CHAPTER II

THE AGRARIAN BASE

An industry which is based upon agriculture is called agro-based industry. The development of textile industry is completely based upon the improvement of agriculture and particularly cotton which is one of the commercial crops of the agrarian economy. The textile industry has its significance, not only due to its export potentiality, but also due to its links with agriculture. It is true that during the colonial rule, India was being converted into an agricultural country for the development of British industrial economy. In short, the industrialization of England had depended much upon the agricultural development of India which induced the landholders to cultivate commercial crops more and more rather than foodstuffs. Moreover, the cultivation of commercial crops, particularly cotton was more favourable to the ryots to pay the land assessment to the Government in cash. Further, the industrialization of India began with the establishment of cotton mills and thus both industries and agriculture became complementary to each other. Therefore it is essential that in any discussion on cotton industry, there is a necessity for examining the existing links between the industry and agriculture. Although Mills came up in the Coimbatore town, it is essential that we look at the hinterland which produced and supplied the required raw material viz., the raw cotton.
Thus, in this chapter the cotton cultivation, response of peasants and the role of colonial Government and how the cultivation of cotton became the base for the floatation of cotton mills in Coimbatore are to be emphasized.

Introduction of Ryotwari System

After the annexation of Baramahal districts in 1792, by the Company's Government, Captain Read introduced Ryotwari System in the newly annexed territory as an experimental basis. Indeed the experiment was also extended to Coimbatore after a few years. By defeating Tippu Sultan in 1799, the whole of Coimbatore area was brought under the East India Company and placed under Major Macleod and Hurdis the Collector of Dindigul. After defeating Tippu Sultan in 1799, the whole of Coimbatore area was brought under the East India Company and placed under Major Macleod and Hurdis the Collector of Dindigul. Both Macleod and Hurdis assessed the lands based on the available village accounts. Further, the assessment was done purely on the basis of the fertility of the soil and gave patta to each ryot for his holding. However this system was given up in preference to village leases which was introduced after 1805. But, the Ryotwari system was again introduced in Coimbatore in 1815 by Sullivan, then Collector of Coimbatore. After a thorough experimentation in Baramahal and Coimbatore districts, the Ryotwari System was declared to be generally introduced in

2. Ibid., pp. 96-101; C.Ramachandran, East India Company and South Indian Economy, Madras, 1980, pp. 31-32.
the whole Madras Presidency in 1820 by Sir Thomas Munro, the Governor of Madras. Though the Company's Government faced difficulties in the beginning, in the later years of colonial rule, the Ryotwari System gave a permanent income to the Government without having intermediaries. Moreover, under this system the Ryots could cultivate their own favourable crops, particularly commercial crops independently. Thus, the Ryotwari System gave way for the conversion of more and more land for cotton cultivation.

**Beginning of Cotton Cultivation**

Coimbatore district had the experience of cotton cultivation from time immemorial. The British, who arrived in Coimbatore, during the late 18th century, were fascinated by its extensive cultivation of cotton. Their interest in the Coimbatore cotton increased when England was getting more and more industrialized. Before the experimentation of foreign varieties, Nadum Paruthee,* Uppum Paruthee* and Shemparuthee were cultivated extensively in Coimbatore. Of these, the first one was very fine and white, though short staple, cultivated in the red soil. The last one was cultivated in the garden lands and used only for spinning brahminical thread.5 Uppum the coarse variety was cultivated


* Paruthee means raw cotton which is not processed in Tamil.
in the black soil. The name Uppum is synonymous with Ukkan, has been interpreted to mean that Vokkaligars who hailed from Chitradurg and Dharwar districts, settled down in the western parts of the Coimbatore district and brought cotton with them during their migration. In due course, this variety was most extensively cultivated in the Madras Presidency.

Before the establishment of cotton mills in England, the locally available cotton was consumed by the local cotton yarn and cloth manufactures. While Kaikolars and Jadars were the leading weaving communities concentrated in the Coimbatore town area, Canara Devangas and the lower castes settled in the villages to manufacture cotton goods. Besides, the Acchadikkaran, Jannappan, Nesavukkaran, Putnul Saliyan and Sedan were indulged in the cotton cleaning and pressing, calendering, dyeing and weaving works. The Kaikolars were the leading handloom weaving community produced only the ordinary common country cloths which always found a ready market. After all these local consumption, the raw cotton was exported to Malabar. While this was the case before the industrialization of England, with the establishment of colonial rule in Madras, the ryots of

6. R. Balasubramaniam, Monograph on cotton in Madras state, Madras, 1965, p. 15. One is not sure whether one can accept this interpretation in toto. The term Vokkaliga has originated from the Kannada root word Okkalu-maga (ryot's son)
Coimbatore declared that they cultivated cotton not because it paid but because it enabled them to pay the land assessment.\(^9\)

It is true that the invention of textile machineries by Wyatt, Arkwright and Hargreaves from 1738 to 1767 and the consequent establishment of the factory system from 1785 greatly increased the demand for cotton in England. While she imported a little more than 40,00,000 lb in 1764, it increased to 5,60,00,000 lb in 1801.\(^10\) Eventhough the supply of cotton to the manufacturers of cotton goods in England was from Levant in the beginning, very soon West Indies, South America, the United States began to export in larger quantities. America found cotton market in England much later and her first export to Liverpool in 1770 was 2000 lb.\(^11\) But, due to its excellent quality the supply was ever increasing one and it increased to 60,02,47,488 lb in 1848.\(^12\)

Nevertheless, Great Britain did not tolerate the dependency over America to import cotton and turned their attention towards India, one of the important colonies of England. As a first step, in 1788, the Court of Directors of the British East India Company directed the Governor General of Bengal to export 5,00,000 lb of Broach and Surat or cotton

