Cotton with its various varieties and names was cultivated in India from time immemorial. India has probably been the first in the world where cotton was grown, spun and woven into cloth. F. W. Thomas informed that the earliest mention of cotton appeared in Asvalayana Srauta Sutra (C. 800) where the material was used to make the sacred thread of the Brahmans. Excavation at Mohenjo-Daro led to unearthing of cotton cloth and twine. In ancient times Indian cotton textiles were famous throughout the world for their quality and fineness. In fact the Greeks first learnt of the cotton plant through a group of explorers who visited India along with Alexander the great and Diodorus (C. 450 B.C.) had written about cotton plant. We have the first mercial mention of Indian cotton trade to foreign countries in the writing of Julius of the Erythrean Sea. From the early days, throughout the long history of India, India was an exporter of cotton textiles until the dawn of the industrial Revolution in Europe. From 1500 B.C to until about 1500 A.D India was the center of cotton production and manufacturer. In Manchester a peculiar texture of goods woven by Indian cotton was found mentioned in. Though we had a history of cotton culture in India in general and

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Inadu in particular, Tamil country had during the colonial period received a tremendous encouragement for the cultivation of cotton as a commercial crop to export to foreign countries as raw material, especially to England. The British had to rely on Indian soil for the cultivation of this valuable crop of their own economic benefits. The various attempts made of the colonial Government for the promotion and culture of cotton to light the colonial motivation of drain of wealth through the extraction of raw materials from the Indian as well as Tamil soil for their own prosperity. Complete political subjugation of the Tamilnadu under the Imperial British India Company by 1801 offered free hand on their part to accomplish any task in whichever manner to be executed.6

After the wars of the eighteenth century, the British Government through the East India Company made proclamation-inviting people to resume agriculture. Due to the Carnatic and Mysore wars, which the country witnessed at the dawn of the nineteenth century, people had fled from their villages that were completely depopulated. In the beginning of nineteenth century nearly two-thirds of its lands were covered with jungle. Therefore the East India Company announced to the people about the change of Government from the nawab and the native rulers to the British and urged the people to return to their villages in order to resume agriculture. The proclamation was issued in August 1801 in the District of Madurai, Tiruchirappalli, Salem, North Arcot, Trichinopoly dated 26.12.1801, vol.3642, p.58.
The Arcot and Coimbatore. Promise of grain and money was held out to the inhabitants who might return to their villages so that their lands, which had fallen into a state of desolation and ruin, might be restored to their former state of fertility. Since the British Government was badly in need of raw material products such as cotton, tobacco, sugarcane, and indigo, the Government showed keen interest in things which would enable the peasants to promote the process of agriculture.

Agricultural Loan Advanced by the East India Company.

A system of granting Takkavi loans to cultivators enabling the peasants to purchase the prime requisites of agriculture such as seeds, cattle, implements etc., was introduced to encourage the peasantry to raise commercial crops. They laid stress on financial benefit to the peasantry if cultivation of commercial crops, which were in great demand in the world market, was promoted. The East India Company advanced takkavi loans directly to the peasants. On the whole, total amount so advanced did not generally exceed 40% of the gross land revenue of the district. The company ordered that the total requirement of each ryot should be correctly ascertained and that the amount granted to a single cultivator should not exceed 50 pagodas (Rs. 175). Auctions were issued to the Amuldars to make payment to the parties directly by demanding proper security in each case and to see that the amount

Details read R. Ratnam, Agricultural Development in the Madras State Prior to 1900.
ved by the ryots was utilized for the intended purpose. Normally the loan recovered in February and March. When a cultivator owned any arrear of revenue, no takkavi loan was given to him; instead, the advance was ed by the Government to liquidate the arrear of loan revenue. This was a er plan carried out by the Government to ensure steady flow of the land nue amount for the smooth going of the Government machinery. In many seeds were advanced for sowing, instead of money, fearing that the antry might divert the amount for the domestic need rather than for vation.

ous other Encouragements

In the beginning, the peasants were confining to their ancient e of farming and cultivating their own dry and wet crops. The Government f started cultivating the commercial crops in farms to stimulate the antry to take to commercial crops. As the values of the commercial crops considerably high when compared with the food grains the peasantry took the cultivation of commercial crops, such as cotton, sugarcane, cco that were in high demand in the European market. Captain Read, the erintendent of Baramahal, stated that he had always been very keen toduce improvements in agriculture for the promotion of commercial crops.

Ratnam, Agricultural Development in the Madras State Prior to 1900, pp 89.

encouraged the cultivation of cotton, indigo, sugarcane and tobacco and
r valuable crops. Munro and MacLeod rented lands in the district under
tain Read for the purpose of introducing the cultivation of commercial
es on August 17, 1795. The Board appreciated Captain Read for the interest
vn on inducing the Indians with every encouragement to introduce the
ure of these valuable articles.\textsuperscript{10} As more supply of cotton was required for
use of the company's investment of cloth in Salem and other district, it was
pointed out that want of raw cotton often stopped the operation of looms,
e one half of raw cotton was brought from the dominions of Tippu Sultan,
ificantly interrupted the passage of the merchants and many a time
hibited the import of cotton entirely from his territory. Therefore the Board
sed for adequate investment to raise cotton in the Presidency sufficient to
the demands for raw cotton both in India and abroad.\textsuperscript{11} Since the
culturists were confined to rice, dry grains and a few other productions of
e value, the inhabitants were poor and so they found it difficult to pay the
rent. It was argued that the payment of land revenue was made easy if the
santry desired on cultivation of commodities of a high price, which
manded foreign market. Buy suggesting this course it was hoped that the
ue of the government would be augmented. Though various commercial
ps such as cotton, tobacco, sugarcane, indigo, groundnut, tea and coffee
\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item Ratnam, Op, Cit., p.101.
\item ibid., p.98.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
introduced and were cultivated in large tracks of land in Tamilnadu, this will highlight only two crops such as cotton and groundnut in detail.

East India Commerce during its Initial Stage

It was alleged that the East India Company was bringing into and large quantities of Indian fabrics and was thus crippling to home try. The British parliament, which debated this matter on 8th March 1623, red that the company's trade was injurious to the national interests. At that England was manufacturing woolen fabrics and this was considered a national industry. The import of Indian cotton textiles into England was dered a dangerous innovation. In 1674-75, England imported cotton goods India to the value of £160,000. Printed calicoes had come into extensive or household furniture in England and Indian muslins had displaced fine from Flanders and Germany and the French cambrics imported into und. The silk and wool weavers of England became panicky and riots took in many parts of England. At last in the year 1700 the Government ed imports of cotton textiles from India. But this only encouraged gling. In 1721, an Act of Parliament was passed, to preserve and traged the woolen and silk manufactures. Under this law, every person was found wearing Indian cloth was fined £5 for each offence and the was fined £20. This measure served an effective barrier to the inflow of
on textiles from India. This was reversed in the aftermath of Industrial Revolution in England.

The industrial revolution and the great inventions associated with it led to the installation of improved machinery for spinning and weaving, which brought about a constant increasing demand for raw cotton and necessitated the constant search for avenues of supply.

Simultaneously vast developments in cotton production took place. The federal Government in the U.S.A, distributed large tracts of land to cultivators at one to two dollars per acre and large cotton plantations sprung up in the south. Cheap slave labour helped in breaking up lands and putting them under cotton. But separation of seed from the lint ed like a baffling problem on account of scarcity of labour. The invention he saw gin by Whitney in the year 1793 came as a big boon and revolutionized cotton production from one of the country to the other. The A supplied to England in the year 1791, only 189,500 lb. out of her total purchase of 2 million pounds, the annual average supply amounted to nearly 1 million pounds. But the political relationship between England and the U.S.A, being such that England was under the constant anxiety of raw cotton being cut off leading to great economic distress and distress and

W.R., Cotton - An Account of its Culture in the Bombay Presidency (Bombay: 1920) p. 114
o it looked for a safer place for raw material supply. It turned to its colonies and cost it eye on India\textsuperscript{13}.

**Trials of Various Varieties of Cotton in Tamilnadu**

**Uppam and Nadum Cotton Cultivation**

With a view of ascertaining the real resources of the Peninsula in the article of cotton, and affording the means of determining on the expediency of generally extending the cultivation of cotton both for China and England the Board of Trade on July 23, 1812 considered it advisable to require reports of Commercial Residents on the following points. On receiving the proceedings of Board of Trade, the Board of Revenue directed the District Collectors to furnish the answers for the following questions:

1. Is cotton cultivated and to what extend in the district?

2. Is there any import or export of the article from the district?

   What is the usual price per candy of 500 lb?

4. What is the time of sowing and plucking and the usual mode of cultivation?

5. Is Bourbon cotton cultivated in the district? Does it grow as luxuriantly and is it as productive as cotton indigenous of the soil?

6. Is the soil of the district generally calculated for the growth of cotton?

7. What is the rent of land capable of producing cotton?

8. What is the aggregate expense of the cultivation?

9. If the soil is favourable to the growth of cotton, what is the best method of encouraging and extending its cultivation?

10. Would the ryots be willing to undertake the cultivation of Bourbon or Tinnevelly cotton on the following or on what condition?

   a) That the Company furnishes the seed and makes an advance of 1/3 of the estimate value of the produce of the land engaged to be cultivated.

   b) That a further 1/3 be paid when the plant is well up and the remaining 1/3 of the delivery of the produce, the price to be fixed either at the time of engaging with the cultivators or by the market price at the time of delivery.

11. Samples (weighing 300 lb. Each) of the cotton produced in district to be furnished to the Board of Trade\textsuperscript{14}.

   The Collector of Chengalpattu responded saying that no cotton was grown in his district and that the soil of his district was not suitable for cultivation of cotton\textsuperscript{15}. Garrow, Collector of Coimbatore, sent to the commercial Resident two memoranda on the cultivation of Uppam and Nadum Paruthi. The Nadum Paruthi (cotton) or Biennial cotton was sown in the months August, September and October with gram and the inferior grains. This as the first gathering. The second gathering was in the month of Panguni (March and April) and the third was in the following October. The plant then opened was and plucked up in January and the ground was prepared with manure etc, for the next showing.


\textsuperscript{15} Guide to Chengalpattu Collectorate Records, dated 7.5.1811, p.2767.
The Collector of Coimbatore, Garrow sent a report to the Commercial Resident, Salem, on 31st August 1812. He first alluded to the fact that prior to 1808 the demand for cotton in Coimbatore district was extensive. His demand cased by 1809-10 and this had the effect of contracting the area under cotton. The Collector pointed out that unless there was a steady and lasting demand for the produce at least for four or five years by guarantee of the Company to purchase all produce at the then prevailing market price, cotton, production could not be increased to any appreciable extent.

Coimbatore produced three different kinds of cotton, the Nadum, Oopum and Semparuthi. Generally Nadum Paruthi produced 16 fold or about ¼ candy (1 candy = 500 lb.) per cawney (of 1.32 acres) and fetched a profit from 27 to 53 per cent to the cultivator.

The Oopum Paruthi was sown on the rich black loam called "cotton ground". It required nine times ploughing. It was not manured and had contemporary sowing. It is an annual and in the period of its duration produced twice the joint return of which was the same as that of the Nadum Paruthi, viz., 16 fold. It was the more profitable of the two but cultivation did not cover the entire country since the black loamy soil was peculiar to certain luks of the district.

The Semparuthi which takes its name from its red flower grew to a
large plant and produced no very inferior cotton, which however was used only
for the spinning of Brahmans’ thread. It was only found Nandavanams or
gardens appropriated to the supply of flowers to the temple idols. The general
produce never yielded on the best of season more than 18 fold of the seed
own. If it produced 16 fold it was reckoned a very good return, but they were
satisfied if it was less than 12 fold. The quantity of Nadum seed required for a
awny for 1.32 acres in 13 measures (volume). On an average of 16 fold as a
return, the produce of the cawney was 208 measures of 26 maunds (of 25 lb.
each) of cotton with the seed.

In addition to furnishing the above information in regard to
ultivation of cotton in Coimbatore district, Garrow also proposed that about
500 candies (of 500 lb. each) of cotton lint be purchased from that district
during each of the next five years for export to China by the East Indian
pany. For this purpose he recommended the grant of an advance. The
overnment sanctioned these proposals in September 1812. Garrow estimated
at 1500 candies of cotton lint could be secured from 8000 cawnies or 10560
res. An advance of 1-¼ pagodas (a pagoda= Rs. 3.50) was to be paid for each
wny before sowing to meet the expenses. A further advance of 5000 pagodas
t all (Rs. 17500) was to be made to all the 8000 cawnies when the cotton
ants had grown to a considerable size. The produce was to be purchased at
he market rates. This scheme of export Nadum and Uppam cotton to China market seemed to have worked successfully in Coimbatore district.\(^7\)

The Collector of South Arcot reported that his district grew about 0,119 cawnies (or 13,357 acres) of cotton which Semparuthi or triennial cotton covered the major area.\(^8\) As the price it generally brought was insufficient to cover all expense of cultivation, rent on land etc., it was always own along with other grains so as to secure some margin of profit. Apparently Semparuthi was the same as Nadum cotton. South Arcot also grew Oopum Paruthi or annual cotton. He also added the cotton cultivation in his district had considerably diminished on account of lack of demand for cotton and as the yots found indigo cultivation more profitable. It was possible to extend cotton cultivation in the district if an assured demand was created.

In the year 1812 cotton covered an area of 19,560 cawnies (or 5,819 acres) in Tiruchirappalli and produced about 2,517 candies of seed cotton. The exports from this district exceeded the imports. Cotton was generally grown as mixture with other crops. The Commercial Resident at Jagore thought that Tiruchirappalli district and Dindugal division were not uited for cotton.\(^9\)

\(^7\) *Board of Revenue Consultation*, vol, Gen. No. 14796, pp.13671-13673.


The Collector of Tiruchirrapalli estimated that about 9,620 cawnies (or 12,698 acres) grew cotton in his district. Though this was capable of extension, he thought that the high cost of its cultivation, the trouble necessary to pick and clean the produce and the risk were factor, which retarded its extension. He recommended reduction in land assessment with a view to encourage the expansion in the area under cotton. R. Peter, Collector of Madurai also sent in December 1812 a detailed report regarding cultivation of cotton in Madurai and Ramanathapuram.

"...a considerable quantity of cotton was exported both by sea and land. In Dindigul and Ramnad both Uppam and Nadum cotton were grown. But in Madura only Uppam was cultivated. Though Nadum cotton was considered to have stronger fibers, Uppam was more largely grown. Nadum thrived better in sandy soil adjacent to the sea. He recommended grant of advance to extend cotton cultivation."

