

## BRITISH NORTH BORNEO NOTES:—

## GENERAL.

Sept. 1.

The Japanese who came by the "Memmon" have been obtained for the estates by Mr. S. A. Korzki. They pay their own passages and require no advances.

A delightful innovation in our rides in Sandakan was introduced lately by a lady who invited her friends to "a Moonlight ride and return to supper." The night was beautifully fine and the riding party pulled up under the coconut trees at Tata's Compong and, sitting on a log on the beach, sang songs, and the natives declared they were "hantus" (ghosts); a swift ride brought them back to supper—and so home!

*Byte.*—Coffee coming on well, bushes looking very strong and healthy, little picking in progress almost daily. Manila hemp also doing well. Advantage is being taken of the rains to plant padi, hemp, cotton and coconuts.

*Loong Piasow.*—A slight flush of blossom on the older coffee (14 months of age.) Ground being cleared for fresh planting. Coconuts also being put in.—*B. N. B. Herald.*

NEWS FROM THE CENTRAL PROVINCE :  
PLANTING AND OTHERWISE.

(Notes by "Wanderer.")

Oct. 8.

*Cocoa.*—Last advices from London, Sept. 15th, are to following effect:—"Prices for Ceylon dropped 2s at last Tuesday's sales. The quality of Ceylon cocoa from recent arrivals is not up to the old standard, but the low price and depressed market are due to the absence of the American demand and competition of Java.

*Coffee* is firm for all good coloury sorts. The stocks in Europe are small; but the receipts in Rio and Santos are about one-third larger than last year. The forward quotations for fair Channel Rio are 68s for September and 63s for December.

*GOVERNMENT ENTOMOLOGIST.*—We can afford to have new Steam Barges for our Governor and Electric Light in his Colombo Palace; but a subsidy cannot be thought of when insect pests are threatening our staple commodities, tea and cacao. Ask a cacao planter what keeps his crops down? Insect pests. Ask the tea planter what is his bogie? Insect pests. Ask the native cultivator what takes the gilt off his gingerbread. Insect pests? Insect pests. So the Northern Association is busy trying to

Convince a man against his will

He's of the same opinion still.

The Governor has made up his mind that there is to be no special legislation to protect the cacao planter be he European or native. A cacao planter in Kurunegala told me he paid more for watching than he did to secure his crop. Nice state of matters in civilized Ceylon.

*RURAL POLICE! RURAL NONSENSE!*—The native headman must be paid what he has lost in commission for collecting paddy tax at the expense of the cacao growers.

## THE CINCHONA-PLANTER'S DIRGE.

What would be the feeling of Mincing Lane if a London cinchona-broker were to rise gravely from his rostrum after a disappointing day's sale, and recite aloud an "Ode to the Hard Times" before closing the proceedings with the conventional "Gentlemen, we are much obliged"? The scene may be imagined, it cannot be described. Yet an incident on all-fours with such a shocking display of unseemly levity occurred at a recent meeting of Dutch business men,

of all people in the world! The scene was in Java, the date July 14 last, and the occasion the annual general meeting of the Java Cinchona-planters' Association. The chief subjects on the agenda were the prospects of the cinchona-trade, the tea-business, and the soul-stirring question, bimetalism. The President, Mr. G. Mundt, read a paper on the cinchona outlook, taking for his text an editorial article in the *Chemist and Druggist* of March 31, and then observing that this concluded the agenda, drew from his pocket an "Ode" to which he regaled the assembly. The "Ode," or dirge, turned out to be a parody on the famous old German student's song, "O, alte Burschenherrlichkeit, wohin bist du verschwunden," and appears to have been received in a silence broken only by the suppressed sobs of those who failed to control their emotions. The verses were written in German, but, business being slack in the drug-trade, the C. & D. man has found time to turn "Occ. poet" for once, and to render into English the presidential effort, keeping as closely as possible to the German original and preserving the dog-Latin chorus characteristic of the German "Commerzbuch." More than once the translator was on the point of throwing up the sponge, but the thought of the still unappropriated Laureate's butt of sherry inspired him with strength to hold out until the end. If anyone feels inclined to make light of his difficulties, let him attempt to retranslate the effusion into Dutch, not even necessarily of the double variety:—

## THE CINCHONA-PLANTERS' WAIL.

O glorious bark-trade days of yore,  
Say, whither are ye banished?  
Will ye return with gold galore?  
Are ye for ever vanished?  
\*Twere vain to try that problem's knot;  
The shilling unit's gone to pot.

*O jerum, jerum, jerum!*

*O quae mutatio rerum!*

The quinte-ma-ers roll in oof,  
Stone-broke are all we growers!  
From us Dame Fortune holds aloo,  
On them her wealth she showers.  
Happy the man who 'scaped our fate,  
On some secluded coffee-estate!

*O jerum, &c.*

The Planters' Club is in a fright,  
No remedy they wot of;  
Full many empty words they write,  
Statistics they've a lot of!  
But action never comes to pass,  
There's no *esprit de corps*, alas!

*O jerum, &c.*

The Government's plantations grow  
In spite of dwindling prices;  
They reap, they strip, they plant, they sow;  
The planters' dander rises,  
In vulgar Dutch their wrath they vent:  
"Portz-Himmel-tausend-Sacrament!"

*O jerum, &c.*

As Dante said, there is no greater pain than the recollection of happy times in days of misery. The "Ode," as printed in the official proceedings, with never a word of comment, looks bald enough, but who shall tell what agonies the unhappy President had borne before he thus burst forth into rhyme? And if it be true that

Most wretched men

Were crailed in o' poetry by wrong,  
They learned in suffering what they taught in song,  
what a terrible load of responsibility rests upon the Quinine-makers' combination which prevents the Planters from earning an honest crust! The Ode, we may add, may be sung to the tune of Luther's well-known hymn.—*Madras Mail.*

## INDIA TEA PLANTING.

*General.*—Upper and Lower Assam have experienced unfavourable weather. In spite of this, leaf is reported as plentiful, but not of good quality. Cachar, Sylhet and South Sylhet gardens have had good weather for growth. Darjiling, Terai and Duars had no better weather than last reported, but latest reports from the Terai announce a change for the better. Mosquito blight is exceptionally bad in the Duars and Terai, and still increases.—*The Planter*, Sept. 28.