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12. Ibid., p. 81.
of similar quality. Since the Provinces under the company's Government did not really afford sufficient quantity of cotton to the demand of the native weavers, only a small quantity of cotton of cheap quality was exported from Bombay. Seeing the low quality and less supply, the Company involved in the affairs of cotton cultivation in India. As a result, in 1790 Anderson was employed for distributing cotton seeds from Mauritius and Malta. In Madras, he distributed the Bourbon cotton seeds. This variety was subsequently naturalized in the districts of Coimbatore, Salem and Tinnevelly. It was much patronized by Hughes a private merchant who resided in Tinnevelly. Following this, to get a better cleaned cotton, in 1813, the Court of Directors sent Bernard Metcalfe to Tinnevelly with American cotton cleaning machines. In the capacity of a merchant and a cleaner of cotton for hire, Metcalfe resided several years in the States of Georgia and New Orleans before his arrival to Tinnevelly. But the attempt of Metcalfe failed as the natives refused to give up their old Charka for

such expensive machinery as the gin.\textsuperscript{19} However, with the opening of free trade, the export of cotton from India was ever increasing. For instance, while in 1813 the total export of Indian cotton to England was only 4,97,350 lb it increased to 8,60,00,000 lb in 1818.\textsuperscript{20} Besides, a considerable quantity of 5,00,00,000 lb was also exported to China in 1818.\textsuperscript{21}

Nevertheless, the Madras Presidency was lagging behind in cotton cultivation. In the Presidency as a whole, cotton cultivation was not very extensive and the cotton grown in many districts was not sufficient for local consumption. For instance, Ganjam, one of the districts of the Presidency produced only a third of the cotton required for its manufacture. Hence, most of the textile manufacturing centres of South India imported a considerable portion of their requirements from the Mahratta Country, Nagpur and some other Princely States.\textsuperscript{22}

\textbf{Randall's Recommendation}

Seeing the backwardness of the Presidency in cotton cultivation, in his Memoir, Randall, the commercial resident

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{19} J. Talboys Wheeler, Hand-Book, p. 29.
  \item \textsuperscript{20} Minute of the Governor General of Bengal, 14 Aug, 1839, Papers relative to Measures taken Since 1836 for promoting the Cultivation of Cotton in India, London, 1847 (hereafter, Papers-Cultivation of Cotton in India) p. 6; J. Forbes Royle, \textit{Culture and Commerce of Cotton}, p. 81.
  \item \textsuperscript{21} J. Forbes Royle, \textit{Culture and Commerce of Cotton}, p. 18.
  \item \textsuperscript{22} A. Sarada Raju, \textit{Economic Conditions in the Madras Presidency}, p. 89.
\end{itemize}
of the ceded districts, said that the cotton cultivated in the then Madras Presidency was not of good quality. Therefore he suggested that cotton seeds of at least 500 or 1000 bags should be obtained from the company agents in Brazil as well as from the United States and it should be distributed to the Collectors of Dharwad, Canara, Malabar, Srirangapatam, Tinnavelly, Madras etc. Randall also suggested that positive instructions should be given by the Collectors to the Amildars and to the chief-cultivators of each area, so that they would take up a keen interest in experimenting with the new seeds.

Randall also proposed many incentives like an immediate cash payment of fifty star pagodas* to an Amildars katcheri which supplies 500 lb of new clean, white raw cotton without leaves, dirt or dust. It is fascinating to notice as to what extent Randall went in popularizing cotton cultivation. He proposed that a gold medal should be given to the first candidate who delivered a quantity of 500 lb cotton out of Brazil cotton seed. He also proposed to establish this form of prize in all the districts whichever would introduce Brazil cotton. The idea behind his proposal was to get more profit out of the East India Company's cotton trade.23

The recommendations of Randall were not fully carried out since the cotton trade was then not the monopoly of the

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* One pagoda was equal to Rs. 3.50. In Tamil country the pagoda was called star pagoda.

Company. Yet, it was compelled to carry out the cotton cultivation and trade in order to remit the loan which they incurred from Home Country. So, as per the suggestion of Randall to experiment the foreign cotton, the Madras Government established four cotton farms of four hundred acres each in Coimbatore, Masulipatam, Tinnevelly and Vizagapattam in the same year and each farm was placed under the Commercial Resident of the districts. Robert Heath who was then the commercial resident of Salem and Coimbatore succeeded in the cultivation of Bourbon cotton in the experimental farm by following the directions which he received from Hughes of Tinnevelly. By his patience and perseverance, Heath was able to propagate successfully this variety in the district of Coimbatore and was able to convince the ryots about the profitability of cultivating this variety in preference to the common cotton of the country. He produced the Bourbon cotton cheaper by availing himself more extensively of the service of local cultivators and in the season of 1823-24 he procured from the district 500 bales of 300 lb each cleaned Bombay cotton. The ryots of Coimbatore were at that time well satisfied that the cultivation of Bourbon cotton was more profitable than that of the common country cotton and thousands of acres were

brought under this type. Following him, G.F. Fischer, the private cotton merchant of Coimbatore and Salem area took up the matter and established large godowns chiefly in the taluks of Erode and Dharapuram to stock the purchased cotton. He gave advances to the ryots for growing Bourbon cotton and was entirely successful in introducing this variety and he alone purchased a major portion of cotton available in Coimbatore and exported to England. Moreover, the Bourbon cotton of Coimbatore attained a favourable market in England. While the exporters were paying between Rs. 70 and 90 for a candy of 500 lb locally, it was sold in England between Rs. 140 and 180. But, the cultivators received only between Rs. 40 and 50. Yet the ryots of Coimbatore found out that the cultivation of Bourbon cotton was more profitable than the country cotton. Further, for the export of cotton from the port of Cochin the road between Coimbatore and Cochin was repaired.