In 1804 the Collector of Tirunelveli reported that the entire quantity of cotton produced in that district might be secured on behalf of the East India Company. A considerable portion of this cotton was used for cloth production in the company's investments and that therefore the effect of raw cotton would interfere with the working of these investments and have the effect of enhancing the cost of production of the manufactured goods. For these reasons he recommended that the raw cotton purchases might be confined only.

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such quantities as were normally exported. In the year 1811 the Board of
Revenue received the following proposals from the Commercial Resident at
Tinneveli.

"... that there are many large tracts of waste land well suited
for the cultivation of cotton in Tinnevelly district... the terms on
which the inhabitants seem inclined to bring this land under
cultivation are that a certain advance may be made for each chain
of land, that the whole produce be received by the Company for
three years, that they pay no tax for the land during this period,
and that from the fourth year a small tax be paid ...."22

A report made in February 1799 indicated that the ryots of the area
round Mayavaram did not show much attention to cotton cultivation and what
little produced was of a very inferior quality. Cotton of a relatively superior
kind was imported to Mayavaram from Ariyaloor, Udayarpalayam, Salem and
Tinneveli. Cultivation of cotton in Thanjavur district was found less lucrative
than paddy cultivation. Difficulties of finding adequate supply of water to
otton field handicapped the expansion of cotton cultivation in the district.23 In
813 the Collector of Thanjavur reported that during the previous three years
otton was cultivated on an average in 512 village of Thanjavur district over an
rea of about 2691 ½ cawnies or about 3554 acres – yielding about 736 candies
of 500 lb. each) of lint. This amounted to an average yield of 104 lb. of lint per

acre, and compared favourably with 98 lb. obtained in Coimbatore then.

Thanjavur soil were not suited for cotton cultivation and that only a maximum of about 5000 cawnies or say 66000 acres remained under cotton in Thanjavur district²⁴.

**Trials with Bourbon Cotton**

Royle classified bourbon cotton as Gossypium Barbadenese. Bourbon cotton is so named from having been grown in the Isle of Bourbon, where it is supposed to have been introduced by the French from the West Indies. Its seeds were distributed by Dr. Anderson throughout the Peninsula. An account of its cultivation is presented here.

**Situation in Tirunelveli District**

As a result of Dr. Anderson’s endeavours, Bourbon cotton was introduced in the district of Tirunelveli. This success was thanks to the efforts made by a private merchant named Hughes, who resided in Tirunelveli, “Hughes seemed born with a genius for developing the sources of a country. For a long time his Senna was widely celebrated as the best in the world. His cultivation of Bourbon cotton was, however, a still greater triumph”²⁵.

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In the year 1814, the Government granted certain areas of land in Tirunelveli districts to Hughes to encourage cultivation of crops such as coffee, indigo, cotton etc. in January 1818, Hughes submitted to Government proposals for cultivating Bourbon cotton in the Southern portion of Tirunelveli districts. These proposals were not recommended by the Collector because he thought the expenses involved be not commensurate with the benefits expected to accrue. Hughes’ proposal gives an indication of the steps he took to acclimatize Bourbon cotton in Tirunelveli district and of the market condition of cotton in England. Hughes relates his experience as follows: “I was therefore early induced to fix my attention to an extended production of the fine Bourbon cotton wool, as holding forth the best prospect of remuneration to myself, and which from the rising state of the cotton trade to Great Britain, was assuredly no less preferable to every other articles as regards the benefits to the country… Bourbon sort from India would never rank higher than those which were indigenous to the country whatever might be the increased cost of production … by steady and patient perseverance. I have overcome this and every other objection in the full attainment of my object by raising the Bourbon cotton of Tinnevelly into a complete equality with that of the Islands.” 26 Hughes attained 100 lb. of fine clean cotton per acre.

The Collector of Tirunelveli, Peter, submitted a report to the Board of Revenue in September 1819, detailing the possibilities of extending cotton cultivation in his district. The land assessment in Tirunelveli was the same whether cotton was grown or a grain crop was raised, cotton culture scarcely matched the advantages derived from cultivation of the grains. The labour was considerably greater. The best means considered to induce an extension of cotton cultivation was not by the remission of land revenue but by the grant of advances to the cultivators and a promise to take their produce at the market price. The quality of Tirunelveli produce varied. Even so it was said to be held in great estimation.

The Collector of Coimbatore, Garrow, introduced Bourbon cotton in this district in 1804. After a trial lasting for four or five years he abandoned it due to lack of enthusiasm on the part of the ryots. When J. Sullivan, became Collector of Coimbatore, he sent a report on 4th May 1819 detailing the possibilities of extending cotton cultivation in Coimbatore district with special reference to the introduction of exotic varieties. Uppam and Nadum cotton were cultivated almost everywhere in the district. The quality of Nadum cotton was superior to Uppam, but Nadum did not yield so much as Uppam. Since ryots looked more to yields than quality, Uppam was more popular. Coimbatore district offered great possibilities of extending the finer sorts of cotton such as Nadum, Semparuthi, Bourbon and Brown or Nankin cotton since the soil everywhere was suited for cotton cultivation. The cultivation of
cotton was in no way limited by the land tax. It was most profitable produce that ryots could grow. The land assessment was the same whether the ryots grew cotton or grains.

The garden lands had to pay four times the rent of dry lands. Sullivan opined that a steady demand for cotton was the surest way of inducing an extension of the area under cotton. He did not think that a reduction in land tax was necessary. He recommended that unoccupied lands might be let to ryots exclusively for the cultivation of cotton at reduced rates of rent. A great deal of the cotton grown in Coimbatore was made into cloth in that district itself, and some part was exported to Salem and Malabar for cloth manufacture. Cotton was also sent for exportation directly to Nagore, Nagapattinam and Madras and indirectly to Madurai and Tirunelveli where it was purchased and sent to the port principally to Madras.27

Heavy tax on Looms and Clothes:

The wool cotton was not encouraged for exportation. Tax was levied to curtail the exportation of wool inorder to make peasantry to send raw cotton. In 1806 J. W. Cochrane, the Collector of Tiranelveli wrote to the Board for granting exemption.

27 Board of Revenue Consultation dated 27.1.1820, vol. 846, p. 720.
“... Having lately purchased in the province of Tinnevelly a quantity of cotton wool with the intention of sending into China, for the export of wool to London was stopped years back, and not having the means of embalming it at the place of growth, we have brought it to Madras on country craft. On its arrival in Madras the usual import duty of 6 percent has been demanded... we ask for exemption.”

In response, export duty on cotton wool was abolished, but cotton ools were allowed to export to countries other than England. Dr. Hughes took up cotton cultivation in Tirunelveli and Hughes's Tinnevelly Cotton continued to be quoted in the Liverpool market as the best in India and it was sold at higher prices than the American short-stapled cotton and three pence per lb. The cotton looms and cotton clothes were continued to be levied tax. In 20 the looms in Coimbatore were taxed as detailed below.

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Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 27.1.1820, vol. 846, p. 4153.


Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 27.1.1820, vol. 846, p. 720.
Table: IV: 1

Tax on Looms in 1820

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place in Coimbatore</th>
<th>Individuals Employed</th>
<th>Looms</th>
<th>Loom’s Tax Rs. a.p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sathiyamangalam</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>617-4-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gobichettipalayam</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>128-11-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>201</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>746-9-0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 27-1-1820, vol.846, p.720

Note: The amount levied is illustrative of the exorbitant nature of the tax.

In 1820 the Collector of Tirunelveli reported about the seizure and retention of 20 pieces of cloth valued at Rs. 150. The cloth in question was levied duty at 6 percent at the choukey of Eral in the Alwarthirunagery taluk, but it was seized and detained by the tahasildar of Nelliambalam on account of its being of a superior quality to that named in the Rownah and therefore liable to confiscation under XX of regulation I of 1812. Earlier merchants complained to R. Clarke, Secretary to Government, about the high duty levied on their goods contrary to the regulations and the Collector of Coimbatore asked the Board to abolish the loom tax. But the Board of Revenue turned down the request. Those cotton goods escaped duty were charged extra duty.

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Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 27.9.1820, vol.866, p.7742.

Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 17.5.1821, vol.884, p.4183.
Duty paid on piece good for ten years since Fasli 1234 in Tiruchirappalli district.

The reduction in duty on customs was due to the increased consumption of English cloths, which had affected the sale of cloths of Indian make at Tiruchirappalli. In the year 1826, J. Cotton, Collector of Nagapattinam in Thanjavur asked for the reduction of inland duty on piece goods manufactured in the territory from 5 per cent to 2.5 per cent but it was not ranted.

J. Sullivan, the Collector in Coimbatore, wrote to the Board with a plea to reduce the inland duty on Indian piece goods from 5 per cent. The Board did not respond to it positively. The excessive duty levied on Indian cotton goods, encouraged evasion of duty through mal-practice.

_of Revenue Consultation_, dated 17.4.1826, vol.1060, p.3744.
The Demand on Accounts of Loom tax for Ten Years from Fasli 1231 to 1240 in the Southern Division of Arcot.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fasly</th>
<th>Number of looms</th>
<th>Amount of Tax Rs-a-p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1231</td>
<td>8451</td>
<td>18367-13-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1232</td>
<td>8712</td>
<td>18895-13-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1233</td>
<td>8401</td>
<td>18371-8-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1234</td>
<td>6355</td>
<td>13729-6-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1235</td>
<td>6675</td>
<td>14205-15-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1236</td>
<td>9259</td>
<td>18366-2-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1237</td>
<td>9666</td>
<td>21212-4-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1238</td>
<td>10102</td>
<td>20347-15-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1239</td>
<td>10226</td>
<td>20409-3-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1240</td>
<td>9678</td>
<td>19278-11-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>18113-2-11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: Remission of Rs. 21-11-18 from Fasli 1231-1236

The amount of tax levied on looms was so burdensome as to discourage production and bring the Langashire cloth into the Indian market. Due to various measures of harassment the industry was pushed into the ebb of ruin. The high duty levied on cotton piece goods strangled the neck of the Indian cotton industry. An amount up to 10 per cent of duty levied on piece cotton goods prompted the local people to smuggle the piece cotton goods to the neighbouring French territory, to avoid the duty inflicted in English territory. When the smuggling goods were seized by the English Government the smugglers were severely punished through heavy additional duty or by confiscation. The incidents below show about it.
“Mr. Chedumbrapillay has a house on the South bank of Pennar surrounded by English ground belongs to the French village of Manamode... this is convenient for smuggling into his house from English neighbouring villages... On 5.11.1841 he was seized on English ground with a large quantity of clothes when on his way to Pondicherry.... It was proved that these cloths were carried to his house from an English village a day or two previously.... He defrauded the Frontier duty and Inland duty... his entire cloths is confiscated...”^37

E. Smalley, Collector of Madras, seizing cloth to the value Rs. 96-4-11 sanctioned the request for confiscation^38. At times the person concerned was punished with imprisonment for a day or two. Thus killing the local handloom industry, the British Company built its own business of importing the machine made cloth into the territories of India.

Promotion of Cotton Culture in Tamilnadu:

The history of cotton development in Madras state was inspired^39 by the economic potentials that were generated by the Industrial Revolution in England and by the changes occurred in political and economic relations between Great Britain and the United States of America^40. The need for more

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^37 Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 27.1.1842, vol.1791, p.1285.
^38 Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 24.5.1830, vol.1238, p.5481.
aw materials to feed industries in England aggravated the problem of scarcity and intrinsically compelled the colonial Government to look for raw material production in India\textsuperscript{41}. In 1788 the directors ordered 5,00,000 lbs of the best Indian cotton. But only a small quantity of poor cotton was obtained from Bombay. In 1790 Dr. Anderson was found engaged in distributing a variety of foreign cotton seeds obtained from Malta and Mauritius to the farmers in the Madras Province. Dr. Anderson introduced Bourbon cotton and it became naturalized in three districts: Viz. Tirunelveli, Salem and Coimbatore. In 1804 Cochran, J. W. the Collector of Tirunelveli addressed the president of Board of Revenue that a total number of 18,679 chains of lands were under cotton cultivation yielding 9,811 candy of cotton for exportation\textsuperscript{42}.

In 1821 D. Hill, Secretary to Government informed the Collector of Coimbatore district about the successful introduction of Bourbon cotton into Coimbatore. The commercial agent at Salem reported on the favourable state of the Bourbon cotton plantation and stated that the “natives had overcome the spugnance.”\textsuperscript{43} In 1826 J. Gwatkin, the Commercial Superintendent of Madras notified the supply of Bourbon cotton seed from Tirunelveli for distribution to various parts in Tamilnadu and received the seeds of indigenous cotton from

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\textit{Board of Revenue Consultation}, dated 15.2.1821, vol.876, pp.1231-32.
\end{flushright}
In 1826, J. Gwatkin, the Commercial Superintendent wrote to the Board:

"... Four bags of Tinnevelly cotton seed have been received and a bag of Bourbon cotton seed in the store be sent to Cuddapah for distribution... Direction for cultivating the Bourbon cotton in Coimbatore district was issued... the Bourbon cotton since it is introduced in Coimbatore district met complete success ... Black cotton soil be avoided ... also poor and sandy soil ... red loom is prepared best... seed be sown in August... care should be taken for weeding the plants... watering required occasionally... planted six feet apart from each plant... a cawny will contain 1600 plants... yield from 1 to 2 candies of cotton ... Hills be avoided."

