

PLANTING.

AMBAGAMUWA, September 8.—We are having very rough weather here, and grub has been playing sad havoc on some of the one-year old coffee, but estates as a rule are looking well.

THE MADRAS FAMINE RELIEF FUND,

The following subscriptions have been received by Mr. J. L. Dewar, Roseneath, for this fund, up to the 8th inst.:

Already acknowledged and remitted	R 550.00
Cargill & Co., Kandy	100.00
C. F. Scowen	10.00
J. F. Gibbs	20.00
M. C. Sidde Lebbe	10.00
H. Gunetileke	5.00
Chas. Edmond	5.00
M. Gunetileke, Mudaliyar	5.00
John de Flura	5.00
A. L. J. L. Marikar	5.00
O. B. Bartholomeusz	5.00
D. A. W.	2.50
C. Liesching	10.00
W. J. De Livera	10.00
Alfred Bremner	10.00
S. S. Swan	20.00
C. E. Prialx	10.00
A. Whyte	10.00
Sangapullai Kangani	10.00
A. Tabor	10.00
Lawrence G. Holland	10.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>R 822.50</b>

We have received the following additional subscription to this fund:—

E. E. ... ..	R. 30
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HAPTALA, September 7.—We had two splendid showers of rain during the night, and we are evidently going to have more; clouds are very black and rainy looking. Very soon you may expect to learn of large blossoms for Haptala spring crops. Outturn, you know, is generally this year very poor.

AGRAS: DIMBULA, September 7.—Weather in this district all that could be desired for bringing on crop. Rice is now very high in price, and there are lots of hungry coolies on hand. You might advise our new Governor to come up this way to have a look of the Dimbula Co.'s clearing: it would give him a good idea of the enterprise of Ceylon coffee planters. I hope he will stick to coffee, and not go rummaging about at old-paddy tanks as our late Governor did.

RAKWANA PLANTERS' ASSOCIATION.

A general meeting of this association was held on the 8th inst., when there were present the Chairman (Mr. O'Dowd), the Secretary (Mr. Brabazon) and Messrs. Cruickshank, Mackenzie, Minto, Hawkins, Seymour, Forsythe, Maitland, Churchward, Watts, Milne, Stuart, Hector, Donaldson, and Allardyce. The following are the minutes of the meeting.

Read letter from Assistant Government Agent, Ratnapura, asking the members of the Planters' Association to inform him of any outbreaks of cattle disease which may occur in the neighbourhood of the estates.

Read letter from Colonial Secretary in reference to Madampe road deviation.

Proposed by Mr. Brabazon, seconded by Mr. O'Dowd: That Government be asked to inform this committee if they are prepared to allow the district to take up the contract at the estimated cost of construction, vizt. R. 61,282.00.

Proposed by Mr. O'Dowd, seconded by Mr. Cruickshank:

That Government at the same time be referred to the resolution No. I, of July 25th, 1877.

Read letter from the Secretary Planters' Association Kandy, in reference to resolution No. III, passed at a general meeting of the Rakwana Planters' Association on 25th July last.

Read Secretary's answer to queries of 9th August last by Secretary Planters' Association, Kandy.

Read letter from Hon'ble R. B. Downall in reference to visiting Rakwana.

Proposed by Mr. O'Dowd, seconded by Mr. Brabazon, and carried:

That Mr. Downall be thanked for his letter.

That Mr. Downall be acquainted with the proposed works to be taken on hand in Rakwana and his support asked.

That this meeting do not consider it necessary to take up Mr. Downall's time by asking him to visit the district.

Proposed by Mr. Hawkins, seconded by Mr. Brabazon:

That in view of the fact that the price of rice in August is R. 5.50 per bushel, this meeting do fix the rate at which coolies be charged for the same for that month.

Proposed by Mr. Mackenzie, seconded by Mr. Cruickshank:

That rice be supplied at the rate of R. 5.50 for the current month.

Amendment, proposed by Mr. O'Dowd, seconded by Mr. Minto:

That the matter of the rate of rice be left for after consideration.

Amendment, proposed by Mr. Stuart, seconded by Mr. Milne:

That there be no loss on rice in the district for the month.—Carried.

Read letters from Mr. Minto, in reference to allowance of Trincoowattie coolies half day for transport of rice on Saturday by Mr. Watts.

Proposed by Mr. Stuart, seconded by Mr. Milne:

That a copy of Mr. Minto's letter be forwarded to Mr. Watts, and that Mr. Watts be asked to make the coolies clearly understand that they are deriving no benefit in a pecuniary point from being allowed half day for transport of rice.

Proposed by Mr. O'Dowd, seconded by Mr. Minto:

That a sub-committee be appointed to frame a scheme of medical aid for forwarding to Kandy.

Sub-committee consisting of Chairman, Secretary, and Messrs. Milne, Stuart, Allardyce, and Hawkins.

Scheme.—That the various estates should be grouped irrespective of districts and an assistant with a hospital be attached to each group.