Efforts by American Planters

As a next step, the Court of Directors engaged ten planters from the cotton states of North America to instruct

31. Minute of Sullivan, Member of the Governor in Council, Madras, 25 April 1840, Papers-Cultivation of Cotton in India, p. 52.
32. Ibid, p. 54.
the natives of India in the cultivation and cleaning of cotton. Among them, three were sent to Madras and they arrived at Tinnevelly in January 1841. In order to supervise their operations J.V. Hughes of 39th Regiment of the Native Infantry was appointed. For their experiment, the collector of Tinnevely obtained 1,200 acres of land with cotton plants from the ryots on the agreement that the cotton crop should be managed and treated by the American method and produce would be made over to the ryots after reserving a sufficient quantity to the company. The Americans proceeded to the locality and pointed out the defects in the native mode of gathering the seed cotton and proceeded to explain their own method. The ryots in return acknowledged the superiority of the American method but urged that it was mere labourious and expensive and therefore they refused to adopt it unless the Government would purchase the cotton so produced at a fixed valuation. The demand of the ryots was not accepted by the planters since it was out of the policy of the Company, and so, the planters were removed to Coimbatore.

Hughes, and other three planters arrived at Erode, one of the taluks of Coimbatore on 27 August 1841, but failed to

34. Letter, Sec. GoM, to CD, 22 Feb. 1841, Papers-Cultivation of Cotton in India, p. 305.
35. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
get land and labour for profitable cultivation. So, Simpson, one of the three planters proceeded to Coimbatore on 29 August 1841 accompanied by the cattle, drivers, farm implements and necessary seed for the cotton farm to be established. Following Simpson, Hawley the other planter and Hughes also left for Coimbatore. However, Morris, the last one stayed at Erode acquired 100 acres of land, ploughed and partly planted. There he cultivated New Orleans, the American variety. But, it became utter failure due to the dryness of the soil. So, he dropped it and left for Coimbatore. Further, on 24 February 1942, Robert Wight succeeded Hughes as the superintendent of the American planters. With the arrival of Wight, the cultivation of cotton in Coimbatore got a new shape. He arrived at the conclusion that the improvement of the Indian and Bourbon cotton was of greater importance than the introduction of American types.

Accordingly, in Coimbatore Wight made an extensive tour to the cotton cultivating areas and made agreements with the ryots to cultivate Bourbon cotton under the American system. As per the agreements he rented out the lands for one or more years on condition that the ryots would cultivate local or Bourbon cotton for Wight according to the American plan and

partly it should be cultivated by American seed. In return for the land, rent and part of the agricultural charges would be paid for half of the crop and he also accepted to purchase the remaining half at the market-price. To carry out these arrangements into effect, Wight proposed to station the three planters at different places in the district. The proposal was approved by the Governor in Council, Madras. As per the above mentioned agreement, Wight arranged about 880 acres of land separately for the three planters in different places like Coimbatore, Coorchee and Udumalpet. Wight himself was having about 200 acres at Coimbatore and sowed Uppum, Bourbon and New Orleans. Along with his farm, Wight supervised the farms of all the other three planters. Subsequently, a large ginning factory on the American plan was built at Coimbatore and a complete machineries for ginning and packing of cotton was established under the superintendence of Petrie an English Engineer. Initially the gins were operated by

42. Letter, R. Wight to Sec., Rev., GoM, 14 March 1842, Papers-Cultivation of Cotton in India, p. 331.
43. Minutes of Consultations, 12 April 1842, Papers-Cultivation of Cotton in India, p. 335.
44. Notes, R. Wight, 1 Feb. 1943, Papers-Cultivation of Cotton in India, p. 351.
manually and later they were replaced by cattle. 46

In the experimental farms the ryots had been offered seed and Wight purchased the produce for the first one or two years until its market value had been ascertained. 47 To encourage the cultivation of American cotton, Wight paid Rs. 15 to 20 for the candy of 500 lb seed cotton while the local cotton was selling at Rs. 12 48. Thus the produce which he collected from the experimental farms was ginned and cleaned in the Government ginning factory and sent to Cochin which is 116 miles away from Coimbatore by bullock carts to

46. Letter R. Wight to Sec. Rev., GoM, 11 Nov. 1846, Selection of Papers Showing the Measures taken since 1847 to Promote the Cultivation of Cotton in India, Vol. II - Madras, London, 1857 (hereafter, Measures to Promote Cultivation of Cotton in India, p. 216. Before the introduction of gins in Coimbatore, cleaning of cotton was generally defective and sometimes wholly omitted. From the date of cotton cultivation, cleaning was performed solely by hand after the removal of seed by foot. Subsequently, a foot roller was used to separate the cotton from the seed. On the eve of the introduction of gins an instrument called charka was extensively used. The charka consisted of two rollers set in a wooden frame with a small interval between them. These were with an ordinary handle and the motion of the one being communicated to the other by a sort of endless screw. The cotton was passed between these rollers and the lint was being separated from the seed. On the other hand the American saw gin was a totally different machine. It consisted of number of thin wheels, the edges of which were cogged or toothed. These circular saws were to separate the lint from the seed. The longer gins contained 60 circular saws which were turned round by either hand-labour or cattle.

47. Letter, R. Wight to GoM, 29 Sept. 29 Sept., 1845, Papers-Cultivation of Cotton in India, p. 387.

England. Accordingly, out of 219 bales of cleaned cotton which Wight got from the experimental farms for 1842-43, 190 bales were exported to England. Likewise, the output of the following years was also exported.

Further, in the ginning factory the ryots were invited to examine the whole process and asked to compare the cotton cleaned by the gin with that of charka. But, still the natives hung back from adopting either the American seed or the American methods. Only a few ryots promised to cultivate a small extent but none seemed to be anxious to commence. Moreover, the results obtained out of the American mode of cultivation showed that the farming system of America was inapplicable to India certainly to Coimbatore. Because, the output of the experimental farms in the subsequent years was comparatively very less. While the average output of the experimental farms for the season 1842-43 was 228 lb of seed cotton per acre, it reduced to 124 1/8 lb for the season 1844-45. Further, the shorter and stronger lint (cleaned

49. Before got it repaired the road which led to the West Coast, the foreign export of Coimbatore cotton was via Madras Port, to which the cotton was sent by bullock carts.
50. The standard weight of each bale then was 300 lb.
52. Letter, R. Weight to GoM, 29 Sept. 1845, Papers-Cultivation of Cotton in India, p. 387.
55. Table No. 2, Papers-Cultivation of Cotton in India, p. 406.
cotton) of the indigenous cotton found a ready sale to the native traders who considered that it was most suitable to the native manufacturers. So, they did not purchase the cotton of the foreign seed. Again, the Government of Madras found out that keeping of the experimental farms was quite expensive and the total expenditure of the farms from March 1841 to 31 August 1845 was Rs. 1, 11,006. Since the condition was such, the Government of Madras proposed the abandonment of the cotton experimental farms. So, Wight gave up it in 1845. However, he was allowed to continue his farming operations in Coimbatore while the planters were directed to carry an independent operations in Bellary and Tinnenely.

