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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

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Proceedings of a Meeting of the Committee of the
Agri-Horticultural Society of Madras, held at
the Gardens on Wednesday, the 8th January
1879.

PRESENT.—

H. S. THOMAS, Esq., F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c., in the Chair.
GEORGE BIDIE, Esq., M.B., F.L.S., &c.
COLONEL A. T. SEARLE,
J. STEAVENSON, Esq., B.A., *Honorary Secretary.*

The Proceedings of last Meeting were submitted and confirmed.

The Honorary Secretary then intimated that the following contributions had been made to the Library and Gardens, and a vote of thanks was passed to the donors.

1. Seed of *Martynia diandra*, from H. S. Thomas, Esq., F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c.
 2. Seed of *Pithecolobium saman* and *Grevillea robusta*, from Dr. Thwaites, Director Royal Botanic Gardens, Peradenya, Ceylon.
 3. Correspondence Botanique: Liste des Jardins, des Chairs, des Musées, des Revues, et des Sociétés de Botanique du Monde, 1878, by M. Moren, from the Editor.
 4. Report on the Progress and Condition of the Royal Gardens at Kew during the year 1877, from the Director.
 5. Le Catalogue Général de l'Etablissement d'Horticulture d'Auguste van Geert, Gand (Belgique), 1878-79.
- I. Read extract from *The Field* of 12th October 1878, page 460, from which it appears that *Landolphia*, a jungle climber from which East African India rubber is obtained, reached Kew alive in July last from Zanzibar.

Read also letter from Messrs. Binny and Co., the local Agents of the British India Steam Navigation Company, dated 7th December last, in reply to one from the Honorary Secretary, dated 4th Idem, addressed to C. A. Ainslie, Esq., asking if he

could get some plants of *Landolphia* from Zanzibar for the Society, stating that they had written to their friends at Zanzibar asking them to endeavour to procure and forward by an early opportunity some of the plants in question, and that on hearing from them in the matter they will advise further.

Read also an extract from the Report of the Royal Gardens, Kew, for 1877, in which, referring to the *Landolphia*, Sir J. D. Hooker quotes a letter from Dr. Kirk, Her Majesty's Consul-General at Zanzibar, in which occurs the following passage:—
"I must try to get the plant introduced into India, for the quality is excellent, and if grown in the Coast jungles it would be an addition to the sources of wealth."

Resolved, that the Honorary Secretary write to Dr. Kirk, forwarding a copy of these Proceedings, and requesting him to be so good as to assist Messrs. Binny and Co.'s friends.

II. Read communication from Lt.-Col. R. H. Beddome, Conservator of Forests, dated Madras, 2nd December 1878, forwarding a copy of a letter from himself to J. Ferguson, Esq., Deputy Conservator of Nellore, of the same date, giving directions as to the Ceara plants in accordance with G. O. 1837 of 18th November last,* for the information of this Society.

Recorded.

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III. Read article in *The Gardener's Chronicle* of 9th November 1878, which states that "the Government of Victoria has had its attention called, none too soon, to the rapid diminution of *Wattle-bark*, a valuable tanning material in, and important export from, the colony, obtained from three species of *Acacia*, *A. pyramidalis*, *A. decurrens*, and *A. dealbata*; that it appointed a commission of seven members and a Secretary, including Baron von Mueller and Mr. Besi-to, to make a full and exhaustive investigation into the subject of Wattle conservancy and bark-stripping, who made an able report; and that at a meeting in Melbourne of those interested in the trade, it was resolved, "That the Report itself is no ordinary production, but is creditable alike to the Commissioners individually and collectively. It is a digest of valuable information pertinent to the subject, illustrating the

* Vide Proceedings of 14th December last.

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growth and nature of Wattles, as well as other trees of great commercial value, growing, and which ought to be cultivated in the colony; and is a compendium of botanical science, with a large amount of geographical information bearing upon the great extent of country traversed by the Board."

Resolved, that as some of the *Acacias* abovementioned flourish on the Neilgherry Hills to such a degree as to be there looked upon more in the light of noxious weeds than useful plants, steps should be taken to obtain a copy of the Report of the Victorian Committee with a view to ascertain if the trade therein reported on cannot be introduced into, or, if already existing, fostered in Southern India; and that the Honorary Secretary be directed to apply to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, to be so good as to obtain for this Society a copy of the report from the Victorian Government.

IV. Read letter from James Grant, Esq., Manager, Scottish Indian Coffee Company, Limited, Colachel, Travancore, dated 12th December 1878, forwarding the following interesting report on the Liberian Coffee plants sent to the Company on 16th August 1877, written by one of the Company's Superintendents:—

"*Liberian Coffee*.—Owing to the case having miscarried and being broken in transit, only twenty-five of the fifty plants forwarded from Madras were received alive at Strathmore Estate. On breaking the small pots, the tap roots were found to have become very much twisted and entangled with the fibrous rootlets, in their endeavours to find an exit from the small pot in which they had evidently been too long confined. Great care had, therefore, to be exercised in transplanting so as to disturb, as little as possible, the soil in which they had arrived. The tap roots, owing to their great length and twisted condition, had to be freely pruned and dressed previous to transplanting; but, as has since been proved, this would appear to have acted beneficially in promoting their rapid growth, as, of the whole twenty-five plants received, all are alive, and are shewing marked signs of their adaptability to the soil and climate in which they are now flourishing.

Holes, about two feet square, were made for their reception, in a small piece of forest land cleared specially for the purpose, and were

filled with virgin soil from the adjoining jungle. Each hole is about eight feet from the other; but the present appearance of the plants would seem to indicate this distance as being a little too close for the future full development of the tree.

