leaves used as greens.
<i>Caladium Esculentum</i> ..	Sammay Keeray	Do. leaves eaten as greens.
<i>Carthamus parvifolia</i> ..	Curay Cheddie	Do. leaves and young shoots used as greens.
<i>Cardiospermum halimifolium</i> ..	Moolacottan	Do. do. do.
<i>Cassia adalensis</i> ..	Kullee Moolayan	Do. tender shoots used, cooked as vegetable.
<i>Cassia Corindis</i> ..	Kadalei, two kinds, one termed Chafay Kadalei.	Grows wild, fruits are eaten.
<i>Cassia Sophera</i> ..	Poonavero	Do. leaves used as greens.
<i>Cathartocarpus fistula</i> ..	Keeray	Do. the mucilaginous pulp from the pods eaten.
<i>Celastrus Cristata</i> ..	Pannee Keeray	Grows wild, leaves and young shoots used as greens.
<i>Cissus quadrangularis</i> ..	Perundel Odie	Do. do. do.
<i>Cleome pentaphylla</i> ..	Nalay Keeray	Do. leaves used as greens.
<i>Coccoloba Indica</i> ..	Govay Kai	Do. ripe fruits eaten.
<i>Celastrus Antiquorum</i> ..	Shannay Kilangu	Do. and cultivated leaves and leaf stalks eaten.
„ <i>Nymphicefolia</i> ..	Karoomay Kilangu	Grows wild, and cultivated, the tubers are cooked.
<i>Crematula Communis</i> ..	Kannang Keeray	Grows wild, leaves and tender shoots used as greens.
<i>Cordia Myxia</i> ..	Vidi Marum	Fruits eaten during the season.
<i>Cordia Olfitoria</i> ..	Kant 'Phothoo or Jows' Mallow.	Grows wild, and leaves tender shoots used as greens.
<i>Cucumis Momordica</i> ..	Kant Vellori, Pythum Kai.	Grows wild, fruits eaten.
<i>Cynodon dactylon</i> ..	Aroogam Pilloo	Do. tender leaves and shoots eaten.
<i>Dioscorea nutans</i> ..	Sunday Keeray	Grows wild, the leaves used as greens.
<i>Dioscorea Alata</i> ..	Yama Kalung	Several varieties, grow wild, tubers eaten cooked.
<i>Dolichos Esaliformis</i> ..	Kant Thumbutan	Grows wild, pods cooked into curries, ripe seeds eaten boiled.
<i>Dracopis polyphyllum</i> ..	Kant Curay	Grows wild, tubers eaten cooked.
<i>Elaeagnus aegyptia</i> ..	Mattengapilloo	The seed grains are eaten cooked.
<i>Eriodendron Anfractuozum</i> ..	Elevam	Found in gardens, seeds roasted and eaten.
<i>Erythroxylon Arcolatum</i> ..	Davaashdaram Keeray	The tender leaves are used as greens, grows wild.
<i>Euphorbia pulchella</i> ..	Amunpetchay Arisea	Grows wild, leaves and tender shoots eaten as greens.
<i>Ficus Bengalensis</i> ..	Alamurum	Fruits of these and other varieties of the Ficus are eaten ripe.
„ <i>Glomerata</i> ..	Attee Marum	Do. do. do.
„ <i>Religiosa</i> ..	Arasa Marum	Do. do. do.
<i>Glinus trianthemoides</i> ..	Sharamay Keeray	Wild, leaves used as greens.
<i>Gisekia Pharmaceoides</i> ..	Nammelli Keeray	Grows wild. The leaves used as greens.
<i>Guazuma tomentosa</i> ..	Redrasum	The woody fruits when ripe are eaten.
<i>Gynandrous pentaphylla</i> ..	Nelivaylla or Kadugoo	Grows wild, leaves and young shoots used as greens.

A List of Plants the various part of which are used as Food, &c.—(Continued).