Indeed, after the failure of cotton experiment in and around Coimbatore, Wight transferred his experimental farm to Ootaccamund which was then part of the Coimbatore district. There, he occupied patta (title-deeds) lands as well as the Government waste land for his experiment. To avoid the compensation which had to be paid to the patta holders, Wight gave preference to the Government waste land for which the rent was paid by the farm establishment. But, when he could not obtain sufficient quantity or good quality he

56. Letter, Collector of Coimbatore to Chief Sec., GoM., 31 May 1850, Measures to Promote Cultivation of Cotton in India p. 312.
concentrated on the pattadars. Accordingly, for the year 1845-46 Wight acquired a few acres there, sowed New Orleans and obtained a good yield. Seeing the growth of American cotton, for the year 1846-47 he acquired about 700 acres. For the patta land he made agreement with the ryots. Accordingly, the rent of the land was to be adjusted with the Government. Out of the total rent payable to the Government half of the rent should be given to the ryots as compensation. After the experiment, the land should be handed over to the ryots. However, for the garden land he paid the full amount of the Government assessment as compensation. There, Wight cultivated New Orleans by using the native labourers on American method.

Moreover, in 1847, many Lanchashire Mills had to be closed owing to the scarcity of cotton. So, Wight was authorized by the Court of Directors to purchase 5,000 bales of New Orleans cotton preferably. But, Wight found out that it was highly impossible to purchase as much required. Because, the cultivation of New Orleahs was very limited in

59. Letter, R. Wight to Chief Sec., GoM, 11 June 1849, Measures to Promote Cultivation of Cotton in India p. 216.
60. Form of agreements for land between the sircar and Ryots, Papers-Cultivation of Cotton in India, p. 403.
61. Letter, R. Wight to Chief Sec., GoM, 11 June 1849, Measures to Promote Cultivation of Cotton in India p. 216.
63. Letter, President, Manchester Commercial Association to CD, 5 Feb. 1847, Papers-Cultivation of Cotton in India, p.424; Letter, R. Wight to Collector of Coimbatore, 14 June 1847, Measures to Promote Cultivation of Cotton in India p. 156.
Coimbatore. However, in order to bring more acres under American cotton Wight proposed the Government of Madras to reduce the land tax into 50 percent where the American type of cotton was cultivated. The proposal was accepted by the Government of Madras. But it was not accepted by the Court of Directors. They argued that the remission of assessment on land cultivated with American cotton would be a clear violation of general principle which prescribed that the assessment should be regulated by the capability of the land without any reference to the particular description of produce which might me raised on it. So, Wight concentrated on the purchase of both American and native type of cotton preferably ginned one. Since, the Government ginning factory was not sufficient enough to gin required quantity of cotton, he also arranged about 150 families to clean the kapas by using charkas.

Nevertheless, Wight was permitted to purchase American cotton from the ryots on account of Government at remunerative price. Accordingly Wight was ready to pay Re. 1

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64. Letter, R. Weight to GoM, 20 June 1847, Measures to Promote Cultivation of Cotton in India pp. 153-154.
65. Minute of the Governor of Madras, 3 Sept. 1847, Measures to Promote Cultivation of Cotton in India pp. 158-159.
66. Letter, CD to GCM, 4 July 1848, Measures to Promote Cultivation of Cotton in India, pp. 179-181.
67. Ibid.
* Kapas are nothing but unprocessed seed-cotton.
68. Letter, R. Weight to Chief Sec., GoM, 21 June 1848, Measures to Promote Cultivation of Cotton in India pp. 293-295.
for a _maund_ of 25 lb. of New Orleans seed cotton, while the native cotton was As. 8 (half rupee) for the same quantity. 69

Thus, including the output of his experimental farm, till the beginning of 1849, Wight collected about 3,000 bales of cleaned cotton. 70

In the meantime, the Court of Directors considered that the object with which the experimental farm in Coimbatore had been fully attained by demonstrating the soil and climate of the district which were capable of producing cotton of a description in every respect suited to the wants of the British manufacturers. 71

However, the Court of Directors directed the Government of Madras to distribute the American seed either freely or at a trifling charge to those willing to cultivate it and also authorized to grant small prizes for its successful cultivation. 72

Further, to make the ryots to adjust with the American type of cotton cultivation with American seeds Wight reduced his experimental farm to 500 acres for the season of 1849-50 and this to be cultivated by the farm establishment. Further, he was also preparing about 200 acres of land to be cultivated entirely by native hired labourers with their native cattle and implements and under Wight's

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69. Letter, R. Wight to GoM, 2 June 1848, _Measures to Promote Cultivation of Cotton in India_, p. 181.
70. Memorandum, GoM, 11 May 1849, _Measures to Promote Cultivation of Cotton in India_, p. 212.
72. Ibid.
superintendent. In this farm Wight proposed to cultivate three different varieties of American cotton.

