

No. 68.

GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.

The following is published for general information.

By Command,

W. H. MARSH,
Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 24th March, 1879.

CULTIVATION OF THE "EUCALYPTUS" IN HONGKONG.

Minute by His Excellency the Governor.

I should wish to see a special report by Mr. FORD on the growth of the "Eucalyptus" in Hongkong. — specimens I have seen in various parts of the Colony are not as flourishing as could be desired, but it is possible that other varieties besides the "Eucalyptus Globulosa" may be more suited to this climate—the "Eucalyptus Amygdalene" or the "Eucalyptus Citriodora" for instance.

12th March, 1879.

J. POPE HENNESSY.

Report by the Superintendent of the Botanical Gardens to the Honourable the Colonial Secretary.

I have to report that the condition of the trees at this time, nearly three years after planting, does not promise well for the success of the Blue Gum in this Colony. Out of the 400 which were planted, about 100 only are now alive, and of those the majority are small and sickly. In all cases where the trees were planted in soil in its hard natural state (the holes made were only about two feet square) the growth has been exceedingly weak, as a rule there being only a single unbranched stem about six feet high. But where the trees were planted in soft soil that had been artificially loosened, as by filling in near to the buildings, and in the earth pit on the lower side of the Aberdeen Station, and where these situations are sheltered, the growth has been rapid and side shoots developed abundantly, but even of these trees the stems are too weak to support the heads. If the leading shoots of the trees had been shortened occasionally during 1877 and last year, no doubt the stems would have been sufficiently strong by this time to support the heads without the assistance of props which are still attached to the trees.

From the facts before us, I conclude that the climate or soil of Hongkong is totally unfit for the cultivation of Eucalyptus Globulus for timber, but if the Eucalyptus has anti-malarious properties in a greater degree than other species—which, however, is much doubted by many scientific men—and it should be considered advisable to make further trials of it here on that account, I believe that it might succeed if grown as bushes, which might be done by a proper system of pruning, and if the soil were loosened well before planting.

Eucalyptus Amygdalina and *Eucalyptus Citriodora* have not, to my knowledge, yet been tried in this Colony, but the latter would be likely to succeed fairly as it is indigenous to Queensland, which possesses a climate approaching the one of Hongkong. The former is found in New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania—the two latter being also the native countries of *Eucalyptus Globulus*—therefore not likely that it would succeed here.

Eucalyptus Platyphylla and *Eucalyptus Maculata*, the former indigenous to Queensland and North Australia, the latter native of Queensland and New South Wales, have done very well indeed within our garden; they were planted about the same time as the 400 Blue Gums. Both kinds are now about 24 feet high, their average growth being about seven feet per year.

CHARLES FORD,
*Superintendent.**Minute by the Honourable the Colonial Secretary.*

The Blue Gum has been tried in Mauritius and failed in the same way as here. It was believed that the climate was too hot.

Submitted,

W. H. MARSH.

21st March, 1879.

Minute by His Excellency the Governor.

Though it has also failed here as a tree, yet Mr. FORD's suggestion of planting the Eucalyptus Globulus as a bush may be tried, and also the experiment of growing the Eucalyptus Citriodora as it is found indigenous in Queensland. Mr. FORD can take the necessary steps for getting seeds from Queensland so as to have 4,000 Seedlings of the Eucalyptus Citriodora planted in Hongkong as soon as possible, in the proper planting season.

22nd March, 1879.

J. POPE HENNESSY.