That in order to obviate the necessity of discontinuing the employment of European doctors by the increased expenditure in paying the said assistants, districts whenever feasible should be joined, and a European doctor appointed to superintend the working of these said assistants and hospitals.

That the working of the ordinance be carried on as much as possible in each district by their committee.

That the medical officer be under the entire control of the district committee.

That if it is found necessary to appoint a Government inspector his position should be clearly defined, and that any suggestions to be made by him should, without exception, pass direct through the local committees.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman terminated the meeting.

DIKOYA PLANTERS' ASSOCIATION.

A meeting of this Association was held at Norwood on Saturday last, when there were present Messrs. Giles F. Walker (Chairman), J. L. Shand, William Mackenzie, J. C. Courtney, Arnold White, Basil White, J. Anderson, J. Taylor, C. R. S. Carew and C. J. Pigott and the Secretary.

The minutes of the last meeting (August 18th) were read and confirmed.

Mr. Shand proposed that rice be issued to coolies for September at a minimum of R.6. Seconded by Mr. J. C. Courtney.

Amendment by Mr. Arnold White that R.6.40 be substituted for R.6 as minimum price. Seconded by Mr. Mackenzie.

The amendment was put as an original resolution and carried:—

Read a letter from the hon. Mr. Downall.

Resolved:—That the hon. Mr. Downall be thanked for his letter and informed that there is nothing, at present, requiring immediate attention in the district.

The Medical Ordinance was then lengthily discussed, the result of which was that the Chairman (Mr. G. F. Walker) proposed the following, which was cordially seconded by Mr. Shand and carried:

That the Ceylon P. A. be requested to again urge upon Government the advisability of appointing a mixed Commission to enquire into the working of the Medical Aid Ordinance, as by this means alone can the real reasons of its failure in many instances be brought to light, and the chances of such failure in future be obviated.

With a vote of thanks to the Chairman, the meeting terminated.

MASKELIYA PLANTERS' ASSOCIATION.

The following are the minutes of a meeting of the Maskeliya Planters' Association held at Brownlow store on Saturday, when there were present Messrs. H. G. Mackenzie (Chairman) Jas. Anderson, Geo. Anderson, Crabbe Carre, Clarke, Knight, Unwin, Renny, Scovell, Seton, Hurst, Robt. Brown (Secretary), and others.

The Chairman called the attention of the meeting to the Medical Aid Ordinance and brought forward the following suggestion:—That until Government shew fully what amendments they wish to make in the ordinance, we consider it premature to venture suggestions upon the same to apply to the country generally, we would deprecate further Government interference and would recommend a further trial of the ordinance, as it stands, in the hands of the District Committees, until we are fully assured that any action Government may take will be an improvement. We think the mixed committee as recommended by the Association, is the only fair way of getting at the required amendment of the ordinance.

It was also suggested that useless native assistants should give place to another European medical officer, retaining only a hospital assistant of the native class, and that this meeting should oppose with all its might the Government intention of burdening coffee states with young men from the Colombo Medical School, who as a class are quite unfitted for the work required of them, and that we should strongly protest against the working of the ordinance being taken altogether from District Committees.

Proposed by Mr. Jas. Anderson, and seconded by Mr. A. M. Carre:—That a committee be appointed to draw up a letter to the Colonial Secretary, asking Government to carry on the road over the Maskeliyaganga to Laxapana at once, also the road down the valley towards Yatiyantotta, the extension to Kintyre only being perfectly useless for all concerned. The Committee to be Messrs. H. G. Mackenzie, A. M. Carre, and Robert Brown.—Carried.

Proposed by Mr. Robert Brown, and seconded by R. A. Crabbe:—That the issue of rice for this month be restricted to 4 bushels for adults, and that the coolie be charged cost price. Carried.

Resolved that the Secretary be requested to write in the name of the Association to the Colonial Secretary requesting Government to have the lands already surveyed in the valley put up for sale at once, to be in time for felling this year.

Resolved that the Secretary be requested to write and thank Hon'ble R. B. Downall for his letters of 11th August and 3rd September.

Proposed by Mr. Jas. Anderson, and seconded by Mr. Scovell: that Dr. Tothill be thanked for his report on the health of the district and working of the Medical Ordinance and that a copy be sent to the newspapers for publication.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman terminated the meeting.

REPORT OF WORK DONE UNDER THE MEDICAL WANTS ORDINANCE IN THE DISTRICT OF MASKELIYA, FROM 1st JANUARY TO 31st AUGUST, 1877.

The following tables shew the number of patients treated in the hospital and of those treated locally on estates:—

IN PATIENTS.					
Total admissions.	Admissions for dysentery and diarrhoea.	Admissions for other diseases.	Total deaths.	Deaths from dysentery & diarrhoea.	Death from other causes.
240	119	121	82	61	21
	Chiefly brought in a hopeless state.		About 34 per cent of all admissions.	About 75 per cent of all deaths.	

OUT PATIENTS.