In spite of that, in June 1849, the Government of Madras determined not only to abolish the experimental culture of cotton in Coimbatore, but also the mercantile operations of the experimental farms. Moreover, the Government wanted to leave the cultivation of American cotton in the hands of the ryots. So Wight gave up the lands which were kept for experimentation to the ryots except two or three fields which were taken by one Prince, a cape farmer who came to Coimbatore to receive instructions in cotton cultivation. But, the Court of Directors did not like to relieve the position of Wight as superintendent of cotton experiments. So, again he rented out about 50 to 60 acres of land both garden and nunjah in Comibatore. There, the garden land was to be cultivated by the proprietors under the Wight's direction while the nunjah land was cultivated by the farm's cattle and aided by a few hired ploughs. Besides, the ryots were thinking that the native cotton could not be cultivated in the irrigated land. But, it was not accepted

73. Memorandum of GoM, 11 May 1849, Measures to Promote Cultivation of Cotton in India, pp. 211-212.
74. Ibid.
75. J. Forbes Royle, Culture and Commerce of the Cotton, p. 506.
76. Letter, R. Wight to GoM, 6 Nov. 1849, Measures to Promote Cultivation of Cotton in India, p. 231.
78. Letter, R. Wight to GoM, 6 Nov. 1849, Measures to Promote Cultivation of Cotton in India, p. 231.
by Wight. To experiment it, two garden lands were partly sown with the native cotton. Among these, some portion was given to the ryots to cultivate according to the native method. The equal portion was taken by Wight for comparison and to be cultivated according to the American method and irrigated the same as the American cotton. Thus Wight prepared the ryots to cultivate country cotton in the irrigated land. Further, Wight made to realize the ryots about the benefit of cultivating American cotton, though the yield was very less during the initial period of experimentation. Accordingly, the district was having 2,000 acres under the American cotton in 1851-52, though the ryots were very much hesitant to adapt the American seed or American culture. Nevertheless, the cultivation of American cotton was also begun in the other districts of the Presidency.

End of State Supervision in Cotton Cultivation

However, Wight retired from the service and left India in March 1853. Following this, on 20 July 1853 the Court of Directors directed the Government of Madras that all the purchases of American cotton to be ceased from that date.

79. Ibid.
81. Ibid.
82. Ibid., p. 213.
Further, the Court of Directors directed that all the direct interference in the culture of foreign cotton should be gradually relinquished for private enterprise. 83

Since then, the experiments in the growth of American cotton had been carried out by private individuals. 84 Besides, with the growth of rail transport, both the cultivation and trade increased. Therefore, the cultivation of cotton both indigenous and foreign began to spread out rapidly in the district. The following table No. 1 gives idea about the growth in cotton cultivation. 85

Table No. 1. Cotton Cultivation in Coimbatore

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Area under cultivation (in Acres)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1857-58</td>
<td>1,20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882-83</td>
<td>2,41,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With the growth of acreage under cultivation, the market for the output was also quite established. During the cotton season thousands of bullock carts were coming to Udumalpet, one of the important cotton centres of the district and from there the cotton was being sent to Dindugal to transport it

to Tinnevelly by train. From there it was exported to foreign countries. Again, after the local consumption of the district, the remaining cotton was sent to Bombay, Calicut, Madras and Trichi for local use as well as for exportation.

**Free Traders and the Indian Cotton**

In the meantime, a five year scheme, formulated in England to spend 20 million pounds for increasing the cotton production in India was abandoned due to the out break of the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. However, the free traders of Manchester urged the Government to adopt measures to enable India to supply sufficient cotton to feed the Lancashire Mills. Further, with the formation of Manchester Cotton Supply Association in 1857, the Manchester free traders carried on their propaganda in a more systematic and vigorous way. But, after taking over the administration of India from the Company by the British Parliament, the Government's attention was shifted over to the removal as the defects in the inefficient mechanical preparation and unsatisfactory business arrangements, which were expected to increase the

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87. Ibid; BRP. 2863, 23 Nov. 1822.
export of Indian cotton to British market. Besides, the export of Indian cotton was ever raising and increased to 6,42,000 bales of 400 lb. each in 1859. Of which, the great bulk was sent to England. So, while the Government of India was sympathizing with the demand of the Manchester free traders to promote the cotton cultivation in India, remained inactive in practice due to the availability of cheap cotton conveniently from different sources, because of the encouragement given by the Company to the ryots to promote the cotton cultivation. But, the propaganda of the free traders had its effect, when the American Civil War started. During the war the Southern states of America were blockaded and so the responsibility of feeding Manchester Mills were left for India. To make an effect, on 28 February 1861, in his Minutes, Lord Canning, the Viceroy of India directed all the local Governments to fulfil the demands of British cotton goods manufacturers by supplying required cotton. Again, he urged the British merchants to send their agents to the cotton producing districts in the interior to procure whatever quantity was available and to adopt measures to reduce the number of intermediaries between the producers and exporters.

92. Ibid.
Further State Inducement

Since the cotton crisis in the British textile industry caused much excitement in the Indian cotton circles during the first year of the American Civil War, India exported to Britain almost everything which resembled cotton and it was clear that without increasing the acreage under cultivation, India could not feed Lancashire. As the pressure mounted, the Viceroy again issued a Minute on 9 August 1861 by announcing the offer of prizes in each Presidency to the grower of the largest quantity of cotton combined with the best quality. As a result, a large number of acres were brought under cotton cultivation. For the easy transportation railway lines were laid and roads were repaired. Accordingly the average annual export of Indian cotton to United Kingdom was increased to 9,73,000 bales during the Civil war from 1860-65. Further, the rise of the price of cotton in England was unimaginable during the war. While the Surat cotton was sold at 3d to 5d. per lb before the war, it increased to 20d. to 24d. during the war.

Besides, the contribution of Madras Presidency in the exportation of cotton was ever increasing (see table No. 2)

95. Ibid., pp. 256-257.
96. Ibid, p. 258.
Table 2. Export of Cotton from the Madras Presidency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Export of cotton (in lb)</th>
<th>Value (in Rs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1860-61</td>
<td>7,88,22,027</td>
<td>1,12,91,211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865-66</td>
<td>12,00,34,216</td>
<td>4,84,16,348</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the total exportation from the Madras Presidency, the maximum percentage was exported to England (see table No. 3).