In 1831 the Board distributed American cotton seed from export Warehouse to South Arcot District for trial and ordered for the report of the result of the experiment tried with the American cotton seed. So John Drent Collector of South Arcot wrote:

"... The American cotton seed was distributed as directed among the talooks most favorable for the production of cotton ... but owing to the peculiarity of season, bad soil, badness of the seed... the experiment failed entirely. In some talooks seed never germinated ... some talook perished before maturity. Where it yielded it was scanty and quality is good. I cleaned and sent to

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Pondicherry and it was pronounced to be very good... The cotton crop in 1833 has almost entirely failed in every talook..."46

The Board directed the Collectors of Tirunelveli, Coimbatore, and Arcot as follows: "... Government in Council ordered to prosecute to the experimental culture of the upland and sea island Georgia cotton ... by means of seed which may have been preserved from the crops of last year or any part of the original supply of seed furnished to you which may not have been pended..."47

In 1833 the Board ordered the Collectors Salem and Chengalpattu to report on the experiment of American cotton seed distributed under order of Government in 1831 for China-Market. And John Orr, the Collector of Salem, replied: "... American seed cotton was received in December in 1831... was distributed to the Talooks with strict orders to the Tahsildars to give it to such individuals only as would take the greatest care of it and to sow it in the most favourable soil... want of rain affected the American cotton and a little seed has been obtained and re-sown... Mr. Fucher Cultivated nicely American cotton in India with much effects... excellent in quality more than indigenous and surbon cotton..."48

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3oard of Revenue Consultation, dated 16.5.1833, vol.1367, p.6625
3oard of Revenue Consultation, dated 16.5.1833, vol.1367, p.6626.
In 1833 the Collector of Chengalpattu submitted the report to the Board on the trial of American cotton seed received on 19th August 1831 for production to the China market. The Collector of Tirunelveli also reported the trial of Mexican cotton seed received on 31st October 1831 for the introduction to the China market. G. D. Drury, Collector of Coimbatore wrote to the Board for a further supply of New Orleans Cotton seed for distribution in other districts. In 1836 William Liddle, Secretary of Agriculture and Horticulture Society to Board of Revenue, wrote that he received a supply of New Orleans, land Georgian and Sea Island cotton seeds and requested the assistant of the Board of Revenue to forward some to Coimbatore, Salem, Tirunelveli and other districts to sow. A. P. Onsolow, Secretary of Revenue Board, wrote to Chief Secretary of Government in 1836, that the quantity of New Orleans, land Georgia and Sea Island cotton seed arrived, were transmitted by railway free of charge to the Collector for distribution to ryots and other tenants to cultivate them. In 1838 Arthur MacLean, Secretary to Madras Revenue Board, wrote to the Board of Revenue that 57 bags of cotton seed were transmitted to various districts.
I landed from the Barque Betsey were under the charge of the Collector of Sea Customs to whom they were consigned.\textsuperscript{54}

B. P. Smollet, the Secretary to Board of Revenue, ordering the district Collectors of Coimbatore, Tirunelveli and Salem to collect the seeds for the supply, penned the following words:

"...cotton seeds were consigned to Madras by the Bombay Government having been placed at the disposal of the Board of Revenue for distribution to the districts which are considered most filled for its growth... Two bags of cotton seed for distribution... report of the growth and produce of each sort..."\textsuperscript{55}

E. P. Thompson, the Collector of Tirunelveli replied to Board on 15.11.1838. "... Report of the trial that made with Bombay cotton seeds received with your letter of 9.4.1837... So for Northeast monsoon did not appear... then how will you cultivate... As it is cultivated I will report the result of..."\textsuperscript{56}

W. H. Balungton, Collector of Coimbatore for his part reported to the Board as follows: "... Cotton cultivation in Coimbatore district is now only commencing and the produce will not be gathered till March and April next... I

\textsuperscript{54} Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 26.3.1838, vol.1602, p.3624.

\textsuperscript{55} Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 9.4.1838, vol.1603, p.4106.

\textsuperscript{56} Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 15.11.1838, vol.1635, p.15147.
have directed the two specimens of cotton to be distributed among the
Tahsildars of the Talook in which cotton is principally grown."\(^{57}\)

J. D. Glieg, the Collector of Salem wrote to the Board of Revenue.

"... reply of your letter 9.4.1838 & 18.10.1838... I distributed the cotton seed
of seven talooks ... and the amount received from the Tahsildars respecting to
t... greater portion of the seed sown did not vegetate and those sprung up to a
certain size were partly destroyed by insect... the remain suffered from want of
rain... Some of them in good condition."\(^{58}\) and submitted detailed report on
25.7.1839 about successful experiment of these cotton seed and produce\(^{59}\).

J. D. Gleig, the Collector of Salem wrote to the Board of Revenue
30.9.1839.

"... the cultivation of foreign cotton seed lately issued by
me having generally failed, I applied to Mr. Fisher for a supply
of seed if procurable in his mootah... he sent the seed with note
contains some hints. Mr. Fisher wrote, the cotton seed that you
require for the Ceylon Government I shall have much pleasure in
getting ready immediately and if you will permit me will sent
them off to Madras. The country species that I have chosen as the
best is the oppum or as it is better known in the commercial
world, the Tinnevelly cotton... This is the season for showing
this species of cotton it is an annual and will only thrive by being
cultivated before the monsoon. May, June July is the best time

\(^{57}\) Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 15.11.1838, vol.1635, p.15148.

\(^{58}\) Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 3.1.1839, vol.1642, p.89.

\(^{59}\) Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 25.7.1839, vol.1665, p.9064.
for sowing it. It is a larger and hardier plant and lasts for years
but the size of the pods and length of the fibre deteriorate after
times as the plant become aged. I renew it every 3 or 4 years.
You may depend upon the seed being fresh and good.⁶⁰

And R. D. Parker, the Secretary to the Board of Revenue wrote to
the Collector of Salem, "...The seed send through Tanjore... you advance the
sum for conveyance entering them in your accounts as a contingent charge for
the 15 manuds of seeds."⁶¹ The Board ordered J.D. Gleig, the Collector of
Salem to supply Bourbon cotton seed to the Board for the distribution in
various districts. J.D. Gleig wrote. "The quantity of cotton seed of Bourbon
cotton is supplied at the order."⁶²

The Effort of Government on Cotton Cultivation in 1840

The colonial British Government wrote from London in the
venue dispatches encouraging the Home Government to intensify further the
commercial crops cultivation. I.L. Lushington, the Government in authority in
ondon, wrote as follows.⁶³

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⁶⁰ Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 7.10.1839, vol.1675, pp.13460-64.
⁶¹ Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 7.10.1839, vol.1665, p.13462.
⁶² Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 7.10.1839, vol.1665, p.13464.
⁶³ Despatch of Court on March 15, 1839 on the Improved Cultivation of Cotton in India.
"You are fully sensible of the interest we have taken in the cultivation of cotton, sugar and other articles of commerce suited to the European market... The full and interesting information, which we have from time to time received from our respective Government has satisfied us that they are as deeply impressed with the importance of this subject... that the effort which have been made in the formation of Roads, the construction of canals of irrigation and the alternation in the mode of assessment have been felt and acknowledged by the agricultural community and have a considerable extent in the article of sugarcane been attended with encouraging success... With regard to cotton... the success of cotton cultivation has not been so great as could be wished... with a view to encourage the cultivation of cotton experimental farms and subsidiary farms were established, pecuniary advances made to individuals and rewards granted to such natives so evinced zeal, seeds in considerable quantities were procured from Egypt, Bourbon, Brazil, and from North America and sent to India and Georgia, New Orleans were despatched."\(^{63A}\)

The despatch signed by R. Jenken, W. Astell, W.S. Clarke, Lock, W. Young, Warden, R. Mills, Vans, Agnew, H. Shank, M.J. Freith, W.B. Sayley, John Cotton, read as follows: "From the best information we obtained from your records and from other source... under proper management and superintendence, India is capable of producing cotton in quality to compete with cotton from North America which the best Bombay cotton (Surat) cleaned by Churka often rivals... Required information regard to the time and manner

\(^{63A}\) Record of Bombay Consultation, dated 23 1840, vol. 1698, p 3356.
If gathering the cotton from pod and cleaning it by means of machinery sufficiently rapid to produce the cotton in large quantity without injury to the staple... acquired knowledge by native of India regard to cotton cultivation and right application of it by them to the attainment of object contemplated have induced us the depute persons to North America with instructions to obtain full information on the subject and if possible to engage parties willing to proceed to India and duly qualified for the purpose of instruction and superintending the natives in the cultivation of cotton and the proper mode of cleaning it by means of machinery... you adopt effectual measures and facilities for promoting and extending throughout India any plan suited for the attainment of the objects contemplated... Reward for the exhibition of a certain quantity of cotton properly cleaned... we authorize you to offer. Rewards of such an amount as you may consider sufficient to stimulate parties engaged in the production to exhibit cotton of good growth and cleaned by machinery... We are of opinion that the quantity of cotton so exhibited should not be less than 300 bales... 3 hurka machine for cleaning cotton by sent to Bombay.”

Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures established by Royal Harter in the city of Glasgow wrote as follows: “...Merchants and manufacturers in the trade between England and British India desire to adopt

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*Board of Revenue Consultation*, dated 2.3.1840, vol.1698, pp.3356-3359.
such measure to develop the resources of that mighty Empire, assured that the interests of Britain and of India if the Governors and Governed are alike interest there in... The extent of the agricultural resources of India at present rich as that country is in every variety of soil, climate and capable of supplying this country with many most valuable articles of extensive consumption, we yet derive most of these from foreign sources which our fellow subjects in India, having no encouragement given them endure the greatest poverty, themselves and become a source of poverty rather than of wealth to the state... Your memorialist expresses these ideas in extending and improving the cultivation of cotton in India... The court already aware of the vast and increasing quantity of cotton required for the manufacturers of this country, of the large amount of shipping and grant drawn from British India. British is almost entirely dependent on Foreign supply for cotton article which is now scarcely less necessary than bread corn to her very existence and that the consequence of a rupture with America, no very improbable event, would be most disastrous... Having superseded the native fabrics formely greatest stable... thrown millions of person out of employment, it is surely the duty of a paternal Government to endeavour to turn the attention of people to other profitable occupation. The manufacturing districts of India are those wherein the cotton plant spontaneously thrives and therefore nothing can be more natural than that the inhabitants deprived of a market for their cloths should be encouraged to cultivate the raw materials... You have already made effect to improve the
quality and extend the cultivation of cotton in India and continue these effects that in a tropical territory so extensive and diversified there can be no physical impediment to the attainment of such on subject.  

The quantity of cotton imported into Great Britain in the first even months of the year 1840 amounted to 1,374,316 Bales of cotton. 

What J.G. Hamilton, Chairman of Glasgow, stated in his letter to court of Directors of the East Indian Company and East India Association of Glasgow, while informing the issue of a grant in worth quoting here:

"... To encourage machines to produce an improved machine for cleaning the cotton, this grant was made jointly to the Association of London, Liverpool, Glasgow and the Chamber of Commerce at Manchester... Strike a hope of success... want of Road whereby the quality of the cotton is injured both by the haste with which it is necessary to gather it so as to overcome in the time the readiness distance between its place of growth and its market and by the effects of weather during its transits likewise greatly increase its costs, not only by labour and time required to carry it through such a country but by the quantity thus damaged and consequently last the quality further injured by the wants of sheds where in the cotton may be protected from the weather both at the place of growth and shipment..."  

1 Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 2.3.1840, vol.1698, pp.3362-3366.  
2 Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 2.3.1840, vol.1698, p.3366-3368.
By extending the cultivation of cotton in India, the natives of their country would acquire greater means for procuring the comforts... taxation would be less burdensome... The great continent of Asia, the India with its immense and industrious population is capable of producing from its varied climate and soil every quality of cotton that may be desired and to any extent which our increasing manufacturers may required and at a less cost than from any other country in the world. The inferiority of the quality of East India Cotton has been greatest impediment to a more extensive consumption of it in this country... The want of warehouses of sheds in which to deposit the cotton at the commencement of the rainy season at the shipping port tend greatly to the injury of the quality... Every inducement which can with propriety be held out to capitalists to embark in the cultivation of cotton should be offered to them... court take measure to device and adopt such measure as may appear to you to be most conducive to the extension of agricultural resources of India and particularly for the improvements of the quality and the extension of cultivation of cotton.”67

Various seeds were continued to be experimented and many efforts... P. B. Smollett, Secretary to Board of Revenue, wrote to the Secretary of government on 12.10.1840. “... reply to regarding the experiments of introducing certain superior sorts of cotton into the Madras territory from seed received from Bombay... the experiment with Bombay seed... Little success

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*Board of Revenue Consultation*, dated 2.3.1840, vol.1698, pp.3374-3394.
ae to the ignorance of the ryots about the soil best fitted for cotton and also id quality of the seed supplied little of which was found to germinate. 58

In January 1821 I. M. Heath, Commercial Agent made a report on e results of cultivating of Bourbon cotton in Coimbatore district. Seeds were st received by him in November 1819. They missed that year’s season and e crop therefore failed. In 1820 the seed were sown again in proper season. hey have a very good crop. Heath therefore concluded that Coimbatore was ninently suited for Bourbon cotton. Over 1000 acres were reported to be under the crop 59. Heath had informed the Royal Asiatic Society with respect the influence of vicinity to the sea that Bourbon cotton came to perfection at distance of 150 miles from sea. Heath could also produce it at a cheaper rate an Hughes by availing himself more extensively of the services of the local asants, whom he found most trustworthy and fully to be relied upon. He ade an abridgement of Hughes’ paper, which he had translated into Tamil nd given to every farmer who agreed to make trial of the new seed. He, oreover, employed a person to go round, inspect and report on the progress f cultivation. At the proper season of pruning, Heath himself went round and owed how the operation should be performed. He made his experiments on e Bourbon cotton in a very light soil. In introducing this cultivation, he had encounter the usual difficulties consequent on the introduction of any

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Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 12.10.1840, vol.1721, p.13360.

Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 15.2.1821, vol.876, pp.1231-32.
velty in agriculture, but this gave way to perseverance. At the end of the
years, Heath had the satisfaction of seeing the experiment completely
successful. During 1823-24 he procured from the district of Coimbatore five
hundred bales clean Bourbon cotton, of 300 lb. each. The peasants of
imbatore were at that time well satisfied that the cultivation of this was
re profitable to them than that of the common cotton of the country.70

lem and Tiruchirappali Districts

During the year 1819, the Board of Trade, Madras, made
quiries for the extending cotton cultivation. The Collector of Salem
reported that was cultivated to a very limited extent in Salem district
that too as crop mixed with grains. He added that the prospects of
ending cotton in his district were not bright.71

ials with American Cotton

Establishment of Experimental Farms:

Not having been satisfied with the small success attained with the
ltivation of Bourbon cotton, the court of Directors attempted further
ovement on Indian Cotton. In a letter dated May 17, 1819 the Board of
ade, Madras came out with proposals for opening four hundred acre


experimental farms. The text of the communication is quoted in full extents to capture the spirit of the time.

"The cotton of Tirunelveli had been highly improved in the English market and there is every reason to expect similar testimony in favour of the produce at Coimbatore... by Mr. Heath still the Board feel satisfied from general opinion and from the information communicated by Mr. Hughes of Tirunelveli that Tinnevelly cotton is inferior to many other descriptions and that from the climate of those districts, Tirunelveli and Coimbatore, being peculiarly favourable to the growth of the plant, the better kinds might be introduced with little difficulty and trouble. This circumstances has led the Board on the present occasion to consider the expediency of endeavouring on a limited scale to introduce a system of cultivation which eventually lead to the diffusion of a better species of plant... The Board proposes the establishment of... experimental farms under the direction of the local commercial residents, and upon the responsibility of the commercial department, namely, one in Tirunelveli and one in Coimbatore... each farm to consist of about 400 acres of cotton soil, in that part of the district where a proper supply of water may be easily procured, the rent and the expense of cultivation being paid by the commercial residents after the selection of the farms... the plan here proposed is experimental only having for its object the discovery how far the most approved cottons of other countries will thrive in these provinces... the experiment would also ensure the supply of fresh and good stock of seed of the description that may be found best to answer for distributing generally in those districts and it would be a ground work for introducing the same system of cultivation in other districts with
the hope of ultimately superseding for the purpose of exportation
the growth of the present country plant.”

