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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	625	Press.
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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.
JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

3rd February 1879, No. 199.

Reformatory Schools.

Read the following paper :—

No. 5. *Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 7th November 1878, No. 2988.*

Read the following letter from C. BENSON, Esq., M.R.A.C., Acting Superintendent of Government Farms, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Saidapet, 9th September 1878, No. 826 :—

I have the honor to submit the following observations for the information of the Board, with a request that they may be forwarded for the consideration of His Excellency the Governor in Council.

2. Some time ago the subject of establishing a juvenile criminal reformatory for the reception of youths of the criminal classes on the Saidapet Farm was under discussion; but, as it had been allowed to drop, I was greatly surprised to learn quite recently on good authority that the project was again before Government, and that it had been favorably received in some quarters. It would appear, from what I have heard, that the idea is to locate this Institution on that portion of the estate which was formerly devoted to the "Model Farm," and that it is not intended that its inmates shall ever be employed on the Experimental Farm which lies south of the nullah, and that the management and working of the Institution and of the confined juveniles will be entirely under the Jail Department, not being in any way connected with the officers of the farm.

3. It is, I would point out, admitted by all that agriculture must be raised from the low position it at present occupies in this country before any material progress can be expected in the work of improvement; this has been admitted both by the Board and by Government on many occasions. The objections to associating the work of agricultural improvement with jails were fully discussed about eight years ago, and, finally, it was decided that such an association being impolitic, jail farms should not be in any way connected with the Agricultural Department, but be devoted to the growth of vegetables, &c., for the use of the prisoners; it being thought, and with good reason, that connection with jails would not help forward the objects of Government in endeavouring to improve the agriculture of this Presidency.

4. I would next draw attention to the fact that it has on numerous occasions been pointed out that every endeavour must be made to afford facilities* to natives for observing, and exertions be made to convince them of the utility of the improved processes we practise and advise the adoption of; but is it likely that agricultural improvements connected inseparably with jails and criminals will be likely to find favor with, or that those advocating them will be able to carry such conviction as the Board point out the importance of in their Proceedings, No. 2112, of the 31st of July last, to the minds of the cultivating community in general, and especially to those better classes of native farmers, who can do most in general agricultural reform.

* For instance in G.O., No. 385, dated 5th March 1872.

5. How desirable it is that all agricultural officers of Government should avoid doing any thing, which might by any means lead to misconceptions arising in the native mind regarding their work and its objects, has been impressed on them on many occasions; but it must be allowed there is scarcely any thing more likely to cause grave misconceptions than the degradation of the cause of agricultural improvement through the connection of it with criminal reformatories.

6. The Saidapet Farm has now been in existence for about twelve years, the last ten years of which have witnessed work which has frequently called forth the appreciative remarks of both the Board and of Government and of the Secretary of State; but its struggle against much opposition and under great embarrassments into its present position has been long and arduous. However, now that the farm has reached a position in which it may be capable of doing much good in Southern India, it appears likely that its future will be blighted under the suffocating incubus of having its name inseparably associated with the criminal classes of the country. It cannot be otherwise than associated with the classes, if a criminal reformatory be erected on any part of the farm estate. The whole block has become so well known to the public, Native and European, as the "Government Farm," that when they observe such a building, as this prison will, in all probability, be placed in a position of prominence courting the public gaze, as it cannot help doing, if it is to be placed in a healthy situation, the connection in their minds will be unavoidable.

7. If this reformatory be erected as proposed that the Agricultural College and its work will become closely connected in the native mind with it, it is impossible to doubt. What the effect of this must be can be easily understood. The Agricultural College is as yet not even fairly started; it has not yet been organised on a firm and stable basis, but, if it is to be associated with the training of the criminal classes of the country in such a manner as is suggested by some, it may be safely assumed that all hopes of its being ever able to effect any thing of importance for the cause of agricultural reform must be laid aside. This is not, I believe, the intention or wish* of the Government, for it has been more than once admitted by them that agricultural improvement is an object worthy of their most strenuous support. The following quotation from a Proceedings of the Board, dated as far back as the 20th June 1873, No. 1,066, referring especially to agricultural education is illustrative of the general opinions which have been from time to time expressed.

"Able youths now find no fitting object for their abilities in the stagnant agriculture of the country, and therefore even when they are the sons of land-owners they turn their attention to over-stocked professions. When science and progress have disturbed this stagnation, and an agricultural education is shown to be a means of getting money, these youths will not be so eager to forsake the favorite pursuit of their forefathers. Even now, much intelligent interest is awake and systematic instruction would turn it to account."

8. It is well known that our students have not, from their early training and experience, been led to believe that "all labor is sacred" and that manual labor is in no way dishonorable. It is also admitted that it is, if they are to be useful agriculturists, imperative that their minds should be thoroughly impressed with the belief that such labor carries with it no degrading stain. But I may ask, how are the false ideas inculcated from their youth up to be removed, if a portion of the farm estate (even though separately worked) is to be tilled by such youths as would be confined in this reformatory prison. The task is already difficult enough, but, if this be done, will be one such as has never been thrown in the way of agricultural reform in any country,—one thrown in the way of no other profession, and one so difficult, nay the performance of it is almost impossible, that it may well be assumed that the object in view never would be attained. In other ways also the effects of the contamination of close connection with criminals on our students cannot but be injurious. There are many people also who would feel such insuperable objections to studying agriculture on a farm, a portion of which was devoted to such purposes as those to which it is now proposed to turn the Saidapet Farm, that they would avoid the risk of such close

contact with rascality even at the cost of the loss of the education they desired to obtain and required for their own benefit.