Table No. 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total percentage of cotton exportation to England from Madras Presidency out of its total exportation</th>
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The economic effect of the large increase in the exports during the war was that an enormous quantity of money poured

100. Report on the administration of the Madras Presidency during the year 1863-64, p. 27; Report on the Administration of the Madras Presidency during the year, 1865-66, p. 35.
into India and more particularly into Bombay.\textsuperscript{101} Members of the various communities in Bombay including merchants, bankers, brokers and traders invested everything in cotton exports and thought of no other business or commodity in their excitement of the huge profits which the white staple of the country brought them.\textsuperscript{102} The influx of wealth which thus poured into the slender coffers of Bombay citizens stimulated wider enterprises in other directions and afforded opportunities to company promoters to put forward various schemes in the form of banking and financing associations, press and shipping companies, land and building undertakings and various other enterprises.\textsuperscript{103} It is true that the enterprises which were emerged during the war were closely associated with the cotton export. But the profit of the cotton trade was invested in the textile industry only in 1870s and the investment was not only in Bombay but also in Madras.

**Coming of the Cambodia Cotton**

Indeed, following the year 1853, the experimentation of American cotton varieties was getting deteriorated in the Presidency due to the lack of Government encouragement. However, it was once again revived with the opening of the

\textsuperscript{101} Robert W. Brock, "Cotton Manufacture in India and China", p. 362.
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid.
Saidapet Farm at Madras in 1878. There, the systematic experiment was conducted on New Orleans, Upland American, Brazilian and Sea Island varieties. But the results recorded were of negative in value. Later, in 1905, other varieties like Egyptian, Caravomica and Peruvian were also tried at the new farms opened in Bellary, Hagari, Attur and Taliparamba. But, all of them were failed without any success. The situation was changed with the introduction of Cambodia cotton in Coimbatore. With that, the involvement of the colonial Government was also more active in the experimentation and the hybridization to keep the quality of Cambodia. Further, the introduction of Cambodia cotton and keeping up of its quality also led to the development of mills in Coimbatore. Along with the availability of short, and medium staple, the long staple Cambodia could feed the mills to manufacture yarn according to the needs of the local and foreign markets.

In 1904, C. Benson, the Deputy Director of Agriculture, Madras obtained some cotton seeds from A. Paulin, the president of the Chamber of Commerce, Pondicherry and sowed at the Agricultural Research Station, Koilpatti. In 1905, A. Harvey and Company the cotton merchants and the mill entrepreneurs of Madurai, Tuticorin and Ambasamudram found

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105. R. Balasubramaniam, Monograph on Cotton in Madras, pp. 103-104
107. R. Balasubramaniam, Monograph on Cotton in India, p. 104.
the same type of cotton from Cambodia in Indo-China in a bundle of kapas which was traced to Pondicherry and they planted it in the compound of the Company's pressing factory at Virudhunagar.\textsuperscript{108} The successful growth and good yield of it immediately caught the attention of the cultivators of the Madras Presidency and in 1907 a small quantity of the seed was distributed. Thus, in 1907-08 fifty bales of lint were produced out of this seed and in 1910, the cultivation was slowly moved into Coimbatore.\textsuperscript{109} Within a short span of time, this variety was thoroughly established in the Southern districts of the Madras Presidency, particularly in the Coimbatore district. Owing principally to its capacity of being grown profitably, its cultivation was spread out rapidly from the very beginning and thus in 1912 there were about 60,000 acres were brought under the Cambodia cotton.\textsuperscript{110} The cultivation was ever increasing and by 1919 the area occupied by the Cambodia cotton in the Presidency was estimated as 2,00,000 acres.\textsuperscript{111} Seeing the profit earning capacity of the Cambodia, the ryots were giving up their paddy cultivation and concentrated on Cambodia cotton cultivation.\textsuperscript{112} Further, more and more unoccupied lands were brought under Cambodia cotton. Accordingly, in 1923-24, in

\textsuperscript{108} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{109} R. Balasubramaniam, Monograph on cotton in India, p 104.
\textsuperscript{112} G.O. 1929 (Ms), Dev (Confid1) 31 Oct. 1936.
the Coimbatore district alone 1,64,898 acres were under Cambodia cotton. 113 Corresponding to the increase of the acreage under Cambodia cotton, in 1934-35, the total area under cotton in the Coimbatore district as well as in the Madras Presidency were 3,63,775 and 24,76,663 acres respectively. 114 By 1945, 5,00,000 acres were brought under Cambodia cotton in the Presidency. 115

Thus, the lucrative nature of the Cambodia cotton attracted both the cultivators and the traders and Tirupur, one of the cotton centres of Coimbatore became the centre of Cambodia cotton. As a result, alongside Tirupur, a number of cotton ginning and pressing factories were erected. While in 1898 Tirupur was having one ginning and one pressing factories, it increased to fifteen ginning, four ginning and pressing and two pressing factories by 1935. 116 However, before 1914, the kapas of Tirupur area was railed or even carted to Virudhunagar or Tuticorin markets owing to the inadequate ginning facilities. 117 But, after establishing a sufficient ginning and pressing factories in and around Tirupur, the Cambodia cotton of various places were brought to Tirupur, ginned and cleaned there and exported to various

115. G.O. 2364 (Ms), Dev., 19 June 1945.
consuming centres. In Tirupur, the merchants mainly Europeans bought and sent the Cambodia cotton to the mills of Bombay, Calcutta, Madurai, Sholapur and Tuticorin and also a good portion was exported to Japan, England and other countries of Europe. Further, during the First World War, the merchants of Bombay came and settled in Tirupur, established ginning and pressing factories, purchased kapas from the cultivators directly, cleaned it and exported to Bombay. Likewise, before the establishment of regulated cotton market in Tirupur, which was considered the second largest cotton market in India, the mill-entrepreneurs of Coimbatore established cotton ginning factories in the cotton centres like Tirupur, Avanashi, Udumalpet and Coimbatore, purchased cotton directly from the cultivators, cleaned it in their own ginning factories and supplied it to their mills. On the other hand, after the establishment of the regulated market, the mill-owners of Coimbatore procured most of their requirements from the Tirupur market and the remaining was supplied by the local as well as foreign markets. Accordingly, by 1939, it was estimated that the average annual consumption of cotton from the Tirupur market was 1,60,000 bales, from the other markets like Avanashi,

118. Ibid., pp. 800 and 805.
120. Berar Market in Bombay was considered the largest cotton market in India.
Dharapuram, Pollachi and Udumalpet it was 40,000 bales. At the same time the mill-owners of Coimbatore were also importing about 50,000 bales of upcountry and foreign cotton. The upcountry cotton was collected from the Bombay side through the agents. The foreign cotton mainly from Egypt was imported through the port of Cochin.