Randall, on March 29, 1819, sent proposals for importing cotton
eds from America and cultivating them in India putting forth the several
guments in support of his proposals.

“... No scheme of cultivating any produce fit for the
European or China market will ever succeed, unless aided by the
Honourable Government or atleast be patronized by the local
revenue authorities. There can be no doubt that both excellent
cotton, tabacco, pepper, sugar, indigo, groundnut and opium,
with other articles, might be introduced and procured in great
quantities of good quality and at moderate prices, under
Government control and attention, and certainly is such a state as
must be well adapted for exportation to Europe and China
producing wealth to the cultivators, revenue to the states, and a
valuable export on Government account... the cotton at present
cultivated in the territories under Madras is not of the best kind,
much of the old native cotton is poor in produce and bad in
staple. The most saleable cotton seed for India would be from
New Orleans, Brazil and Bourbons, being the most profitable
kinds of cotton, white in colour, long stapled, and producing the
most wool from the pods, also the easiest, cleaned from seed, and
the least trouble some in cultivation... Bourbon seed may be
planted between small ridges of soil in open fields, if the fields
can be watered by wells, tanks, springs, or nullahs branching
rom large streams. The Brazil or kidney cotton is a tree which

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P. Beton, Agricultural Development in Madras, p. 1631.
grows from ten to twelve feet in height and which produces an immense number of pods... The kind of cotton will succeed and thrive well on the banks of tanks, nullahs near spring, wells, and small streams of water. It is a very valuable kind of cotton... If the Board of Trade could obtain from the Honourable company’s Agent residing at Rio – de – Janeiro in the Brazils about 500 to 1000 bags of Brazil seed... Some bags of New Orleans cotton seed... a few bags of American Sea Island cotton seed, it should be sent to and distributed to Collector of... Tirunelveli, Coimbatore, Tirchirappalli, Thanjavur, Salem, Arcot... Collectors to sent the seed to the different Amildars with instructions to give it to the head cultivators or any native having lands for cultivation and to advise them to plant the same in and about the Villages, near tanks, wells, nullahs, spring... that it may be duly nourished. An order be issued by public tomtom saying that fifty star pagodas (a pagodas is Rs. 3.50) will be paid at the Amildar’s cutcheree, upon the first delivery of 500 lb of clean white cotton free from leaf, seed and dirt or two and a half star pagodas for each maund, weighing 25 lb and as a reward to cultivators Government will present to the first candidate raising 500 lb of clean white cotton from Brazil seed and deliver them at the talook cutcheree of the Amildar within two years from the time of planting, a gold medal with chain to wear round the neck. This medal and chain shall be in value at fifty pagodas and shall be presented by the Collector in open cutcheree on some festival day. Each Zillah in which Brazil cotton is introduced shall be entitled to one medal and chain on the same terms... 500 to 600 plants will rise well upon an acre and when full grown will produce each tree not fewer than five or six hundred good pods...
230 pods make a pound weight... clean cotton from \( \frac{1}{4} \) or \( \frac{1}{3} \) of the weight of every pound cotton and seed...

Randal was for government direction and not pleadings before the Indian peasants. It is worth quoting what he had to say on the attitude of people. As to reasoning with the native about the benefits of any new system - scheme it is a vain attempt and mere waste of time. They will coolly listen to such conversations and then they will start the most absurd objections, give novation, laugh at the idea of increasing what is called by Europeans their comforts and at last go away determined not to try anything new. This is undoubtedly true when the natives are left to their own will and pleasure. Let government only order a thing to be done, they will cheerfully changed and they will then go on of themselves...”

**Introduction Of American Cotton**

By the thirties of the nineteenth century, the Lancashire textile industry established its markets not only in India but sitting out the handloom Doth, but had captured also the other markets in China and elsewhere. Since the Lancashire industry dependent to a substantial extent on supplies of raw cotton of the superior grades from America, and since the Lancashire industry apprehended stoppage of these supplies at any moment consequent on

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East India Company - Reports and Documents connected with the proceedings to the East India Company in regard to the culture and manufacture of the cotton wool, raw silk and live in India. (1836) Quoted in R. Ratnam. Op.Cit., pp.164-167.
development of international factors, the representatives of the Lancashire industry kept impressing on the court of Directors the imperative need for developing cultivation of the superior grades of cotton allover the British Empire. Accordingly the Court of Directors procured supplies of these seeds directly from America and sent them to Madras state. Four casks of seeds of Upland Georgian and one cask of Sea Island Georgian cotton were sent by the ship Minerra in 1831 with notes about their cultivation as practiced in America. Captain Hall’s Travels in North America sent a report as follows:

“Everybody must have read in the Newspapers under the head of Liverpool News, some mystical notice about Upland and Sea Island... on looking at the map of America, abreast of Georgia, a number of Islands appears such as Tybee, Ossaban, Lapelo, and St. Simons... They are very important in commerce as being spots on which the finest kind of cotton is raised... Sea Island also grows at various places on the main coast, and also in the swampy regions bordering most of the great rivers...”

The Minerra landed the cargo of five casks of American cotton seeds at Madras in September 1831. The Board of Revenue distributed the seeds as detailed in Table: IV: 3:

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1 The Board of Revenue Consultation, vol Gen no. 15504, p.8734.
Table IV: 3

Distribution of American Cotton seeds to Districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To the Collector of</th>
<th>Upland Georgian casks</th>
<th>Sea Island lb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tirunelveli</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coimbatore</td>
<td>½</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salem</td>
<td>¼</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Arcot</td>
<td>¼</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Collectors of Tirunelveli, Coimbatore Salem and South Arcot were asked to try the new varieties following the two notes of instructions, sent by the court of Directors, about the cultivation of American cotton⁷⁵ and later sent their report to the Board of Revenue in 1833 about their innovative experience.

Results of Trial in Coimbatore Districts

In June 1833, the Collector of Coimbatore reported that the American seeds were distributed to ryots in Coimbatore, Palladam, Perundurai, Cheyoor, Erode and a few other surrounding places where cotton was already largely grown. Adverse season militated against the success of the trials and except a small produce in the taluks of Coimbatore and Erode the remaining trials were a failure. The Bourbon cotton was under cultivation in Erode and

Perundurai for a period of 16 years. The produce of Bourbon cotton was bought up regularly by a private trade establishment at Erode upon advances made annually to the ryots engaged in its cultivation. The cultivation of Bourbon cotton was successful. So the Collector had no doubt that American cotton also would succeed in an equal manner as Bourbon cotton. In order to afford sufficient incentive to the ryots to take to the cultivation of American cotton the Collector recommended that the growers of American cotton should be exempted from payment of land revenue for only one season provided that they handover one-half of the produce therefrom to the Government. The Governor in Council sanctioned the remission of the assessment on the lands appropriated to the cultivation of the American cotton with full permission to the growers to deliver to the officers of Government a portion of the seed secured from the American cotton to enable the Government to supply seeds to other persons desirous of growing American cotton 76.

The Collector of South Arcot reported the failure of the trials with the American seeds due either to the peculiarity of the season or to the unadoptiveness of the soil, or to the sterility of the seed received 77. In May 1833, the Collector of Tirunelveli reported that the ryots were unwilling on the trial of the untried American cotton and those who sowed the cotton seeds, had expressed themselves against the American cotton because its cultivation was


more expensive since the lands required better preparatory cultivation and more manure. The yield was also less than that of the indigenous cotton.

**Cultivation of Different Kinds of Cotton**

In the meantime Agri-Horticultural Society at Madras had been set up in the year 1835. It actually engaged itself in exploring all means of introducing and acclimatizing new plant species. In November 1836 the Board of Revenue received from abroad a supply of seeds of New Orleans, Upland Georgian and Sea Island cotton, which the society was desirous of distributing. It therefore requested the Board to instruct the Collectors of Coimbatore and Tirunelveli and any other suitable districts to try the seeds on the condition that each grower should return one half of the seed from the crop of the New Orleans, Upland Georgian and Sea Island species grown by each person in order to enable the society to supply the seeds to other growers. The Madras state had several exotic varieties under trial. The Uppam and Nadum and Bourbon cotton have been dealt with. The remaining varieties were

a. New Orleans and Uplands (Gossypium barbadenese): The uplands varieties has a staple of one inch to 1¼ inches and white in colour and forms the bulk of the cotton of commerce. The planters of New Orleans cotton received their seed from Mexico or from the Gulf Hills in Mississippi, every fourth or fifth year.

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b. Pernambuco or Brazilian: This was also the Semparuthi of Coimbatore. It is classified as Gossypium peruvianum. It is a perennial growing tree up to ten or fifteen feet. It is one of the exotic varieties.

c. Egyptian: The Egyptian cotton ranks next to Sea Island in quality and length of staple. It has a staple of 1 ¼ to 1 2/3 in length. It is a species of Gossypium barbadense.

d. Sea Island: It belongs to the species Gossypium barbadense. It is the most highly esteemed of the cotton because it is remarkable for the length and fineness of its fibre and for its silky softness. The staple is 1 ½ inches long.

Efforts of Cotton Planters From America

In first decade of the nineteenth century, the Company was interested in merely purchasing whatever raw cotton was available in Madras state and exporting it to the overseas markets in China and England. During the second decade of the nineteenth century the East Indian Company interested itself in improving the quality of the cotton exported. The successful introduction of Bourbon cotton particularly in Coimbatore and to a lesser extent in Tirunelveli was the first land market in this direction. During the third and fourth decades of the century this matter was taken one more stage forward by the trial of Bombay cotton in Madras and of the Exotics, Sea Island, Upland Georgian, Egyptian and Pernambuco varieties with little or no success.
The Court of Directors in London was flooded with innumerable petitions to pursue with the utmost vigour the development of cotton cultivation in India. In 1838 The Directors of the Chamber of Commerce and manufacturers in Glasgow pointed out to the home authorities that Britain was dependent on America for supplies of raw cotton and that if war broke out between England and America the textile industry at home would seriously suffer. The English cotton manufacturers having superseded the native fabrics formerly the greatest staple and thereby thrown millions of people out of employment, it is surely the duty of a paternal Government zealously to endeavour to turn the attention of the people of other profitable occupations. With this end in view they suggested the extension of cotton cultivation in India. In 1838 The Chamber of Commerce and Manufacture of Manchester brought to the notice of the Court of Directors that during the first eleven months of the year 1838, India supplied only 5 per cent of the total imports of raw cotton into Britain which aggregated to 13.7 lakhs of bales valued at 14 million sterling. The East India Associations at Liverpool and Glasgow also impressed upon the Court of Directors the immediate need of augmenting exports of raw cotton from India to England. Having regard to the failure of previous attempts to augment Indian production of cotton, the Court thought to

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import into India the American cotton seeds and the wholesale adoption in India of American methods of cotton cultivation to solve the problem.

**Arrival of Cotton Planters in Madras:**

In 1840 the Court of Directors engaged ten planters for the cotton states in North America to instruct the people of India in the cultivation and cleaning of cotton. On 13.8.1840 W. B. Bayley from London wrote to the Governor in Council in India: “... We have engaged 10 individuals from Unites States represented to be perfectly conversant with the growth, cultivation cleaning and packing of cotton in all its branches. We send four persons to Calcutta under Captain Brevet Bayles of Madras army. Three persons to Madras, James Morries, J. N. Hawlay and Samuel Simpson and three persons to Bombay... certain quantity of cotton sown this season be reversed until their arrival in order that their instruction may be taken in regard to the process of picking, cleaning etc...”

Captain Bayles of the Madras army, who had been deputed to the cotton states for the purpose, purchased a sixty saw gin, a model gin house and machinery to meet his objectives. The violent opposition which he had to encounter from the local cultivators out of suspicion over his methods compelled him to carry arms to pursue his objectives. The labour under constant fear and the lawless state of the community induced him to retreat the moment.

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he had affected the objects of his journey. G. D. Drury, Collector of Coimbatore wrote to Secretary of the Board of Revenue informing him of his plan.

"The planters be sent to Oodoomulcotta in the talooks of Chuckragherry in which large best quality of the annual cotton is produced; within the range of few miles he will have the ample means of seeing every process of cultivation, gathering and packing... then he proceed to another talooks to inspect the cultivation of Bourbon and country Triennial cotton... The ryots will be invited to observe the process recommended for their instructions..." \(^{82}\)

P. B. Smollett, Secretary of Board of Revenue wrote to the Secretary to Government about the steps taken.

"... American planters arrived... Government farm going to be approved by Court of Directors... and Tinnevelly is the best adopted by the Court of Directors... due to its soil best suited to the growth of cotton and land extension there... season passed so this year cannot plant... so planters employed to inspect the process of cultivation pursued by the natives and suggesting improvement to them. The planters cannot be soon become acquainted with the native mode of cultivation or the character of the people and at present the cultivation is in its earliest stage... sent planters to Tinnevelly... purchased for the year quantity of land to the extent of about 1000 or 1200 acres already sown with


\(^{83}\) Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 20.10.1840, vol. 1725, pp. 14790-14795.
cotton to afford the planters an opportunity exhibiting the system of cultivation pursued in America... Collector also avail the advice of planters in the selection for an experimental farm... two Gomastas acquainted with English language being employed to aid him in communication with the natives...”

In response H. Chamier, Secretary to the Government wrote: “... American planters be sent without delay to Tinnevelly and placed under the Collector and the Officer instructed to obtain for the year the required quantity of land already sown with cotton... The subject of an experimental farm will be taken into consideration at an early period... Gomastah also appointed to assist the planters.” P. B. Smollett, the Secretary to Board of Revenue wrote to the Collector of Tirunelveli on 2.11.1840.

The planters demonstrated the American mode of cotton cultivation previous to the establishment of Government Farm. The planters were not familiar with the local language and customs of the people. The Government provided Rs. 145-0-0 to procure a horse to reach the destination. All expenses were paid on the road and two bullock carts were also supplied to them. Simpson, I. Morris and I. W. Hawley were given Rs. 145-0-0 for expenses, two bullock carts and a clerk to accompany the planters on their route to Tirunelveli.