Scientific Names.	Tamil Names.	Remarks.
<i>Hoya Veridiflora</i>	Coringee Keeray	Grows wild, leaves used as greens.
<i>Inga dulcis</i>	Coorikapooly	Ripe fruits eaten.
<i>Ipomoea reptans</i>	Vallay Keeray	Wild, leaves eaten as greens.
" <i>repens</i>	Parrotay do.	Do. do.
" <i>Sarcocolla</i>	Thalee do.	Do. do.
<i>Leucas aspera</i>	Thombay Keeray	Grows wild, leaves and tender shoots eaten as greens.
<i>Maka busidolia</i>	Erimbellie Kai	Grows wild, ripe fruits eaten.
<i>Mangifera Indica</i>	Mankai	Fruits and seeds, latter converted into meat.
<i>Melia azadirachta Indica</i> ..	Vepa Marum	The ripe fruits are eaten as they contain a small quantity of sweet pulp between stone and skin.
<i>Mimusops elengi</i>	Mogentum	The ripe fruits are eaten.
<i>Morinda citrifolia</i>	Munja parattay	Grows wild, green fruits carried, ripe eaten.
" <i>Umbellata</i>	Noona Kai	Do. ripe do.
<i>Nymphaea Odalis</i>	Shangumee pushpam	Grows wild in tanks, there are two or three varieties according to the colouring of the flowers. The roots and seeds are eaten cooked.
<i>Oslea Marmelous</i>	Vilva Marum	Grows wild, the ripe fruits are eaten.
<i>Opuntia Vulgaris</i>		Do. do. do. the green fruits and tender shoots may be cooked into curries.
<i>Oralis Corniculata</i>	Poolaray	Grows wild, leaves and tender shoots cooked as greens.
<i>Paridonus Odor</i>	Thalay	Grows wild, the floral leaves are eaten raw or cooked, and the lower part of the drupes of the ripe fruits are sucked of their pulp.
<i>Phaseolus rostratus</i>	Karselene	Grows wild, the tuberos roots are cooked and eaten.
<i>Theopis Sylvestris</i>	Ethum Panany	Grows wild, leaf-herb or cabbage and ripe fruits eaten.
" <i>Farinifera</i>	Etheo	Do. do. do.
<i>Portulaca Olincon</i>	Paroopoo or Coroo Keeray ..	Grows wild, leaves and tender shoots are cooked and eaten as greens.
" <i>quadrifida</i>	Passelle Keeray	Grows wild, do. do.
<i>Promna Serratifolia</i>	Mooney do.	Do. do. do.
" <i>latifolia</i>	Nella do.	Do. do. do.
<i>Prosopis Spicigera</i>	Pannibay	Do. do. the meals from the pods are eaten.
<i>Rottia trifolia</i>	Nurseyppattay Keeray	Grows wild, leaves and legumes used as greens.
<i>Salicornia Brachecta</i>	Oomarie Keeray /	Grows wild, leaves and shoots used as greens.
" <i>Indica</i>	Pavala poondoo	Used as a pot herb.
<i>Salsola Indica</i>	Yella Keeray	Wild, leaves used as greens, largely resorted to during famines.
<i>Schleichera trifuga</i>	Poomarum, Coroo Marum ..	Grows wild, ripe fruits are eaten.
<i>Schmedelia Serrata</i>	Tandika	Grows wild, fruits are eaten.
<i>Sesuvium Portulacastrum</i> ..	Vungarayasee	The leaves and tender shoots used as a pot herb, grows wild.
<i>Sethia Indica</i>	Tovadrum, Serramaatty	Grows wild, leaves and tender shoots eaten as greens.
<i>Solanum inersum</i>	Mannuthakata	Grows wild, leaves and young shoots used as greens, ripe fruits eaten.
<i>Solanum Jaquini</i>	Candung katri	Grows wild, fruits are cooked into curries.

A List of Plants the various parts of which are used as Food, &c.—(Continued)

Scientific Names.	Tamil Names.	Remarks.
<i>Solanum torvum</i>	Secondary Kai	Grows wild, fruits used as vegetable.
<i>Spondas Mangifera</i>	Marey Manga	Do. leaves used as greens.
		Fruits cooked into curries and pickles.
<i>Sterculia foetida</i>	Pannarai Marum	Grows wild, thorocasted seeds are eaten.
<i>Strychnos potatorum</i>	Tattai Cottay Marum	Do. fruits when ripe are eaten.
<i>Suaeda indica</i>	Kojay Kassaray Keem	Used as a pot herb, grows wild.
<i>Syzygium Jamblanum</i>	Navel	Grows wild, ripe fruits are eaten.
<i>Tamarindus indica</i>	Poocha Marum	Leaves, young shoots, fruits and seeds are eaten, the latter converted into meal.
<i>Toddalia Acclista</i>	Moolacarnay	Grows wild, leaves are used as greens.
<i>Thapa hispansa</i>	Singubara	Do. seeds.
<i>Trianthema obcordata</i>	Sharannay	Do. leaves and tender shoots used as greens.
Do. do. Var.	Sharalay Keeray	Do. leaves used as greens.
<i>Trichostema cucumera</i>	Pepodol	Do. fruits curried.
<i>Trilobos terristus</i>	Nerroujee Keeray	Do. leaves used as greens.
<i>Urtica tuberosa</i>		Do. tuberous roots boiled and eaten.
<i>Xanthochymopictorius</i>		Do. ripe fruits.
<i>Ximenia americana</i>		Do. do.
<i>Zizyphus jujuba</i>	Yellanday Kai	Ripe fruits.

Manassas,
3rd May 1871

CONCLUSION

WILLIAMS, ^{late} GEORGE LEAF, Esq.,
Inspector of Vaccination, Madras Presidency.

Fig. 99.

ORDER THEREON, 29th May 1877, No. 739.

Circulated accordingly to all Collectors for communication to officers engaged in famine relief.

2. The papers will also be communicated to Dr. Bidie, the Superintendent of the Government Central Museum, in view to a collection being made of the plants.

3. The Collector of Chingleput will be requested to make inquiries regarding the Karangudi non-thorny cactus, with reference to its suitability as fodder for cattle.

(True Extract)

D. F. CARMICHAEL,
Off. Chief Secretary.

Under Secy. to Govt.

To all Collectors

- „ the Superintendent, Government Central Museum
- „ the Board of Revenue.
- „ the Sanitary Commissioner.
- „ the Revenue Department.

Rev. J. Wright

Handwritten notes on a piece of paper pasted onto the left page of an open book. The text is written in cursive and includes:

W. H. H. H.
6/20/20
2-6
1917