

* The TROPICAL AGRICULTURIST *

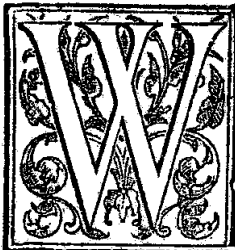
◇ MONTHLY. ◇

Vol. XIV.

COLOMBO, OCTOBER 1ST, 1894.

No. 4.

COLONIA.



WE have lately been favoured with a number of "Colonia"—the Colonial College Magazine published for the "Summer Session, August 1894." No doubt a good many of our readers are acquainted with

the existence of "The Colonial College, Hollesley Bay, Suffolk," where a thoroughly practical course of instruction is given to young men who intend to look to the colonies for a career. The provision for such training in the college buildings, arrangements, farm, gardens and other grounds seems to be wonderfully comprehensive, and so far as the great agricultural and farming colonies of Australasia, the Canadian Dominion, and South Africa are concerned, we have no doubt that the instruction is most suitable and generally invaluable. We take leave to doubt, however, whether it can be so specially applicable to the career of young men coming to tropical or sub-tropical regions; and yet there are many departments in which most useful instruction can be given. Land-surveying, for instance, is a branch of instruction and training which, we have long maintained, can never be thrown away on young men whether intended for the tropics or for temperate regions. There is much, too, to be learned in the gardens as to grafting and budding and horticultural cultivation generally most suitable for the future orange or other fruit-growers in Florida, California, South Africa or sub-tropical Australia: Indeed, to the future Indian, Straits, Ceylon, Mexican or African planter such instruction could not come amiss, although plantations of tea, coffee, cacao, &c., have to be treated after a very different fashion. Nevertheless the young man who goes through a course of "Estate, Farm and Building" with some Engineering instruction at Hollesley Bay ought certainly to be better fitted for a plantation as well as farming life, than youths fresh from Public Schools, one would think.

But the proof of the pudding will always be in the eating, and the Colonial College has already

very widely justified its existence by the usefulness and success of its students in nearly every part of the world. We are much interested in the letters received for the Magazine from old students describing their experience, a feature which ought of itself to make "Colonia" an exceedingly useful journal. Then information from other sources of a useful character is reproduced, and we have no doubt that the *Tropical Agriculturist* now sent to the College will occasionally be laid under request. The reports of the work done each session is of more than ordinary interest:—"haymaking" on the 90 acres of Signal Hill, in glorious sunshine; or the news that of 490 lambs from 305 ewes in the college flock, all but 3 have thriven, so securing the head shepherd the prize given by the Suffolk Agricultural Association; or the trial of new inventions (a Disc churn, &c.) in the dairy; or the great extension of the fruit gardens through budding and grafting; or even the doings of the Athletic Club in Sports besides Cricket, Tennis, Sailing, Rowing, Swimming. From the report of Speech Day, we see how fully influential colonists take an interest in the College: Sir Charles Tupper (of Canada) in closing the proceedings, for instance, said:—

I can only say that the interesting speeches we have heard from gentlemen from Australia, South Africa and other places have been such as to give additional zest and interest to this College which aims at preparing young gentlemen not for any particular locality, but to fit and qualify them for the discharge of their duties efficiently in whatever outlying portions of the Crown they may reside.

One of the most interesting features is the report of visits from old students to the College, and also the connexion maintained, which enables young men to profit by the experience, advice and even assistance of their predecessors in making a start. In illustration we quote as follows:—

Mr. Gerald Murray was over for a short stay in England, after nearly five years in Florida, where he has an orange grove. He likes the country and life very much, and we fancy were it not for the occasional frosts in spring which sometimes nip his oranges in the bud, he would consider that his lines had fallen in altogether pleasant places. Anyhow he is a philosopher, and takes things as they come.

Mr. Van Someren had to tell us of 18 months' residence in Chicago, where he has been going in for electrical engineering. He is shortly sailing for Canada, where he proposes to follow the same profession—one of the best of the day; with out doubt,

Mr. E. N. Howard who, after some experience of fruit-growing in California, settled with his brother in Georgia, where they have purchased a farm with a good house, and are grazing cattle and hogs, growing a little maize, wheat and cotton, as well as fruit for which there is a ready sale. They consider that with about £500 a fair start with good promise of success may be made in their district. The thermometer does not go higher than 95° in the summer. The winters are often warm, but subject to occasional "cold snaps," when they get some snow and sledging. Messrs. Howard would receive a student or two, who might wish to look about them before settling, on very moderate terms for board and lodging. Ellis Blyth is about to join them.

We have received a letter from Mr. E. J. Windham, De Clare, Moosomin, Canada, stating that he would be glad to receive another student as partner in his half-section (320 acres.) He writes that he has now been three years in Canada, and the longer he stays the more he likes it.

As a further indication of work done, we quote:—

Mr. Hedges, C.E., has earned well-merited praise this term for the energy with which he has conducted the work of his department. At all hours he has been ready to help any student who showed interest in his important profession. The log bridge, the model of roof, etc., by Stevenson, and the excellent class work by some students, are indications of much good and thoughtful work.