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84 Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 22.10.1840, vol. 1724, pp. 14383-14387.
85 Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 2.11.1840, vol. 1727, pp. 15013-14.
86 Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 2.11.1840, vol. 1727, p. 15016.
87 Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 2.11.1840, vol. 1727, p. 15018.
Simpson, I. Morris and J. W. Hawley and the clerk reported of the £170, £150, £180, £15 respectively as advance on their salaries. Three American cotton planters deputed to the Madras Presidency left Madras for Tirunelveli on Wednesday November 18, 1840. J. C. Bird, Collector of Tirunelveli wrote about the availability of bullock carts for the use of American cotton planters in Tirunelveli.\textsuperscript{89}

The three planters were kept together or at a distance of not more than 50 or 100 miles apart. In January 1841 the Board of Revenue sent to the Government proposals for taking 1200 acres of cotton lands in Tirunelveli districts under which the land owners agreed to cultivate and harvest the crop as per instruction of the American planters and to retain the produce to themselves (landowners).\textsuperscript{91}

Experiment in Tirunelveli: 1841-1842

Despite all out efforts to make the experiment a success, on April 8, 1841, the Board of Revenue received letter from Captain Hughes, Superintendent of the American cotton planters, which indicated the failure of the plan. Captain Hughes wrote: “The American planters have been located in a house in the Fort of Palamcottah. It was decided that in the first instance the

\textsuperscript{88} Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 5.11.1840, vol. 1727, p. 15016.

\textsuperscript{89} Board of Revenue Consultation, dated 16.11.1840, vol. 1728, p. 11583.

\textsuperscript{90} Board of Revenue Consultation, vol. Gen No. 15950, pp. 2415-2420.

\textsuperscript{91} Board of Revenue Consultation, vol. Gen No 15947, pp. 1384-1388.
planters should confine their proceedings to the neighborhood of Tinnevelly and that the native cultivators should be invited to come forward, if they desired instructions, letting them known that the Americans were willing at all times to afford every assistance in their power. This invitation having become generally known, some cultivators from the village of Karasocoolum, about 2 miles from Tinnevelly, came on the 24th March to request the attendance of the planters for the purpose of instruction and on the morning of the 26th instant I directed two of the planters accompanied by a Gomastah and two person to proceed to the village in question.

On the return of the planters, the report of this experiment was most unfavourable. On the view of the fields pointed out by the cultivators... the Americans proceeded to rectify by instruction the cultivators in the method of picking the cotton practiced in America but which although they acknowledged its vast superiority to their own, the cultivators at once declared their inability to adopt by reason of the greater trouble and greater expense attending its operation." Hughes summed up by saying that unless the Government purchases the cotton at a fixed price; the cultivators desired the introduction of no new method of cultivation or even of American seed”

"Board of Revenue Consultation, vol. Gen No 15957, pp. 4885-4889"
Fisher’s Opinion:

The Board of Revenue had informed the Government that due to late season, want of accommodation for the American planters and lack of suitable implements it was found impossible for them to do anything useful in the 1200 acres proposed for the experiment in the first year. The Board therefore recommended that in the succeeding year, each American planter might be assigned 150 acres of land in which they would first acquire the necessary local language in order to enable them to actually go out into the district in the succeeding years for imparting necessary knowledge to local ryots on the American system of growing cotton and gathering it. Thereupon the Government referred the matter to Fischer who was in Salem and had extensive annual contracts with the cotton growers of Salem and Coimbatore. Fischer expressed his views to the Governor of Madras in his letter dated May 14, 1841 as follows:

"...The main difficulties to establishing a superior character in the home market for Madras cotton are wholly beyond the control or scope of these planters. By their means, no doubt, will with greater facility be taught to the ryot, an improved system of cultivating cotton from first to last including the picking, cleaning and embalming.... The ryots are skilful husbandmen... little practical results can be expected from the

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5 Board of Revenue Consultation, vol. Gen No 15962, pp. 6390-6396.
labour of these American planters until backed by the introduction of capital and the immediate application of European superintendents into the interior together with good roads for the transmission of so bulky an article.... The introduction into the Coimbatore district of the Bourbon cotton, the cotton next in the value to the American Sea Island, by a system of cultivation and preparation nearly similar to that pursued in America and which Bourbon cotton has ranged as high as 15 or 16 pence the lb. in the Home Market will exemplify what the ryot is now able to do under adequate arrangement.... In Tinnevelly the planters had many difficulties to encounter.... I would respect that the planters should be removed to Coimbatore as district more prepared to receive and better adapted for the mediated experiments. If they were located in that part of the Coimbatore district adjoining Erode, my cotton establishment there would afford them opportunities of having plantations of different kinds of cotton under their observation and management...”

The Government welcomed this suggestion and ordered on May 25, 1841 the immediate removal of the American cotton planters to Erode or to such places in its vicinity as the Collector of Coimbatore in communication with Captain Hughes, their superintendent, might consider best. The experiment made in Tirunelveli, thus ended in failure.

Arrival of American Cotton Seeds and Implements:

In June 1841, Captain Hughes and three American planters left Tirunelveli for Coimbatore. Captain Hughes was the first to arrive at Erode on June 22, 1841. Simpson reached Erode on June 24 and the two remaining planters joined them by the middle of July 1841. In the meanwhile American ploughs and American cotton seeds sent by the Court of Directors had landed at Madras. Fischer who inspected the ploughs while at Madras felt that though the ploughs were good, Indian cattle would not be able to pull them nor could they be repaired locally in the event of their falling into repairs. Fischer was also disappointed to note that the seeds were of the description called Georgians of American Upland cotton. The indigenous cotton of Tirunelveli under careful management was hardly inferior in quality and price to the Georgians. Coimbatore Bourbon sold for more. He therefore concluded that it was not worth the trouble and cost to introduce Georgian. The Americans had then superiority over Indian cotton by means of the Sea Island cotton. He therefore wanted that the Sea Island cotton should be naturalized by the Americans in the Presidency. Captain Hughes caused the examination of all the seeds on receipt at Erode. Simpson had identified the seeds as New Orleans (or Gulf Hill seed) and not as Georgian. The seeds were purchased at Rodney town on the river Mississippi and the City of Natches 30 miles from Rodney. Sea island

*Board of Revenue Consultation*, vol. Gen No 5756, pp. 4439-4443.

*Board of Revenue Consultation*, vol. Gen No 5756, pp. 4733-4744.
could be grown only in areas where sea air was available and that Simpson was unacquainted with the method of cultivating Sea Island cotton. Subsequently Captain Hughes ordered for one barrel of Sea Island cotton seeds.

Location of the Cotton Planters in Coimbatore:

An area of 101.7 acres was first taken on lease near Erode for locating one of the experimental farms and this was placed in charge of Morris. Simpson proceeded to Salem to select a suitable site and Hawley to Coimbatore. Finally the government decided that Hawley and Simpson be sanctioned at Coimbatore itself. In November 1841 Captain Hughes reported to the Government that the ryots of Coimbatore district were still very imperfectly acquainted with the experiments in progress. He sent notification for approval of the Government. This was translated into Tamil and distributed among the ryots. The content of the notification in its entirety is reproduced here.

"...It is now known in this province that the Government is engaged in an experiment for the improvement of cotton cultivation after the American system both at Erode and near Coimbatore. This experiment has been instituted as well for the profit of the inhabitants and ryots as for the benefit of the state, as in the event of the cultivators following the method of preparing and ploughing the land practiced by the American

97 Board of Revenue Consultation, vol. Gen No 5757, p.5082.

planters on their plantations, they will by this means not only
insure a large produce but a better and more suitable article for
the Europe market. Uppam Paruthee, Nadum Paruthee and Shem
paruthee are of the worst kind, poor in produce, bad in staple, the
native cultivators hitherto have given very little attention to the
improvement of their cotton, which at this time is entirely
deficient of every valuable property and therefore not marketable
in Europe. The cotton now valued in Europe is that known under
the designation of New Orleans and is grown in America. This
cotton from its abundant produce, superior cleanness, good and
even staple, and the greater care of preparation bestowed upon it,
obtains the preference in Europe over every other description and
thus excludes the sale of Indian cotton which from careless
picking, imperfect cleaning and the consequent dirty state in
which it arrives in Europe is fit and is used only for candlesticks
and other coarse purposes. In order to obtain the finest quality, a
better method of cultivation is alone required. With this view,
Government took measures to engage the services of three
planters from America, persons well skilled in the whole process
of cotton cultivation and cleaning and who have now arrived in
this district to instruct the landowners, cotton merchants and
ryots in the system of agricultural operation that has proved so
profitable to the American nation, and if the ryots are willing to
learn the system it will be found equally profitable to themselves
but if they will still follow their own system which is most faulty
there is no hope of improvement. The people of this Province
should not therefore neglect to inspect the Government plantation
at Erode and Coimbatore. These plantation are entirely under the
management of the American planters and are designed for the
instruction of all those who may be anxious to inform themselves
of a new and remunerating method of cotton culture. Already a landholder at Tinnevelly named Ram Singh has sent two of his servants to Coimbatore to learn the process, an example that should be followed by all those interested in the experiment.

The Americans ploughs supplied by Government for the use of the American cotton planters has been tried at Erode and Coimbatore and found efficient in every respect. They can be worked either by one or two bullocks and ploughs the earth well and deeply which is of the utmost importance in agriculture whereas the plough of the country merely scratches the ground and from its construction is incapable for turning the soil over in any quantity, so that the roots not having room to expand or draw nourishment from the surrounding earth. Those persons who have any doubts on the subject, Captain Hughes requests, will come to his house where personal inspection they can form their own opinion of the new plough which they will find light, strong and durable, as easy to work as to keep in repair. 7 rupees is for the large plough and 3 or 4 for the smaller ploughs and may be less..."99

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Results of the Experiments

In March 1842 the Government received a report declaring the failure of the first year's experiments conducted in Coimbatore district. Out of 101.7 acres allotted to Morris at Erode an area of about 13 acres was devoted to demonstrate the American method of growing paddy. The remaining area was sown with seeds of Bourbon, Sea Island, New Orleans and Nadum cottons. The experimental area in Coimbatore consisted of three blocks. An area of 98 acres consisting of black soil situated in the North of Coimbatore town was sown with New Orleans, Sea Island and Uppam cotton seeds. An area of 9 1/2 acres situated in the East of Coimbatore town comprised of red wasteland and was sown with the New Orleans and Uppam seeds. The third block of 15 1/2 acres was also in the East of Coimbatore and was under New Orleans and Uppam. These crops yielded very little and the failure was attributed to hasty selection of sites, late season, bad and rotten seed, unfavourable weather- (heavy rains of October followed by severe drought)\textsuperscript{100}. The Court of Directors deeply regretting the failure for the present of the experiment and decided on entrusting future work to Dr. Wight who took charge of the work on 8\textsuperscript{th} March 1842.

\textsuperscript{100} Revenue Department Consultation. vol. Gen. No. 5773, pp.1364-1368
Dr. Wight’s Plans

Immediately on assuming charge of office as Superintendent of Cotton Farms, Dr. Wight toured all the cotton growing villages in Coimbatore districts. His idea was to apply the American system of growing cotton to the indigenous cottons for the following reasons:

1. The American system was based on simple principles of vegetable physiology and nearest approach to perfection.

2. Indian cotton was intrinsically superior to the American cotton.

3. Indian cotton was suited to the local climate.

He proposed to enter into contracts with ryots for growing cotton under the American system. Dr. Wight was to supply American cotton seeds. He would pay to the Government the land assessment on the holdings coming under this plan. He would bear also the cultivation charges. In return the ryots should handover to him free of cost one half off the produce of each holding. He would also purchase the remaining half of the produce at market rates. The three American planters were stationed at Coimbatore, Udumalpettai and Pollachi respectively. They would go round the villages advising the ryots coming under this plan on the American system of growing and picking cotton. The Government approved the proposals and wanted that Dr. Wight should not only apply the American system for growing cotton to the indigenous varieties but also take steps to popularize American cotton in this country since the later was

101 Revenue Department Consultation, vol. 5775, pp.2316-2339.
one of the specific objectives for which the Court of Directors obtained the services of the American planters.

Dr. Wight took about 200 acres at Coimbatore for experiment under his personal supervision. Another block of 200 acres was taken in the village of Kurichi, situated near Coimbatore town. This was in charge of Sherman who was American planter appointed in June 1842 in place of Hawley who had accepted appointment under the Bombay Government. Simpson was allotted about 300 acres, which too was in Coimbatore. Morris closed down his project at Erode and moved to Udumalpettai with a 300 acres farm. In November 1842 the gin house at Coimbatore was taken over by James Petrie, an engineer for the cotton machinery.
Table: IV: 4  
Statement Showing the Results of Experiments Carried (1842-43 & 1843-44).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Soil</th>
<th>Kind of Cotton</th>
<th>1842-43</th>
<th>1843-44</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Area in Acres</td>
<td>Yield of Seed cotton In lb per acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Superintendent’s Farms, Coimbatore</td>
<td>Red Alluvium</td>
<td>Bourbon</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Red Alluvium</td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Red Alluvium</td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Red Uppam</td>
<td>Broach</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Red Alluvium</td>
<td>Egyptian</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>171</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kurichi Farm (in charge of Mr. Sherman in the first year and Mr. Morris in the second year)</td>
<td>Alluvium New Orleans Uppam</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alluvium Uppam</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alluvium Bourbon</td>
<td>11 ¼</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alluvium Uppam</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>129 1/4</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Coimbatore Mr. Simpson</td>
<td>Black Red</td>
<td>New Orleans Uppam</td>
<td>208 1/2</td>
<td>192 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Red Bourbon</td>
<td>40 1/2</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>296</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Udumalpettai (in charge of Mr. Morris in the first year and Mr. Sherman in the second year)</td>
<td>Black Black</td>
<td>New Orleans Uppam</td>
<td>100 1/2</td>
<td>226 1/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Red Red</td>
<td>New Orleans</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>62</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>5 ¼</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>311</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: R. Ratnam, *Agricultural Development in Madras State prior to 1900*, pp.210-211.
nomics of American System and Indigenous System:

At the conclusion of the first year's trials, Dr. Wight pointed out it not worth the effort if the venture did not give at least 100 lb. of ginned on per acre and a maximum charge of Rs. 10/- per acre. The average enditure per acre amounted to Rs. 8 1/2. In a Despatch dated April 3, 1844 Court of Directors were gratified to learn that the expenses incurred on erican system of cultivation, found to be more costly than the indigenous hod. But it was over balanced by the superiority of the crops produced. "The l and application evinced by Dr. Wight in the conduct of these experiments very creditable to that officer," so commented the Directors in the spatch.

al Made in 1844-45

Based on his experience gained during the two years, Dr. Wight de the following modification in the mode of cultivation in the succeeding rs:

Abandonment of the ridges, which carried off rainwater and ipoverished the soil for want of moisture.