**Tricky Traders**

Since at Tirupur Cambodia cotton had acquired a wide spread reputation for its superior quality, it induced the unscrupulous traders to resort to various tricks to sell their short staple cotton as long staple Cambodia cotton. Accordingly, the traders transported the inferior cotton to Tirupur by train and rerail it as Tirupur Cambodia. Secondly, the Cambodia lint was mixed with short staple varieties, pressed it into bales and railed it from Tirupur as Tirupur Cambodia. Thirdly, in the ginneries, the Kapas of Cambodia was mixed with short staple, ginned and pressed and exported as Tirupur Cambodia. Thus, along with the local short staple, the kapas from Guntur, Davangere and even from Hubli were transported to Tirupur and sold it as Tirupur Cambodia.

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121. Letter, Chairman, Tirupur Cotton Market Committee, Tirupur to Collector of Coimbatore, 16 March 1939, G.O. 767 (Ms), Dev., 3 April 1940.
122. G.O. 886 (Ms), Dev. (Confidl), 22 Feb 1946.
Further, in some cases, the traders bought cotton from Khandesh, stored it in Tirupur and sold it to the local mills as Tirupur Cambodia. Moreover, large quantities of low grade Cambodia cotton was transported from the extreme south of the Presidency to Tirupur to get the benefit of Tirupur Cambodia cotton.

Cotton Commission's Observation

In the meantime in 1917, the Government of India appointed the Indian Cotton Committee to study both the possibilities of cotton cultivation and trade. In their report, the Committee stated that the practice of mixing short staple cotton with long staple cotton was much prevalent in the ginning and pressing factories, in certain long staple areas with a view to secure the higher price offered to the long staple. Secondly, the short staple cotton was frequently railed to the long staple areas and rebooked them even without mixing the long staple cotton. So, the Committee strongly condemned these malpractices and recommended that legislations should be undertaken immediately with a view to prevent the transportation of short staple cotton for admixture with the long staple cotton. It also recommended certain measures including the

125. Ibid., P.9.
126. Ibid., P.11.
licensing of cotton ginning and pressing factories to prevent such malpractices as damping, mixing and adulteration which were injurious to the quality and reputation of Indian cotton. As a result, the Cotton Transport Act was passed in the Central Legislature in February 1923. The Act allowed the local Governments to notify the protected areas in which superior varieties of cotton were being cultivated and to specify the railway stations within such areas to which extraneous and waste cotton and seed were being booked.

Accordingly, on 13 August 1924, the Madras Government issued the press communique regarding the protected areas of long staple cotton and the Railway Stations which came under those areas. Though the cotton growers and merchants of the Madras Presidency opposed the Cotton Transport Act, it was put into force in the Madras Presidency on 24 November 1925.

State Intervention

Likewise, as a supplementary to the Cotton Transport Act, on the basis of the recommendation of the Indian Central Cotton Committee, the Central Legislative Assembly passed the Cotton Ginning and Pressing Factories Act in 1925 to prevent or at any rate reduce the adulteration of long cotton.

129. G.O. 1657 (P), Dev., 18 Nov. 1925.  
staple by mixing short staple which were being practised in the ginning and pressing factories. As per the Act, the cotton ginning factory should maintain a ginning register containing a daily record of all cotton ginned in the factory, the names of the persons to whom the cotton had been ginned and of the quantity ginned for each person. Likewise, the owners of every cotton pressing factory should maintain a press register containing a daily record of the number of bales pressed in the factory, the serial number of each bale and the name of the person to whom it had been pressed. Again, the pressing factories were required to put serial number with the mark on the bales which had been prescribed for the factory before removing the bales from the factory. If any bales were removed from the factory without having been marked, the owner of the factory had been liable to the punishment with fine which might extend to fifty rupees. For weighing, the factories were required to keep the weights if any prescribed by the local Government as standard for the district in which the factory was situated.

Thus, by passing the above mentioned two Acts the quality of the cotton of the particular area was clearly maintained. Accordingly, it could protect not only the mill-owners of foreign countries but also the mill entrepreneurs of India by providing pure cotton. As a result, in Tirupur the quality of Cambodia Cotton was

strictly maintained. Consequently, the mill owners of Coimbatore could buy long staple cotton cheaply to spin higher counts yarn, which had a favourable market not only in India but also in foreign.

Tirupur Cotton Market

The Indian Cotton Committee also expressed its appreciation of the rules under which the cotton markets had been established and regulated in Berar and suggested that cotton markets on the Berar system should be established in other provinces as early as possible. But, even before the publication of the report of the Indian Cotton Committee, on 10 July 1918, the cotton growers and sellers of Coimbatore District resolved that the possibility of establishing a market at Tirupur. The matter was accordingly placed before the Tirupur Municipal Council. It readily accepted the proposal and in its meeting on 19 February 1919, the Municipal Council passed a resolution in regard to the establishment of a cotton market at Tirupur and submitted it for the approval of the Government. The proposal was accepted by the Government and the foundation stone for the cotton market was laid by the Governor of Madras on 14 June 1919.