The plants, after being put out, were at first slightly shaded, and watered, when there was no rain-fall, every second day. The shade and watering were afterwards gradually dispensed with, as the plants shewed signs of having established themselves firmly in the ground and when indications of their making young wood were discernible.

Several of the plants are now shewing from three to four pairs of primaries and carrying in some instances leaves measuring 16" x 9".

The plants are now a little over a year old, and are from 3 to 5 feet in height—the elevation of the land in which they are planted being about 800 feet above sea level, and preserving a moist, warm, and very forcing climate.

One plant, which was sent to another part of the country and planted under similar circumstances, but at an elevation of some 450 feet above sea level, and with a western aspect, has attained even a larger growth than those at Strathmore. But although nearly 6 feet in height, it shews a tendency to be more *lanky* and perhaps less robust or hardy looking.

Another experiment was tried on an estate possessing particularly fine and friable soil, at an elevation of about 1,400 feet above sea level, and even in this instance the appearance and rapid growth of the plant are everything that could be desired.

I regret, however, to observe that, even in the case of the two isolated plants just referred to, this species of coffee shews no signs of possessing immunity from the dreaded leaf disease (*Nemelia vastatrix*); but, on the contrary, the plants were, almost without exception, all attacked with the fungus before they had been any length of time in the ground.

As yet, however, it is not apparently of a very virulent type, and I hope in a future report to be able to state what effect the disease may have in the bearing capabilities of this description of coffee. In conclusion, I would suggest the extension of the cultivation of Liberian Coffee in the lower ranges of the Travancore Hills, where the

ordinary description of coffee cannot be successfully cultivated owing to the protracted drought during the early months of the year: and am of opinion that both soil and climate are well suited for its proving a remunerative speculation.

GEO. ANDERSON.

STRATHMORE ESTATE.
November 1878."

Resolved, that Mr. Grant and Mr. Anderson be thanked for the Report and informed that the Society will be glad to have further reports, as to the success of this important experiment.

V. Read letters from C. A. Ainslie, Esq., dated 17th, and W. W. Munsie, Esq., dated 27th December, 1878, tendering their resignation of their seats on the Committee of the Society, as they expect shortly to leave Madras for Europe.

Resolved, that the resignations of these valuable Members of the Committee be accepted with every expression of thanks for their long and useful services to the Society, and regret at their departure.

VI. The Honorary Secretary reports that one of the Liberian Coffee plants received from Kew on 17th July 1877, and planted out in the open in the experimental garden, on 25th February 1878, produced ten blooms on the 14th December last, and seems to be in good health and likely to mature its fruit; also that another planted in the shade has several buds upon it; and that the flowers are so large and beautiful that he thinks the plant worth growing for them if not for its fruit.

VII. Resolved, that the Honorary Secretary ascertain what day in February will suit His Grace the Governor for the Annual Flower Show.

The Financial Statement for December was laid on the table, and the estimated expenditure of Rs. 850 for January was sanctioned.

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Financial Statement for December 1878.

	l.	s.	d.	p.
Cash balance on 30th November 1878	...	...	3	6 11
Received from Secretary	...	...	567	0 0
	Rupces...	510	6 11	
EXPENSES—				
Fixed Establishment	...	...	163	0 0
Other expenses...	...	...	340	6 2
Cash in hand on 31st December 1878...	...	...	1	0 9
	Rupces...	510	6 11	
Actual balance to the credit of the Society's account on 30th November 1878	...	...	3,718	10 11
Revenue during the month of December 1878, paid to Messrs. Binny & Co.	...	...	616	7 4
	Rupces...	4,335	2 3	
Drawn in December 1878	...	...	567	0 0
Actual balance to the credit of the Society's account on 31st December 1878 exclusive of interest and commission due by and to Messrs. Binny & Co., and to be credited and debited in the Society's account.	...	...	3,828	2 3
	Rupces...	4,335	2 3	

H. S. THOMAS, Chairman.
JOSEPH STEVENSON, Hon. Secretary.

GAUTHIER, ADOLPH, FOUNDER.

No 67

From
Joseph Stevenson Esq
Honorary Secretary
Agri-Cultural Society
Madras

To
J. M. Gosselin Esq
Acting Secretary to Government
Revenue Department
Madras

Wherewith I have the honor to send a copy of the Proceedings of the Committee of this Society of 8 January last from which you will observe that a Committee appointed by the Government has been engaged in Victoria, Australia, on enquiries relating particularly to the possible failure of Wattle bark, which there seems to originate an important trade.

Wattle scrub having become a weed on the Veldt herewith the Committee consider it as desirable that information should be obtained on the subject, & have

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desired me to apply to you to be so good
as to obtain for the Society a copy of the
Report of the Committee from the Victorian
Government.

I have the honor to be

Dear Sir

Yours most obedient

Joseph Stevenson

My Secretary

gn Horticultural
Society's Gardens
Peris 4 February
1879

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Application will accordingly be made
to the Government of Victoria

By order of the Hon. Secy
Hon. Secy Mad. Agn. Forster
24/1/72

12 Feb/72

Revenue 1899. 24/1/72

No 1090

From
Honorary Secretary
Agri. Horticultural
Society Victoria

Dated 4th }
Dec: 6th } February/72
No 67
Sm: 1

In No 12th February/72 No 579

Forwarding
copy of Proc. of the Socy
and requesting to obtain
Report of the Committee
engaged in Victoria on
agricultural relations
between the Middle-class
and the Victoria Council

W. H. Baker