Professor Heatly has also had a most interesting term. He and his class at the time of writing are engaged in Practical Examinations, and in an enquiry into alleged poisoning of cattle by the common brake fern.

Among the general information given is an account by the Earl of Glasgow of a visit to one of the largest and most notable farms in New Zealand. In the course of it we have the following interesting fact:—

The increase of red clover in this colony is a very remarkable thing. At first it was not a success, but the experiment of introducing the bumble bee was tried by the Acclimatisation Society, and it is claimed that the wonderful spread of clover during the last few years is the work of that insect in carrying and fertilizing the seed. There are fields of pasture everywhere where the red clover is spreading year by year in the most wonderful manner.

Finally, we may mention an "Old Students' Directory" as a feature of "Colonia": the list includes from 160 to 170 names, and every British Dependency is represented in the addresses, as well as many parts of the United States, Central and South America; while among young Ceylon planters are four ex-students of the College. Our wish for "Colonia" and the College it represents is for a long and prosperous career and increasing usefulness year by year in the time to come.

THE TEA OF DIFFERENT COUNTRIES.

The tea of China, though we may suppose it the best, is not the only plant used in that capacity in the world. In Mexico and Guatemala the leaves of quite a different plant (*Psoralea glandulosa*) are used as tea. In the northern part of the same continent there is what is called *Labrador tea*, made from the leaves of the *Gualtheria procumbens* and *Ledum latifolium*. The most famous of all American teas, however, is the tea of Paraguay, of which large quantities are annually imported into Peru, Chili, and the States of Buenos Ayres, and the use of it is so universal in South America, that the inhabitants have always some of this tea ready prepared, whether engaged in occupations at home or in the fields, and no person departs on a journey without being provided with a quantity of the herb. It is made by merely pouring warm water on the leaves, and is sipped through a silver or glass tube from a small vessel called a "Mate Pot" which is carried in the hand, or, should the person be on horseback or engaged in any occupation

requiring the use of his hands, it is suspended from the neck by means of a small chain. It is frequently mixed with a little lemon juice, and is used either with or without sugar. Many European travellers prefer this to any of the teas imported from China. The Paraguay tea is the more remarkable, from its being the produce of a species of holly, a genus hitherto considered as deleterious. This plant has an extensive geographical range, being found in the woody regions of Paraguay, watered by the Parana, Ypane, and Jejni; in the province of the Minas Geraes, and other districts of Brazil; and it appears to have been found in Guiana. The tree is about the size of the orange-tree, to which it bears considerable resemblance in its habit and leaves. The flowers are white, are tetrandrous, and are succeeded by scarlet berries, like those of the common holly. The leaves, whether fresh or dried, are destitute of smell; but, on a little warm water being poured upon them, they exhale an agreeable odour. Mr. Lambert has been so fortunate as to obtain a living plant of this highly interesting tree, which is now growing in his collection at Bayton House, Wilts. In New Holland the leaves of the *Correa alba* make very good tea. The inhabitants of those barren and remote islands denominated the Kurile Isles, in the sea of Kamtschatka, prepare a tea from an undescribed species of *Pedicularis*. Many other aromatic herbs of the order *Labiatae* are used as tea in different countries.—*Derby Comet*.

JACKSON'S NEW PATENT "PARAGON" TEA DRYER.

Mr. George Reid of M'lang Tea Estate, Assam now sends a further report to Messrs Marshall, Sons & Co., Limited, upon this new machine after working it for several months as follows:—"I have much pleasure in stating that I am as much pleased with the Paragon Dryer as ever. I find that, it ought to be cleaned out every week, i.e., the Soot Chambers; formerly, when we were only having small days, we cleaned it out once a fortnight, but latterly working 12 to 14 hours a day, we found it very hard to keep up the heat unless cleaned out once a week. The machine has given us no trouble whatever since it was erected. On the whole, the machine is a good one and I can safely recommend it."—*Indian Planters' Gazette*.

THE MANILA HEMP TRADE OF 1893.

FALLING-OFF IN EXPORTS.

Mr. W. Stigand, Her Majesty's Consul at Manila, in his commercial report to the Foreign Office for the year 1893, gives the following particulars of the hemp trade at that port.—There has been a decrease of 149,037 bales or 17,604 tons in the export of hemp, the export having been 641,471 bales or 80,183 tons in 1893, against 790,508 bales or 18,814 tons in 1892. The average price of hemp for the year was 7.50 dols. per picul, which is lower than it was in 1892, when prices ruled from 8 dols. to 9 dols. from the beginning of the year to September, when it advanced to 10.75 dols., and remained at this valuation till the end of the year. The year 1892 was the year in which the greatest quantity of hemp was exported from the Philippines since the superiority of Manila hemp has been recognised in English and American markets. The commerce in this article, the chief product until lately of the islands, has almost entirely in recent years been in the hands of the English merchants, owing to their reliance on the superiority of Manila hemp and on its ready acceptance by foreign purchasers. The producers in the provinces, however, formerly forwarded their hemp to the capital insufficiently dried and in an otherwise unprepared state, and frequent complaints from purchasers were received of the deteriorated quality of the hemp. Alarmed at the danger thus threatening the reputation of Manila hemp, the chief export houses of Manila united together and published a circular by