Treating the American cotton as a biennial just as Bourbon in this untry and Sea Island in Egypt. This meant that, after the first seasons' cotton ckings, the plants had to be pruned up to ground level.

Early sowing in May and June instead of after the October rains.

Rotation with other crops instead of raising the cotton in the same field after year.

Simpson after completing three season's trials in Coimbatore stated in January 1844 that to continue the experiment under the then prevailing circumstances would be of no profit.

gage of Some American Planters

In June 1842, Hawley accepted service under the Bombay Government and in his place Sherman was appointed. Ever since his arrival in Coimbatore Sherman took ill several times. His arrival at Erode from Tirunelveli was delayed on this account. Dr. Wight had to transfer him from Udumalpettai to Coimbatore (for the Kurichi farm) for this reason. In March 1845 he was persuaded of his work to proceed back to America on the expiry of his contract. Wight then reported: "... the American farming system is inapplicable to our country so far at least as we have tried, it and to our earlier want of knowledge of this fact may be praised our annually decreasing returns from the lands for the last three seasons..."104

Morris reached Madras on his way to America on the morning of 8, 1845. He wrote to the Government explaining the reasons for his departure. His not being placed on the same salary as the American planters employed in Bengal and Bombay and the non-payment of his annual wages due to the Department Constitution, vol.Gen.no. 5852, pp. 371-374.
gratuity where cited as principal reasons. He expressed his willingness to
continue in the assignment for one more year precisely on the same terms as the
American planters in Bombay. On August 12, 1845 the Government informed
him that his services were being engaged for another year and that he should
proceed immediately to Coimbatore. Dr. Wight however felt that there was no
use keeping him at Coimbatore. He suggested that Morris be sent to the ceded
districts where useful work awaited him. Accordingly Morris was sent to
Bellary where he again fell ill and expired in March 1846\textsuperscript{105}.

At the instance of the Government Dr. Wight ascertained from Simpson the terms upon which he was willing to continue his service. He
conveyed to the Government in April 1845 his impression that the demand of
Simpson for a salary of Rs.500/- per mensem was too high. He recommended
that Simpson’s service might be terminated in Madras and placed before the
Bombay Government. In September of that year, Dr. Wight also reported to the
Government that Finnie, one of the cotton planters in Bengal, was disposed to
engage his service under the Madras Government on the same terms as those
offered to Simpson and that in case the Government decided to employ him he
could be stationed near the east coast in preference in sending him inland. The
Government accordingly terminated Simpson’s services and employed\textsuperscript{106} Finnie
for advice and encourage the cultivators in cotton growing districts in terms of

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Revenue Department Consultation}, vol.Gen.no. 5856, pp. 5697-5698.
\item \textit{Revenue Department Consultation}, vol.Gen.no. 5845, pp. 2137-2154.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
improving their system of growing and cleaning their cotton. He was posted to Tirunelveli district for the purpose. Sherman was send to Udumalpettai.¹⁰⁷

Review of Experiments for Four Years Ending 1844-1845.

In September 1845 the Government called for a detail report from Dr. Wight on the working of the cotton farms in Coimbatore district. The Government’s categorical questions in this regard were answered by Dr. Wight in the following manner.

1. On whether the experiment had succeeded in introducing a better mode of agriculture and more perfect machinery for cleaning cotton Dr. Wight’s answer was Yes. However he hastened to that the American mode was susceptible of some modifications calculated to adopt it to the peculiarities of Indian soil and climate to which the pure American system was hardly applicable. He also classified that no local cultivator had adopted it till then.

2. For the question whether the American cotton was superior, he answered affirmatively and said that Price currents are 20 per cent in favour of American cotton as compared with American cotton.

3. As for the query whether the improved methods were within the reach of the local cultivators, again the answer was yes. But disadvantage that the heavy seed cotton had to be transported over a long distance for being ginned was

¹⁰⁷ Revenue Department Consultation, vol.Gen.no. 5856, pp.5810-5812.
pointed out. The ginning loss was about 2 per cent due to removal of sand, dust etc., from the lint by the saw gins.

4. If the experiment were to be continued, what was the term expected of locals and what further object it would serve by its continuance in the Coimbatore district? Was the question posed next? Prospects of extra remuneration would attract ryots was the reply to that question. It was argued that if the experiment is withdrawn at this stage all the work so far done would be lost. Dr. Wight considered it a difficult and slow process to carry conviction to the uninstructed prejudiced mind that was stepped in tradition.

5. Why is it that New Orleans, the American cotton variety sought to be introduced, was found better than the indigenous variety Uppam, but even so it was not cultivated by any ryot was another important posure for which Dr. Wight said:

“A belief has been long prevalent that the superiority of American over Indian cotton both as to quality and amount of produce from a given area of land was in a great measure attributable to the superiority of American cultivation, and that if the American system of cotton agriculture and American machinery for separating the fibre from the seed were introduced into India, then the Indian ryot might successfully enter into of his produce.”

Efforts of Cotton Planters from America - Final Stage 1846-48.

When the year 1846 dawned we find that Dr. Wight got confirmed that Coimbatore town proper was not good for the continuance of the experiments and he shifted the farm to a place by name Otacalmont (Otacalmandapam), 12 miles southwest of Coimbatore town. Finnie who was working in Tirunelveli district and Dr. Wight always differed in views.

Results of Mr. Finnie Experiments in Tirunelveli District

During the year 1846, Mr. Finnie only acquainted himself with soil condition and arranged cultivation of American cotton near Sivakasi. In May 1847 he submitted to the Government a proposal for starting a hundred re model farm in Courtallem valley. In reply to Government's enquiry as to what he meant by a model farm, Mr. Finnie replied:

"The proposed model plantation to the extent of 50 or 100 acres is to be on lands held by Government and cultivated under my superintendence by hired labour or contract ... and to be planted in rows and the ground well-stirred and free of all extraneous matter but solely with native instruments as an example to the landholders in the hope of inducing them to put the culture on their own account. I propose to distribute the seeds to those who are willing to cultivate the article and will contract to take the produce off hands at a fixed rate per candy on Government account and as soon as the

people will adopt the plan I should give up all culture on Government account and leave it in their hands merely taking the produce at its value. This is the simplest plan of the procedure and more likely to succeed than if the business was confined to the experiments...." The Government sanctioned this scheme. A ginnery was also erected at Sivakasi.

Referring to the experiments conducted at Sivakasi in 1846 Finnie said that due to long drought not a plant lived except a small field, which was planned and irrigated by a ryot of intelligence and zeal. This field produced a little cotton and the people liked it much. The ryots thought that in a good season American cotton would succeed without irrigation. Finnie also added that during 1847 he had planted American cotton at three stations namely Sivakasi, Aruppukottai and Virudhupatty and declared: "Failure must be the result... I say we have failed to produce American cotton in Southern India and must ever fail where we have not the benefit of both monsoon." The local merchants also pointed out to Finnie that ginning by saw gin entailed loss of weight of produce to compensate which they were not paid a higher price than what is paid for churka-ginned cotton. In April 1848, Finnie reported failure of the American cotton raised in the three centers referred to above. The crop thrived only in well-protected spots. Saw gins were also found unsuitable for

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ginning the indigenous cotton\textsuperscript{112}. In January 1849 he reported failure of the trial for a third year as well\textsuperscript{113}. He was firmly of the view that the country was not suitable either for growing American cotton or for using American gins. He thought that the indigenous cotton and churka could be improved upon. These views were not accepted by Dr. Wight who attributed the failure of the trials to lack of care and close supervision on the part of Finnie.

\textbf{Dr. Wight's Experiments in Coimbatore District:}

Early in 1847, Dr. Wight received a letter from the Court of Directors inviting his remarks on certain suggestions regarding the trials made by Turner, President of the Commercial Association of Manchester. Dr. Wight's reply dated April 8, 1847 to the Home Authorities is reproduced below:

The American cotton grown in the Coimbatore Farms has been found superior to any of the same description grown in India. This is no doubt partly owing to the suitable selection of the sowing season. Turner's suggestions regarding early sowing has been tried but in a great measure failed. The best time for sowing according to Dr. Wight was the time chosen in such a way that the plant should flower about the time the North East monsoon commence should in October.}

\textsuperscript{12} Revenue Department Consultation, vol. Gen. No. 5911, pp. 4696-4698.

In the event of an average season lands yield according to the quality of the soil from 500 to 1000 or even 1200 pounds per acre of American seed cotton. The local Indian plant was much less productive. As suggested by Dr. Wight tried low alluvial lands but the return proved quite disproportionate. Cotton grown on black ground had a longer and softer staple when grown on red gravelly soil on which American cotton was successfully cultivated. The stiffer clayey soils had not responded well except in when there were frequent showers keeping them in an easily workable state, as they are liable to bake and become very hard in dry weather. Therefore Dr. Wight recommended the plan of cultivating the Mexicon cotton plant as an annual and never to sow the same land oftener than every third or fourth year as it was considered to be a very exhausting crop.¹¹⁴

The Discontinuance of the Experiments

The Government had to take a decision as to the continuance of the trials. They had before them Finnie’s view of the utter futility of the experiment expressed in the most emphatic terms and Dr. Wight’s view on the success so far achieved and the need for further continuance of the work in order to popularize the cultivation of American cotton among the ryots. Their orders dated June 1849 were as follows,

"...The Governor—in–Council is quite satisfied that the Honourable Court of Directors and this Government in obedience to their order have already done everything that was either requisite or called for to give the experimental farms the fairest, fullest and most liberal trial and is of the opinion that the existence and further continuance of those experiments is calculated to do harm to the cause which they were originally intended to promote, by unavoidably leading the natives of the cotton growing district to imagine that Government alone have the means and facility of raising American cotton or of improving the culture and quality of the indigenous plant. In pursuance therefore of the views communicated by the Honorable Court...he (The Governor—in–Council) has resolved upon the discontinuance not only of the experimental cultivation of cotton in Coimbatore but also of the mercantile operations into which they have latterly merged in purchasing and shipping cotton, the produce of those districts..."115

Before leaving India Finnie recommended a fair trial of Captain Law ford's plan of irrigating American cotton, and added that this country could not produce the American cotton, the saw gin machine was not applicable to this country, that it was unsuited to the genius of the people116. In September 1849 the Court of Directors made it clear that though they wanted the discontinuance of the cotton farms it was not their intention to discontinue the cultivation of exotic varieties of cotton. They therefore ordered “Government

115 Revenue Department Consultation, vol. Gen. No. 5931, pp.3451-3464
should still continue to afford its aid by distributing American seed either gratuitously or at a trifling charge to those willing to cultivate." 17 In pursuance of these orders, Dr. Wight stayed on in Coimbatore district to continue the spread of cultivation of American cotton. The following extracts from a report dated December 27, 1850 from the Collector of Coimbatore, E. B. Thomas, indicate how little Dr. Wight could achieve in spite of his most earnest and ceaseless endeavors to introduce American cotton spread over a period of one decade: "The sooner the present experiment under Government funds and agency for the improvement of cotton is closed, the better for Government and for the object in view. It has already continued for ten years at a cost of nearly three lakhs of rupees and whatever good was likely to result from it has had ample time for trial. All Government experiments are necessarily costly and unsatisfactory." 18

In May 1852 Dr. White in a report on his achievements stated that New Orleans were yielding very poorly in Madras state 119.

Local spinners did not like the softness of New Orleans and this hampered its spread. Trials were in progress on growing the varieties such as Mexican or New Orleans, Sea Island, Egyptian and the Brazilian or Pernambuco in coastal areas. These were still in their infancy and were continued, not by the Government but by three private parties viz.,

1. Messrs. S. David and Arthur Less of Manchester

Trials done at Tiruchendur in Tirunelveli district.

2. Messrs. T and N. Longshaw of Manchester

Trial done at Madras (A total area of about 2500 acres were under these trials).

On receipt of report from Dr. White and all the other related particulars the Court of Directors explained the reason for their retreat:

"...Since the relinquishment of the Government farms in Coimbatore the ryots have taken to the culture of American cotton on their own account to an extent considerably greater than during their existence would seem to imply that the time had arrived when the interferences of Government could properly by withdrawn... be properly withdraw from the market as purchasers of American cotton and we hereby convey to you our authority for gradually relinquishing all direct interferences in the culture of cotton of that description in the hope that it has now reached a point where it may be safely left to private enterprises."^{120}

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Referring to the trials on cotton cultivation F.C. Brown, son of Murdoch Brown, whose name is associated with cotton trials in Malabar district, observed in 1862, "American planters came to teach but returned after learning from Coimbatore farmers."\textsuperscript{121}

Cotton Experiments During 1853-62

The efforts on the part of the Madras Government to introduce American cotton and American machinery into the Madras Presidency virtually ended with the departure of Dr. Wight from India in 1853. Since then, some experiments in the growth of American cotton had been carried out by private individuals. But the question of whether this better stapled could be grown with profit to the cultivator, remained unresolved.

Dr. Mudge, Surgeon Major in the Madras Army experimented the cultivation of Brazil or pernambuco cotton in Madras. Dr. Mudge writes his experience:

"I first tried the Brazil or Perunambuco cotton in 1860. The Honourable D. Arbuthnot, Collector of Kurnool, gave me 12 seeds from which 11 plants came up. These were planted out about the 25\textsuperscript{th} March, in common garden soil with a small quantity of old manure and were at first watered everyday... till they had attained about a foot in height. I then left Madras for a Neilgherries and did not return till the end of May. I found that the gardeners had neglected the trees and that four out of the

\textsuperscript{1} Board of Revenue Proceedings, No. 407, dated April 9, 1862.
The district was not naturally well drained due to the uncertainty of periodical rains and freshes from the river.\textsuperscript{125} Silver, the Collector of Tirunelveli, in a letter dated 20\textsuperscript{th} February 1862 reported as follows: "The average quantity of unclean cotton grown in the district of Tinnevelly during the last three years was 150,000 candies of 500 lbs each. In the year 1860-61, 4400 candies of cleaned cotton were sold at Rs. 102 (£ 10-45) per candy. There are no obstacles to the spread to cotton cultivation, but a stimulus seems to be require establishing agencies for dealing direct with the cultivators in the interior, instead of conducting their business, as they do at present, through brokers at the part of embarkation and by constructing better roads in the cotton growing localities, the cultivation of cotton be extended beyond doubt."\textsuperscript{126} Silver also forwarded his reply to the Madras Board of Revenue to certain queries put to him by His Excellency Sir William Dension the Governor of Madras, as regards the cotton trade at the port of Tuticorin:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Queries to the Collector</th>
<th>Replies from the Collector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Distance from Tirunelveli to Tuticorin</td>
<td>Thirty-four miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Character of the country between the two places sand.</td>
<td>Bare and open passing over black soils, rocky ground and deep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There is a made-road for only 8 miles out of Tirunelveli and the River Tamiraparani unbridged, intervenes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{125} Letter from Mr. Hathaway to Board of Revenue, dated 7\textsuperscript{th} June, 1858.