9. The portion of the land, which it is, I believe, proposed to utilise for the purposes of the reformatory, is nearly all of it required for the experiments which it has been decided to make in stock-breeding,* and for which considerable preparations have been made. The necessity for carrying out some such experiments has been long recognised, but it was found that the only other land at all favorably situated for the purpose, although far inferior for the objects we have in view to the land which the reformatory proposes to take up, could only be obtained at a price of about Rupees 11,000,—a price which caused the abandonment† of the plan in favor of the present proposed arrangements regarding the land now referred to. Seeing that the finances of the department are in a doubtful state, it does not seem to be at all fitting that the farm should be called upon to give up land on which it has spent much money to improve and bring into a shape suited for our purposes, and obliged to purchase other land which will always be less suitable, and which will require a large outlay on it to make it in any way fitted for the objects in view. Land for the reformatory and its purposes could easily be purchased; for there is abundance of land admirably adapted for such purposes, and far more favorably situated. That the reformatory should purchase land for itself is, under present circumstances, evidently far less open to objection and more just.

* G.O., 15th June 1875, No. 912.

† G.O., No. 989, of 1st July 1875.

10. I would suggest that the best manner of reducing and of keeping crime in check is to improve the agriculture on which so much of our population is dependant for their daily bread, and which now from its weakness so often fails them. It is clear that crime increases in times of scarcity, chiefly in consequence of the high price of food; this was admitted to be the case, especially regarding dacoities, at the beginning of the famine, and again in a recent resolution of the Supreme Government recommending the release of some prisoners who had been driven to crime through want.

11. It being every where acknowledged that prevention is better than cure, it will, I submit, be far better to urge on the work of agricultural improvement, which can, it is acknowledged, do so much to avert the famines and times of scarcity, which cause so much crime in this country than to expend sums on the erection of juvenile reformatories, and that, if money be available for the erection of the proposed prison on the Saidapet Farm, it might be far more advantageously utilised in a work the necessity for which both the Board and Government have repeatedly and fully admitted, but which is now languishing and neglected from, it is said, a want of funds.‡

‡ G.O., No. 1,095, dated 18th July 1878. If money be available for building a reformatory, it surely can be found for educational buildings; and, if there be any available, it is clear that the crying wants of the Agricultural College should be first attended to and removed.

12. I have throughout this letter taken it for granted that the inmates of the Institution will not, as I said in paragraph 2, be at any time or in any way associated with the Experimental Farms; but I observe in the last Administration Report of the Presidency that for 1876-77 the following remarks by the Inspector-General of Jails which seem to show that such is not intended to be the case:—

"The farm will afford facilities for training the boys in agricultural labor, in gardening, and in the care of farm animals. A certain amount of carpenters' and smiths' work is carried on at the farm, so that one difficulty, that of providing suitable industrial occupation, will be overcome."

If these are to be the arrangements, the objections I have raised acquire all the more force and demand the greater attention, whilst others will arise which I have not at all referred to.

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13. In conclusion, I would ask of what use, supposing the youths in the reformatory acquire a perfect knowledge thereof, would an acquaintance with the mode of handling an English plough, &c., be? It requires something more than simple practical knowledge of tools and implements to become a farmer, for in no avocation is capital more necessary for advancement, and it is absurd to presume that it is the intention of Government to start these criminals in life after their time of incarceration has expired. It does not take long for any able-bodied man to become a fair farm laborer, and in no employment is there less likelihood of permanence than in farming as at present practised in Southern India.

SUBMITTED for the orders of Government.

2. The Board have had no official intimation that any arrangement for the establishment of a juvenile reformatory at the Saidapet Farm is contemplated, and they would not have felt themselves justified in addressing Government with reference to the rumour alluded to by Mr. Benson, were it not that the idea is, to a certain extent, confirmed by an extract from a letter from the Inspector-General of Prisons, printed at page 76 of the Madras Administration Report for 1876-77, where that officer speaks of the arrangement as finally decided upon. The Board would regard any such proposal with the greatest regret, and if any weight is to be attached to the statement above quoted, trust that an opportunity may be afforded them of expressing their views on the subject.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

J. STURROCK,
Acting Sub-Secretary.

Transferred to the Judicial Department.

FORT ST. GEORGE,
23rd November 1878.

(Signed) L. A. CAMPBELL,
Under Secy. to Govt.

No. 6. ORDER THEREON, 3rd February 1879, No. 199.

His Grace the Governor in Council observes that Mr. Benson,—temporarily only in charge for Mr. Robertson, the Superintendent Government Farm,—has not only gone out of his province in discussing what the policy of Government should be in matters altogether foreign to his department, but has presumed to advise on a subject regarding which the opinion of the Superintendent himself had not been asked.

2. The Board will certainly be consulted before any decision is come to by Government on the project adverted to, but at present there is no definite proposal of the kind under consideration.

(True Extract.)

G. H. Bates
Acting Chief Secretary.

To the Board of Revenue.
" Revenue Department.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

Renoué D. C. A.

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The figure consists of seven small, vertically stacked diagrams illustrating the stages of tooth development. From top to bottom: 1. A small, rounded bud. 2. A bud with a slight indentation at the top. 3. A bud with a more pronounced indentation and some internal structure visible. 4. A bud with a deep, U-shaped indentation, showing the beginning of the crown and root. 5. A bud with a very deep indentation, the crown is more defined. 6. A bud with a deep indentation, showing the crown and root more clearly. 7. A fully formed tooth with a distinct crown and root.

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