A Practical Guide To Coco-nut Planting

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Fig. 1.—Coco-nut Tree branching out near the top into five distinct stems, each of which carries fruit.
A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO COCO-NUT PLANTING

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WITH 106 ILLUSTRATIONS

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BY KIND PERMISSION
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO

SIR WILLIAM TAYLOR, K.C.M.G.,
WHO HAS ALWAYS TAKEN A KEEN INTEREST IN
THE COCO-NUT INDUSTRY
AND DID MUCH TO FOSTER AND ENCOURAGE
EXTENSION OF THE
CULTIVATION IN THE FEDERATED MALAY STATES
DURING HIS TENURE OF OFFICE
AS RESIDENT-GENERAL FROM 1904 TO 1910.

R. W. MUNRO.
L. C. BROWN.
PREFACE.

This book on Coco-nut Cultivation is the outcome of a request made by the Government of the Federated Malay States for an enlargement of Mr. Brown's Bulletin No. II, written on the same subject in 1910, and is by no means intended to be an "Enquire Within" about everything connected with the coco-nut.

In acceding to this request it was decided, in order that the work might be as useful as possible, to bring it out in its present form abundantly and suitably illustrated.

Hitherto, to our way of thinking, few of the publications that have been brought out on the subject of coco-nut cultivation and the industry in general, appear to contain the amount of material necessary for the "intending planter" in this country, and our object and joint endeavour in the present issue has been to make it more in the form of a "Planter's
Note Book" than an "Investor's," and as such we trust the work may serve as a really useful guide for all those who are interested, or may later on care to interest themselves in the industry.

Perhaps one of the most striking features in the commercial world is the growing demand for the products that are obtained from the fruit of the coco-nut palm.

Owing to the increasing consumption of vegetable oils and foodstuffs derived from the kernel of the nut, for which there is at the present time so much inquiry, it would appear that in the near future, at least, the cultivation can hardly be overdone. It is not surprising, therefore, that its cultivation is attracting great attention in all countries where the land is suitable and good climatic conditions prevail for the growth of the palm; as in these circumstances, with careful and economical supervision, it should undoubtedly afford a sound, lasting and remunerative investment.

It must be borne in mind that the present work, as far as it deals with cultivation, &c., has special reference to the conditions prevailing in the Malay Archipelago, Sumatra and
Borneo, and is only intended to be a guide for coco-nut planters in these countries. Further, it should be distinctly understood that the estimate for bringing a plantation to a producing stage is only framed on the basis that thoroughly suitable and accessible land, capable of perfect drainage, is selected, and that the work of opening up the estate is to be placed in the hands of really experienced and competent men. We admit that these are not so easy to be found in large numbers, but we maintain that the services of men who have had experience of planting in this part of the East are of more value than those of people with experience (however wide) of conditions totally dissimilar to those met with here.

We say this because adverse criticisms in the past on results achieved and attempts by financial advisers to scare the investing public from what is an acknowledged sound industry are, more often or not, the outcome of unwise selection in one or other of the above important questions.

In view of the fact that most of the general information and hints as to the methods to be
adopted which are given in this book are not derived from any theoretical source, but are the results of practical knowledge and experience, it is to be hoped that there are some to whom it will be found a guide and assistance. To those who are apt to ignore the question of heavy upkeep expenditure when it arises, the estimates will be of little interest, and we ourselves are not concerned with speculating on the number of years it will take before their plantations become self-supporting.

Apart from the knowledge of the stability of the coco-nut industry itself, the recent discovery of practical methods of converting crude copra oil into a palatable and satisfactory vegetable butter has given a great impetus to this particular business, and has had a marked effect upon the price of the raw material; so much so that it has led in a great many instances to intending investors taking an over-sanguine view of the ultimate profits to be derived from the industry.

It is undoubtedly the generally acknowledged security of the investment that constitutes its strongest recommendation, and this being so it is very undesirable to see a sound