Total treated 1059; Deaths 41.

STAFF OF ASSISTANTS.—With one or two exceptions caused by absence of assistants and other unavoidable circumstances, every patient on whose behalf special application has been made has been seen by myself or one of the assistants; but it is quite impossible with the present staff of only two "district assistants" that, in addition to special calls, each set of lines should be visited once a week or even once a fortnight.

MORTALITY FROM DYSENTERY AND DIARRHOEA.—The excessive mortality amongst dysentery and diarrhoea patients is due to the hopeless state in which the very great majority of these cases are brought to the hospital. The very great majority of these cases might be cured, if they were sent within the first week of the disease.

NEW WARDS.—A new dysentery and diarrhoea ward is being build and will very shortly be completed; it will accommodate sixteen or twenty patients. Another ward for women is just finished. The hospital floors have all been taken up and relaid with cement, and other improvements have been made.

DIETING OF PATIENTS.—The dieting of all patients and the extras, brandy, milk, eggs &c. has hitherto been paid out of the assessment.

DRUGS.—The supply of drugs, which was ordered from Government, and which should have been delivered in June last, has not yet arrived.

HEALTH OF DISTRICT.—There is at present no epidemic in the district. There were some cases of small-pox a short time since, but confined to a few estates. A few isolated cases of cholera have been reported by Superintendents, but neither I nor the assistants have seen any genuine case. Dysentery and diarrhoea are very prevalent, and the season must be considered as an unhealthy one.

CONCLUSION.—In conclusion, that considering the hospital has only been open since January 1st and that there have been, as there always must be in starting anything fresh, great difficulties to contend with, I think there is reason to be fairly satisfied with the result obtained, as the number of applications for admission increases daily.

(Signed) T. H. F. TOTHILL, District Surgeon.

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the Ceylon Observer.  
THE BISHOP AND THE TAMIL COOLY MISSION.

DEAR SIR,—Warn all who value the holy Protestant religion to beware of the insidious advances of his lordship of Colombo. Can the leopard change his spots? So cannot the bishop and his party cease to work for the overthrow of all Protestant missions and institutions. Let the bishop once get a finger in the pie (the T. C. M.) and it will not be long before the precept that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump will be found but too true.

VERB. SAP.

WORKING OF THE COOLY MEDICAL AID ORDINANCE IN BADULLA.

DEAR SIR,—In your issue of the 31st ultimo, allusion is again made to the working of the Cooly Medical Ordinance, and the remarks of your correspondent certainly tend, in the eyes of the uninitiated, to render "confusion worse confounded" in view of the resolutions of the committee held in Badulla and in view of the district surgeon's report on the 11th ultimo for the half year ending on the 30th June last. Moreover, it was only the other day that your paper gave expression to the well founded growls of a member of the committee; and yet utterance is, at this time, given to an opinion that the "ordinance is working very fairly in the Badulla district since the committee have got things in working order"! Such a statement, surely, must be an emanation from the imagination of a family man in the interest of the district surgeon who, certainly, has proved himself most attentive and satisfactory in cases of private practice, yet who may with good reason, in the present instance, cry "Save me from my friends" knowing, as he well must, the unpopularity attained by him amongst a large body of the planting community by the indiscretion, and want of tact and temper displayed in his attempts to carry out an impracticable ordinance. "Angelic" comparisons, certainly, are out of place in connection with the name of the district surgeon; for it is matter of regret that merely even as an "ordinary mortal" his services have failed to be appreciated with anything like "universal satisfaction." Still, it is said, he has, of late, improved, doubtless under the influence of the wholesome censure of public criticism; yet a much more changed disposition than that which has, hitherto, been his characteristic, must actuate the man ere he is likely to prove himself competent to exercise the large powers so indiscreetly placed in the hands of young and inexperienced medical men by the existing defective ordinance.

It is strongly to be hoped that, in framing a new ordinance, the abortive model which has been such a wretched failure throughout the entire coffee districts may be entirely discarded, and that the practical experience of well educated and intelligent planters, who, for years, have been in habitual and daily intercourse with Tamil coolies, whose respect these employers commanded, and on whose treatment of the ordinary maladies to which the immigrants are subject in this Island they relied in no inconsiderable degree, long before the institution of unwise legislation, should not be ignored, and their authority on their own estates should not be delegated to inexperienced doctors, alike ignorant of the constitutions, habits or language of a class of people so specially committed to their charge merely because they happen to have obtained, in some Medical School, a licence to exercise a profession only to be utilized by extensive practice and long experience.

With the objection of your correspondent, however, to the working of any ordinance that may be framed to supersede the present being handed over entirely to Government, there may be grounds for agreement with him; yet that subordinate powers should be very considerably restricted cannot, but be admitted in view of past experience; and the greatest circumspection, most assuredly, ought to be exercised in the enactment of a Medical Ordinance so to adjust authority as not to admit of injudicious and unconstitutional interference with the rights and liberties of the subject, or of any indiscreet assumption of authority on any side.