\textsuperscript{126} Letter from Mr. Silver to Board of Revenue, dated 20\textsuperscript{th} February, 1862.
3. Amount of existing traffic between the two places

Tirunelveli is not a cotton producing taluk. Cotton is grown in the Northern taluks and northeastern taluks. General commodities pass between the two places.

4. Cost of transport per ton and per bale of cotton from one place to another

Cost of transport per ton and for a bundle of cotton depends entirely on the season of the year. If in rainy weather when the ryots plough their field transport become expensive but on the average the transport of cotton to Tuticorin from the cotton producing taluk costs 10 Rupees per ton of 20 per cwt. or about 9 Annas a bundle of 120lbs.

5. Quantity of cotton passing from Tirunelveli to Tuticorin

Cotton is not sent from Tirunelveli to Tuticorin but the average quantity taken into Tuticorin yearly from the Sattur, Ottapidurum, Shankarancoil and Srivilliputtur taluks along the trunk Cotton road connecting the cotton growing localities with Tuticorn, is 33,000 candies of cleaned cotton.

6. Quality of cotton whether

Entirely of local growth: on other description is exported from Tuticorin. The quality is known in Europe as Tirunelveli cotton. It is clean in colour but short in staple and generally fetches the highest price of Indian indigenous cotton.  

In Salem Messrs. Fischer and Co., had an establishment in 1840. He had a big contractor with local cotton growers. Fischer reported that the general inferiority of the Madras cotton arose from vicious system of trade by a succession of middlemen or brokers, from the village Chetty who made

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eleven were dead. The remaining seven prospered and without any care, and with only an occasional watering produced abundantly. In January and February they yielded more than two pounds of picked cotton, which was valued by London brokers at from 8½ d to 9¼ d per lb. A large quantity of seed obtained, was sown again in March and April. Several hundred plants in the people's park and about two hundred in my own garden, while a good deal of seed was distributed to various parties. The plants in my garden are in full bearing now (January 1862). The trees planted in people's park failed owing to the very saline character of the soil.... Mr. Fischer of Salem informed me, that it did not answered there, probably owing to the greater dryness of the air and character of soil.... Egyptian and Bourbon seed were sown in the people's park between the first and fourth April 1861 and were watered till the plants attained the height of 1 feet after that they only got a little water occasionally.... Both these species have borne very well.... So far as reliance can be placed on one experiment seem to show that Bourbon and Egyptian staples will answer well at the Presidency.\(^\text{122}\)

North Arcot district produced a very inconsiderable amount of indigenous cotton. The average cultivation in the district since 1856 had been only 57 acres. The District Collector described the soil of the region as being sand gravel best suited to the American varieties. In South Arcot the indigenous

\(^{122}\) Letter from Dr. Mudge to Board of Revenue, dated 23rd January. 1862.
cotton was grown larger than in North Arcot. The cultivation confined to two or three thousand acres.\textsuperscript{123}

In Thanjavur the quality of cotton grown fell far short of even the requirements of local consumption and hence large quantities were brought from the Southern districts of Madurai and Tirunelveli to meet the deficiency. Repeated attempts made to improve the quality of cotton grown and to extend its cultivation proved abortive. The land under cotton crop in 1861 was less than 600 acres. Cadell, the Collector of Thanjavur ascribed the unsuccessful result to the unremunerative nature of the crop, the uncertainly of the produce and the labour and expense of preparation arising from the absence of any cheap and efficient machinery. Cadell also thought that the soil of the district was not very favourable to the plants. The landholders preferred the cultivation of rice to any other crops.\textsuperscript{124}

In 1858 Hathaway, the Collector of Madurai went on record that the average number of acres under the cultivation of cotton in the district since 1855 was about 76,000 acres. The soil in which the cotton was raised was black and has a Slimy nature, being very retentive of the moisture. In some parts the ryots raised along with cotton the dry crops such as coriander, horse gram, varagu, cumboo, thinai, dholl, and cumin. Cotton could not be grown consecutively for two years in the same field. The soil was of an inferior type.

\textsuperscript{123} Letter from Mr. Robinson to Board of Revenue, dated 17\textsuperscript{th} December, 1861.

\textsuperscript{124} Letter from Mr. Cadell to Board of Revenue, dated 15\textsuperscript{th} December 1861 and dated 31\textsuperscript{st} January, 1862.
advances to the ryots in his hour of need, up to the Dubash of the European agent at Madras who shipped the cotton for England. Thus after each middlemen had made his own profit, the smallest commodity remained with the ryots, who consequently had no other resource but to supply the largest possible quantity. Under this circumstance Fischer gave advances to the ryots to cultivate cotton following the instruction of the planter, creating an opportunity for the planters for the cultivation of different kinds of cotton. Brett, the Collector of Salem reported on 14.12.1861, that Messrs. Fischer and Co., was the only person in the district, to bring cotton for export. Cotton lands under cultivation were more than 15000 acres. Good road intersected the district in all directions and the principal cotton grown areas were within twenty-five or thirty miles of South Western Railway. Thanks to the effort of Dr. Wight in Coimbatore, the Collector of Coimbatore Thomas stated that the above 120,000 acres were under cotton cultivation in 1857 in different soils. Due to all these experiments and trials some conclusions were finally arrived at, they were (1) American cotton could be grown, but the profit was questionable (2) Indian cotton might be improved but only to a limited degree (3) American cotton always commanded a higher price than Indian and (4) The demand of Indian cotton depended on the supply of cotton from America.

128 Letter from Mr. Brett to Board of Revenue, dated 14th December, 1861.
129 Letter from Mr. Thomas to Board of Revenue, dated 18th December, 1857.
The End of ‘Desultory’ Trials on Cotton

Though the trials with American cotton seeds with the assistance of American cotton planters were terminated, endeavours were continued in certain directions not only to improve the quality of indigenous cottons but also to introduce certain exotics. These trials too proved futile. In October 1861, the Governor His Excellency Sir William Denison paid considerable thought to the question of improving the quality of indigenous cotton. The following minutes of his would be read as follows: -

“I am induced to bring under the consideration of the council questions connected with the improvement and extension of the growth of the cotton in the Presidency of Madras by the publication of a resolution of the Governor- in- Council to the effect that the prizes of 10,000 rupees will be given during the years 1861-62 and 1862-63 in each of the Presidencies Fort William, Madras and Bombay under certain conditions made known in the proclamation. Since my arrival in Madras the same subject has been brought before me in various ways- at one time in the shape of suggestions for the improvement of the means of conveyance by water or railways, for the purpose of bringing more cheaply to the market the surplus produce supposed to exist in the interior; at another, as in the present instance, by proposals to stimulate the cultivation by the offer of prizes.... That the great surplus of cotton suppose to exist in the interior of the country and which only awaits cheaper means of conveyance to bring it to market is the product of the imagination of those
whose object is to show that there is traffic sufficient to defray the cost of transport as well as the interest of money invested in railroads, or canals, as the case may be. Cotton is cultivated and that largely in various districts but this is generally done by the ryots under the stimulus of an advance of capital from a merchant or speculator and on the security of a fixed price per pound of the crop. There is, therefore, little or no surplus beyond that already, mortgaged to the merchant, at a price low enough to enable him to pay all costs and charges to port of shipment.... With a view then to the development of the cotton producing powers in India generally by which the English manufacturers might be relieved from their present dependence upon the supply from America, two courses appeared to present themselves.

- The encouragement by every means of the introduction of the better species of American cotton
- The improvement of the native cotton, by increasing the length of the staple, and lessening the coarse of the fibre.

The object being to improve the quality of the cotton grown on what is called the cotton soil, I should propose to allow to a few intelligent natives in different parts of the country who may be willing to undertake these experiments a remission of all assessment upon a certain quantity of land not exceeding, say 30 acres in extent, for a period of five years upon condition that this land should be devoted to cotton cultivation.... In addition to this a reward should be promised to all who, at the end of five years should be able to show
that the produce of their land was superior in value taking quality and quantity into consideration...”

Prize Competition

During the time when the cotton experimental farms were in progress, the Madras Government had instituted a prize competition scheme to encourage farmers to improve the quality and yield of various agricultural produce including cotton. The Agri-Horticultural Society, Madras was in charge of these competitions. In a letter dated March 29, 1845 the Secretary of Agri-Horticultural Society, Madras addressed the Madras Government on the subject of prizes to be awarded:

"Annexed is a schedule of prizes with conditions the General Committee would suggest for the adoption of Government. It will be observed that the sum total of prizes offered for competition is slightly in excess of the amount sanctioned for competition in the year 1845. New Orleans cotton has been substituted for Peruvian still further to encourage the successful experiment of last year at Coimbatore and a prize for the best indigenous cotton has been introduced agreeably to a suggestion of Dr. Drury. The General Committee are of opinion that these prizes should be awarded by judges approved of by Government who should be empowered to refuse a prize to any article which had not attained a certain standard of excellence or to give only a reduced prize. Nine ryots out of ten, if they have

130 Board of Revenue Proceedings, No. 14, dated November 1, 1861.
not sold their produce almost before the seed is sown sell it to intermediate agents before it is cut. To them the prices of cotton in the British market and the fluctuations of British Commerce are things undreamt of. Their native village, the Tahsildar's Cutcherry (office) and the Collector's Hoozoor (head office) form the horizon of their hopes and fears.... He (ryot) generally starts upon capital borrowed at the Presidency and as a matter of course sends his produce there... to remedy this inequality between native and European competitors, the General Committee would recommend Government to desire Collectors of the several districts to assemble at the proper season a panchayat of native ryots to determine the best produce afforded for competition in each district band to send a small portion of the best produce of each district to the Presidency and at the public expense with a certificate that the quantity necessary for competition had been produced and explanatory note of the method of culture.... They would further recommend that the produce of the best article be rewarded with a silver medal of small value...” 131 (A)

The conditions suggested by the Department for the award of prizes are as follows: -

“Full information must be communicated regarding the nature of the soil, the mode of culture and the causes generally which may be reasonably supposed to have enabled the party claiming prize to produce a superior article. None of the prizes will be awarded to parties for products not bona fide grown by themselves. The first prize for raw silk and wool will be open for

general competition but natives of India and Indoo-Britons will be admitted as competitors for the other prizes mentioned in the list."\textsuperscript{132 (B)}

List of prizes recommended for the year 1845-1846.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lb</th>
<th>Rs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For the best Sea Island cotton</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the Upland Georgian</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the New Orleans</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the Egyptian or Bourbon</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the Country Cotton</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Every competitor for the above prizes was expected to communicate full and minute details for his cultivation or manufacture. The first prizes or open to all competitors. The second are limited to natives and East Indians unconnected with agency houses. Medals may be taken in lieu of money prizes and of the same value at the option of the successful competitor.

The proposals sent by the Department were approved by Madras Government. The Government also directed that a separate medal should be given to each cultivator of the several production specified in each taluk\textsuperscript{132}. All specimens offered for the pecuniary prizes and medals were to tested by persons

\textsuperscript{132 (B)} Board of Revenue Consultation, vol. Gen. No. 16172, p. 5768

\textsuperscript{132} Board of Revenue Consultation, vol.Gen.No. 16210, pp. 17345-17346.
competent to declare their marketable value as well as by native cultivators or others who might be able to pronounce of their superior quality.

In respect of the following year, 1846-47, the terms of the prize competition were slightly different and they were as detailed below.\(^{133}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>lb</th>
<th>Rupees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For the best cotton</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raised from imported</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the second best</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cotton raised from</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imported seed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the indigenous</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cotton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the second best</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>indigenous cotton</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conditions of Competition**

- The competition is open to all classes.

  - In the event of any of the articles produced being considered by the appointed jungles not to reach a fair standard of quality it will be in their power to award lower amount of prizes or to withhold any.

  - If described by the Committee every successful competitor must be prepared to communicate, without unnecessary delay, full and minute details of the method of cultivation, manufacture etc., of prize articles.

  - Medals may be taken in lieu of money prizes and of the same value at the option of the successful competitor.

  - The competition is open to articles grown in any part of the Madras Presidency.

Madras Government approved the above proposals and the competition was continued in 1847-48. These competitions did not evoke any appreciable response from the local population. There was only one competitor for the cotton prizes. The sample produced was of the variety from Bourbon seed and a very specimen. It was grown by Messrs. Fischer & Co., at Salem and received an award of Rs. 300.

Report enclosed explaining on the mode of culture, preparation etc., of cotton seed by Fischer & Co., of Salem to the Madras Agri- Horticultural Society read as follows:

"The sample of the cotton is of the kind commonly called Bourbon seed. It was grown in Erode talook of the Coimbatore district. The soil of the field in which it grew is a light red loam. The field was cultivated the previous with grain. The field was manured with cattle manure, thoroughly ploughed and the seed sown broadcast in April. A month or so after it was sown the ground between the plants was ploughed to kill the weeds. About a fortnight again this, plants were thinned to about three feet apart. It was again ploughed when the plants were two months old. From the failure of the early rains last year the crop was not gathered till December or January. The seed was removed from the cotton by the native hand charka and then carefully hand picked by women and girls and packed in bags."  

Fischer of Salem produced the best cotton from imported Bourbon seed as well as sample of cotton from indigenous seed for which a second best prize was awarded. The indigenous cotton was pronounced of good quality and well cleaned. Sooba Singh's cotton grown in Coimbatore from American imported seed for which the second prize was awarded was declared to be a good article of the kind but the staple had been injured in ginning.

The local authorities without any exception has informed the board that their offers of medals and prizes for agricultural produce had failed to secure an end in view since no ryots had come forward to compete for such prizes. The Board observed that many of the products for which prizes had been offered, were not generally cultivated. A silver medal was not appreciated by the ryots very much. The Board also held the view that it was not desirable to divide prizes between the Europeans and the Indians. For these reasons the Board was not in favour of the continuance of the competitions. Instead, the Board recommended remission of part of land revenue in respect of any praiseworthy individual endeavors to produce cotton and sugar. Accordingly the Government ordered the discontinuance of the competition and the grant of remission of land revenue as may be decided by the Collectors.

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The experiment as suggested by the Governor-in-Council was carried out in Coimbatore district only. During 1866-67 only three of the ten individuals continued the experiment. As no perceptible improvement in quality was noticed the experiment was discontinued at the end of three years.