For the better regulation of buying and selling, the Madras Commercial Crops Market Bill was introduced in the Madras Legislative Council in 1931. The Bill was passed on 24 February 1933 and was assented by the Governor on 10 June 1933. On 1 June 1935, the Tirupur Municipal town had been declared as notified area for cotton market. The Provisions of the Act had been applied to the area within the limits of the Tirupur Municipality with effect from 1 January 1936.134

To look after the affairs of the market, a committee was constituted and began its function from 1 April 1936.135 Following Tirupur, from 1933 onwards cotton markets were established in other cotton centres like Coimbatore, Dharapuram, Erode, Gopichettipalayam, Pollachi and Udumalpet.136

State and Seed Farms

With a view to maintain the purity of the Cambodia cotton seed, the Government of Madras established seed farms in Coimbatore. It was a common practice that the ryots who grew extensive areas of cotton did not have the habit of ginning the Kapas and preserve the seed. They were getting

their required cotton seed generally from the rich and enlightened ryots and local traders. So, the Government of Madras decided to establish seed farms to supply pure seed to the ryots. Accordingly, to establish the seed farm, G.A.D. Stuart, the Director of Agriculture, Madras and H.C. Sampson, the Deputy Director of Agriculture, Coimbatore inspected ten possible sites in the Pollachi taluk of the Coimbatore District, selected a site consisted of 47 acres including two wells and got the approval of the Government of Madras on 18 May 1918. But, it is true that before the establishment of seed farm, the Agriculture Department directly procured seed from Cambodia and a crop was raised from it at Coimbatore. Further, in 1918-19 the Agricultural Department purchased 3,00,000 lb Cambodia cotton seed from the southern districts of the Presidency and distributed to the ryots. As a next step, 150 ryots in the Avanashi Taluk of Coimbatore district were selected and pure seed was supplied to them. The crop was grown by them for the Agricultural Department under the personal supervision of the departmental staff. All operations were done at the proper season, the produce was picked, stored and sold to the department at a premium. The seed from the selected cotton was reserved for sale to the ryots.

Of late, a great demand for long staple cotton had arisen in the Presidency, particularly in Coimbatore as a result of erection of many mills for spinning higher counts. So import of long staple cotton like Egypt and Uganda were increased. Therefore, attempts were required to improve the existing type of Cambodia. As a result, attempts were made to improve the fibre length still further by hybridizing Cambodia with Egyptian and Sea Island cotton. Hence, the improved varieties of Cambodia like, Co. 2, Co. 920 and Co. 1267 were evolved and Co. 2 was undoubtedly by one of the best and most popular cotton grown throughout the Coimbatore district. To supply Co. 2 variety to the ryots the department organised 1,000 acres at Tirupur and the seed obtained from the farm was supplied to the Co-operative societies and other non-official agencies who took up the seed distribution scheme. When the demand for the seed was increased in 1942-43 and 1943-44, additional area of 2,000 acres were brought under seed multiplication scheme. By 1946-47, the area under seed multiplication was again increased, to 4,676 acres.

143. Letter, DAM to Sec., Dev., GoM, 9 March 1940, G.O. 805 (Ms), Dev., 9 April 1940.
In addition to these, the Co-operative Sale Societies also involved in the scheme of the multiplication of Cambodia cotton seed. The Tirupur Co-operative Sale Society Limited, Tirupur was started on 14 January 1921 with the authorized capital of Rs. 1,00,000.\(^{146}\) Initially, the Society was catering the needs of the agriculturists, helping them by supplying Cambodia Cotton seed by giving crop loans and by making arrangement to market their produce.\(^{147}\) As time went on, there was a great demand for the Co. 2 Cambodia cotton seed from the ryots. So, on parallel to the Agricultural Department, the Indian Central Cotton Committee which was constituted in 1921 financed the Society for five years from 1932 to multiply Co. 2 pure cotton seed. Accordingly, the Committee spent Rs. 81,000 for five years for the multiplication of seed by giving salary to the staff and subsidy to the ryots.\(^{148}\) As a result, starting with 1,739 acres in 1932, 5,350 acres were brought under the society as seed farm in 1937-38.\(^{149}\) The Government of Madras also helped the Society by giving a loan of Rs. 20,000 at the rate of 3.5 per cent interest per annum to construct a godown.\(^{150}\)

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on 3 May 1937, the Government of Madras sanctioned a plot of 1.93 acres in Thotipalayam village in the Palladam Taluk at the concessional rate to the Society to construct a godown. However, the Central Cotton Committee terminated its financial assistance to the Society in August 1937. Yet, the Society was continuing the seed multiplication scheme in its own risk and obtained the subsidy from the Government of Madras till 1942. The Society procured the seed of the seed farms either through the ginning factories or the dealers, preserved and sold it to the ryots during the season.

Similarly, in Udumalpet, the Udumalpet Co-operative Sale Society was started on 4 September 1935. Before this was registered as a separate Society, it was working as a branch of the Tirupur Co-operative Sale Society from 1927. Like Tirupur Society, Udumalpet Society also established seed farms and the seed which procured out of it was sufficient to sow 50,000 acres. This Society also got a loan of Rs. 10,000 from the Government of Madras to construct a godown. Further, the Government gave no objection to the

152. Letter, Sec., Tirupur Co-operative Sale Society, Ltd., Tirupur, Dev., 8 June 1945, to RCSM., 17 June 1939, G.O. 1333 (Ms), Dev., 8 June 1940.
156. G.O. 543 (Ms), Dev., 2 April 1936.
Coimbatore District Economic Council to give a free grant of 25 per cent of the cost of the construction of the godown subject to a maximum of Rs. 2,500/- from the Government of India Rural Construction Grant allotted to the District. Like Tirupur Society it also supplied seed to the ryots.

The large scale experimentation of both indigenous and foreign cotton in Coimbatore by the colonial Government gave encouragement to the ryots to bring more and more acres under cotton cultivation. As a result, the quality of cotton improved and the quantity was also increased. It is true that on the eve of the beginning of the colonial rule, the cotton available in the district was consumed by the hand-spinners. Later, the ever increasing output of the land was not only consumed by the mills of Coimbatore, but also the mills of the other centres of India as well as England and Japan. Besides, the formation of the regulated markets in the cotton growing centres of the district, helped the mill-owners to procure cotton conveniently from the nearby markets of the mills. Thus, the availability of cotton as a raw material to the industry, induced the capitalists to establish cotton mills in the cotton growing centres.