**Trials of Peruvian, Egyptian and other Exotic Cotton:**

In August 1862 The Secretary to State for India had sent some quantity of Peruvian cotton for trial in this country together with a note on their cultivation by Dr. Wight in which he explained that it should be sown in September-October and it was tried "extensively and perseveringly" in the Carnatic especially along the wide sandy flats bordering rivers and streams. These Peruvian seeds were sent to several districts for trial. The Board of Revenue informed the Collectors that this variety did not require irrigation and that it was entirely distinct from the species the Brazilian cotton. Mardon who was engaged in the cultivation of this cotton also stated that in his country the seeds were sown at least six yards apart, and that each grew into a tree which yielded even for ten years though the quality of the fibre degenerated after six years. In each year two crops were borne of which one alone gave fibre of good

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137 *Board of Revenue Proceedings*, No. 6393, dated September 24, 1862.

138 *Board of Revenue Proceedings*, No. 2202, dated April 17, 1863.
Each tree was said to yield 2 lb of seed cotton and required abundant irrigation in the first year\textsuperscript{139}. The results of the trial were:

In Coimbatore worms destroyed the crop\textsuperscript{140}. In Salem Fischer sowed the Peruvian seeds on October 1, 1862 in dry loose, reddish and partially sandy soils. They germinated in a week, and required abundant irrigation. Two hundred plants were standing in his garden and they were growing well\textsuperscript{141}. In North Arcot the land was well manured with farmyard manure and on September 30, 1862, seeds were sown in rows 5 feet apart. The fruits ripened in April. The picking of cotton continued till May end. Each acre gave 45 lb. of lint and 90 lb. of seed. The plants were cut to height of 4 feet in June 1863. The crop was not irrigated\textsuperscript{142}. In Tirunelveli the seeds did not germinate\textsuperscript{143}. The trial was made in Chengalpattu by Dr. Shrott, "Zillah Surgeon". Seeds were sown in rows six feet apart on November 6, 1862. They were coming up well\textsuperscript{144}.

Subsequent reports, however revealed that these exotics failed in the districts of Madurai, Coimbatore and Tirunelveli either for want of rain or due to insect attack. The results obtained in other districts are:

\textsuperscript{139} Board of Revenue Proceedings, No. 2488, dated April 28, 1863.
\textsuperscript{140} Board of Revenue Proceedings, No. 1983, dated April 1, 1863.
\textsuperscript{141} Board of Revenue Proceedings, No. 3444, dated June 12, 1863.
\textsuperscript{142} Board of Revenue Proceedings, No. 3999, dated July 1, 1863.
\textsuperscript{143} Board of Revenue Proceedings, No. 6843, dated October 26, 1863.
\textsuperscript{144} Board of Revenue Proceedings, No. 4723, dated July 20, 1863.
Chengalpattu: Egyptian cotton was first tried with great success in the year 1859-60 Dr. Shrott, "Zillah Surgeon", grew Bourbon, New Orleans and Brazil cotton successfully without irrigation. Bourbon cotton continued to produce cotton throughout the year. The Egyptian variety would not stand the heat of this country. In the opinion of the Collector of Chengalpattu, though individuals successfully grew the exotics, the ryots in general were not enthusiastic about them.\footnote{145}

South Arcot: Messrs. D. Keess and H. Gibbs of Cuddalore experimented on Peruvian, Egyptian and Sea Island cottons. The Egyptian variety was sown in two cawnies (say 2.6 acres) and there were 3000 plants in this area. This variety required watering three times a week. It was not found vigorous and did not tolerate India's heat. The experiment with Sea Island cotton commenced at Cuddalore in 1861 and continued even in 1864.

Sea Island: The experiment undertaken by Messrs. Keess and Gibbs is described as follows in the Board of Revenue Proceedings. "A nursery was in the first instance prepared and the young plants transplanted when about six weeks old.... We have always put them down in holes similar to those prepared for the Egyptian.... These varieties thrives remarkably well; attains a height of about six feet.... These plants are scarcely affected by the sun, require watering three times a week when young.... The pods are very numerous upwards of 600 pods; a few plants that were put down in 1860 yielded as abundantly now as

\footnote{145 Board of Revenue Proceedings, No. 8003, dated December 18, 1863.}
they did during the first season.... Average yield of each pod is 7 ½ grains. Average yield each plant is 4 ounces per annum."

**Peruvian:** Messrs. D. Keess and H. Gibbs sowed Peruvian cotton on October 28, 1862 in a nursery. The seedlings were transplanted after six weeks; farmyard manure was applied to the field. When there was no rain they were watered every second day. The young fruits withered and dropped off. There was a gale in October 1863 resulting in damage to many trees. It was learned that the productive powers of the plant will go no increasing until the sixth year. Concluding their observation, Messrs. D. Keess and H. Gibbs said: "The Peruvian cotton plants stand the sun well.... The staple is fine and long and the cotton commands a high price in the European market, second only to the Sea Island variety.... The yield of ten ounces per plant and 900 plants per cawney (1.32 acres) at eight feet apart will amount to 560 pounds of cleaned cotton per cawney."  

**Salem:** The Sub Collector, Salem, grew Peruvian cotton 16 feet apart in holes 4 feet and 3 feet square. No watering was done and the plants came up luxuriantly. Ryots were much impressed with the growth of this variety. But trials made by private parties were not successful. In December 1868 the Deputy Collector, Namakkal reported that Peruvian cotton seeds sown on

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146 *Board of Revenue Proceedings*, No. 418, dated January 22, 1864, and No. 2990, dated May 17, 1864.

147 *Board of Revenue Proceedings*, No. 418, dated January 22, 1864, and No. 2990, dated May 17, 1864.

148 *Board of Revenue Proceedings*, No. 3780, dated June 1, 1866.
February 27, 1868 were old and only one germinated. Fruits developed when the plants were six months old. Each pod contained twice as much cotton as the American variety and thrice as much as the Country variety. American cotton seed was also sown on February 27, 1868. Fruits developed after five months planting and the cotton was ready for picking two months thereafter.\footnote{Board of Revenue Proceedings, No. 5508, dated August 30, 1870.}

A Cotton Commission reviewed the work of cotton development carried out in India. The cotton commissioner concluded that the cultivators of Madras Presidency, when cotton seed was distributed to them, made the experiment fail.\footnote{Board of Revenue Proceedings, No. 2491, dated June 21, 1871.} Mr. Robertson, the Superintendent of the Government Farm, Saidapet added that:

- The ryots could not understand the motive of the experiment and were suspicious.
- Seeds of the exotic cotton were unsuited to the low agricultural condition and practice of the country.
- Seeds were supplied out of the season.

Citing to the above views, The Board of Revenue said that desultory attempts of improving cotton had already been made in this Presidency on a greater scale and their complete failure was a lesson that should not be forgotten. At last Government abandoned the trials and experiments.
On the whole, the area under cotton cultivation in different districts in the Madras Presidency showed an average increase in the net cultivation of cotton. The ups and downs in the area under cotton cultivation indicate pressure on the cotton cultivation owing to the seasonal fluctuation, price variation and market indicators. In the years 1852 and 1853, the average increased, since the season was favourable and the demand for cotton in the market was also high. In the district of Madurai the area under cotton cultivation increased from acres 74687 in 1851 to acres 85067 and 86786 in 1852 and 1853 respectively. The districts of Tirunelveli showed an increase of more than 13000 of acres under cotton cultivation when compared with the cotton cultivation in the years 1851 and 1852.

Due to American civil war, the cotton importation into British from America was drastically curtailed and a heavy demand, therefore, for raw cotton in the British market was created. The British Government exported raw cotton from India in a large quantity to England to resolve imbalances. This was the cause for the increase in the market rate for raw cotton during the years 1861-1864. There was a cotton boom and the area under cotton cultivation increased. In the district of Tirunelveli the area under cotton cultivation increased from 194850 acres in 1857 to 26253 in 1862 showing an increase of 67673 acres of land under cotton cultivation. In the district of Coimbatore the area increased from 113663 acres in 1857 to 207646 in 1863 with the difference of 93983 acres of land under cotton cultivation. In the district of Madurai it showed an
increase from 74583 acres in 1857 to 123914 acres in 1864 by the difference of
59331 acres under cotton cultivation.

Famines and droughts seem to have adversely affected the
agriculture more than the fluctuation of season did. During the famine of 1866-
68 the agricultural practice failed tremendously showing heavy decrease in the
acreage under cultivation. During the famine of 1877, 1878, the area under
cotton cultivation decreased from 302507 acres in 1873 to 130406 acres in 1877
showing a decrease of 172101 acres of land under cotton cultivation in
Tirunelveli district. In Coimbatore district it was from 207646 acres in 1863 to
149167 acres in 1877 with the difference of 58479 acres and in Madurai it was
from 123914 acres in 1864 to 33878 acres with a difference of 90036 acres of
land under cotton cultivation.

At the close of the nineteenth century, however, the area of cotton
cultivation had increased almost in double in ratio in the district of Coimbatore.
In the district of Tirunelveli it was 122391 acres in 1847 and 186884 acres in
1900 showing over 50 per cent of increase in the area under cotton cultivation.
In the District of Madurai it was 48747 acres in 1847 and 60523 acres in 1900
showing almost 50 per cent of increase in the area.
Table: IV: 5

Statement for Decennial Figures for the Area under Cotton Cultivation in Coimbatore, Tirunelveli and Madurai districts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Coimbatore Acres</th>
<th>Tirunelveli Acres</th>
<th>Madurai Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>97830</td>
<td>122391</td>
<td>48747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td>113663</td>
<td>194850</td>
<td>74583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>119247</td>
<td>205065</td>
<td>86919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>149167</td>
<td>130406</td>
<td>43554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>246704</td>
<td>225973</td>
<td>70069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>221007</td>
<td>201781</td>
<td>60612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>182651</td>
<td>186884</td>
<td>60523</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The area under cotton cultivation at the interval of ten years was assessed to show the area under cotton cultivation in the cotton districts. On the whole the table above shows an increase of area under cotton cultivation in the districts of Coimbatore, Tirunelveli and Madurai from 1847 to 1900. During the year 1867-1877 there seems to be a striking shrinkage of acerage. This was because of 1876 famine. The year 1887, has recorded impressive expansion due to a very favourable climate for the cultivation of cotton in all the three districts. It was because of the favourable monsoon and raised market value for raw cotton.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Coimbatore (acres)</th>
<th>Tirunelveli (acres)</th>
<th>Madurai (acres)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paddy</td>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>Paddy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>6600</td>
<td>149167</td>
<td>16000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>93448</td>
<td>246704</td>
<td>275094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>154772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>107692</td>
<td>221007</td>
<td>303467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>225874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>90023</td>
<td>182651</td>
<td>285748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>230251</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** R. Ratnam, *Agricultural Development in Madras State prior to 1900*, p. 271

When the area under cotton cultivation is compared with the area under paddy cultivation, it is also found that the fluctuation of area under each crop cultivation was the same. Probably it was due to the common influential factors like favourable monsoon or failure of rain. In all the districts as shown in the table above, the area under paddy and cotton crops cultivation increased in the year 1887 when compared with the previous ten year period ending in 1877. At the end of the nineteenth century, the area under paddy cultivation showed an increase of 83423 acres when compared with the year 1877, in Coimbatore district, 269748 acres in Tirunelveli district and 226451 acres in Madurai district. In Coimbatore district in 1900 A. D. the area under cotton cultivation was more than double the amount of the area under paddy cultivation. In the
district of Madurai the area under paddy cultivation always larger than the area under cotton cultivation. On the contrary in the district of Tirunelveli the cultivation of cotton showed a fluctuation in three decades while the area under paddy cultivation showed a steady increase.

The value of the trade in raw cotton 1855 was 25 lakhs of Rupees. Since then it had increased, though with considerable fluctuation, to nearly 6 times that sum, the average of the last five years being Rs. 137 lakhs. During 1855-56 and 1860-61, the price of cotton ranged between 2 and 2 ½ annas per lb. In 1861-62 it was a little over 3 annas, the quantity exported being 8 ¾ million of lbs and the declared value was over Rs. 170 lakhs. In 1862-63, the quantity exported fell by nearly 28 percent. Owing to transfer of North Canara and with it, the trade of the important cotton-exporting port of Compta to the Bombay Presidency, and in consequence of the American war and the unprecedented demand for Indian cotton in the English market, which arose thereupon, the price nearly double and the value of the exports rose by 40 per cent upwards. The price of cotton and together with it, the value of exports was steadily maintained in the years 1863-64, 1864-65 and 1865-66, during the continuance of the American war, and in the last mentioned year, the export reached 120 million of lbs., the highest figure recorded for this Presidency. With the end of the American civil war, and as a consequence, of the fall in demand for Indian cotton in the Manchester market, the export trade declined in 1866-67 from 11 millions lbs. to less than 2 ½ millions of lbs. In 1867-68,
however the exporters nearly doubled and in 1868-69 quadrupled. Since then they have been fluctuating between 4 to 8 millions of lbs. in quantity and 100 to 200 lakhs of Rupees in value. Table IV: 7.  

Table: IV: 7  
Raw Cotton Exported Annually from the Presidency of Madras (1855 – 1876).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Raw cotton Cwt</th>
<th>Value Rs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>21013464</td>
<td>2521351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td>53988065</td>
<td>7222286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td>55015309</td>
<td>8771724</td>
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<td>1858</td>
<td>38652542</td>
<td>6117902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1859</td>
<td>62512527</td>
<td>9597135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>78822027</td>
<td>11291211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>87544471</td>
<td>17040215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>62374133</td>
<td>23812882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>72490886</td>
<td>44718112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>73101578</td>
<td>40418937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>120034215</td>
<td>48416348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>24367350</td>
<td>9437365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>49286131</td>
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<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>94030728</td>
<td>21399830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>68513748</td>
<td>19125050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>42347132</td>
<td>10604132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>75329127</td>
<td>17205095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>67905380</td>
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<td>1873</td>
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<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>80388584</td>
<td>16268783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>82143068</td>
<td>16528491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>53879952</td>
<td>10740374</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Annual volume of the Sea-Borne Trade and Navigation of the Madras Presidency for the year 1876-77 (Madras: 1878).
The principal ports from which cotton was exported were Fort St. George, Tuticorin and Cocanada. In the year 1876-77 the exports to foreign countries, except for Ceylon and to other Presidencies show a large decrease. This was attributable to the severe famine that devastated the Presidency in the years, 1875-76 and 1876-77. The famine proved to be a great disastrous for cotton cultivation. Its effect on trade was felt only in the year 1877-78.