

## No. XI.

3,000 TO 5,000 FEET.

DEAR SIR,—My system is:—Tip, leaving fish, two whole leaves and a shoulder, about a quarter of the leaf. Then pluck, leaving fish and one leaf right on to a month before pruning. I strongly object to leaving fish and half a leaf early in the life of the flush. It may give quantity. But my experience is that it seriously affects the quality, and I think it also injures the bush. Is it that the leaf cut in two was required by the bush to digest the plant food taken up from the soil and sent back through the bark to feed the roots? Will a more learned man than I am say?

When coffee was torn out to make way for tea, all must have remarked how bare of feeding rootlets the large roots were. The trees had been short of leaves for many a day. **WHOLE-LEAF.**

### THE PROSPECTS BEFORE OUR "CREEPERS."

[ENGLISH PAPERS REQUESTED TO COPY.]

DEAR SIR,—I have heard it contended that in getting out young men, who pay long premiums, and £10 to £12 10s stg. per mensem, for board which may cost R60, the favor is conferred by those in this import trade. I think the following advertisements culled from the last week's papers, are conclusive of the opposite:—

1st. A Company paying 25 and 30 per cent dividends advertise for an assistant on R100 per mensem. Supply so exceeds demand, that business men are not ashamed to offer such a pittance; yet the last holder of the post lost *his health* and his predecessor *his life* in the service.

2nd. Another billet is offered, in the same feverish district, with the noble salary of R70 per mensem.

3rd. Wanted an *experienced* European assistant salary R100 per mensem. [So that after gaining experience, £5 10s is what a "Creeper" may expect—one quarter of what he pays monthly for premium and board!]

4. "Wanted an experienced assistant, salary R150 per mensem. *No creeper need apply.*"

5. There is a well authenticated report current that thirty-seven creepers applied for one small billet lately, and

6. I know that over a hundred Ceylon men applied for a billet with a small salary in another Colony.

I think your Overland issue should contain this, with the request that all home papers should copy and warn parents against creeper trappers who are becoming more and more numerous—the notorious success of a few stimulating the greed of many.—Yours,  
"OBSERVER."

"OBSERVER" may be sure that his letter will be prominently inserted in our *Tropical Agriculturist*; for there can be no doubt that its warning is called for, so far as employment and openings in Ceylon are concerned. The only qualification we would offer on our correspondent's position is with reference to the value of a training in Ceylon with the special view of finding a career elsewhere—in North Borneo, the Straits, Java or British Central Africa. Young men who lay their plans after this fashion may be exempted from the warning; but then they ought to see their way to an opening before coming out here, either through having capital to take up land, or the promise of employment after their training is over.—Ed. T.A.]

### APICULTURE AND OUR CEYLON BEES.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Colombo,

4th Aug. 1894.

SIR,—I am directed to forward to you the enclosed papers regarding Apiculture.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,  
H. WHITE,  
for Colonial Secretary.

West Maitland, N. S. W., Australia,

June 20th, 1894.

His Excellency the Governor of Ceylon.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—Will you be kind enough to put me in communication with an apiarist, if such an one exists, who lives near or within easy distance, of a port of Ceylon at which the P. & O. or Orient steamers call?

I trust you will excuse the liberty I take in addressing you on this matter, but although I have made many enquiries here I have failed to ascertain the whereabouts of a gentleman who is at all interested in Apiculture in Ceylon. My desire for knowing a Beekeeper in your Colony is actuated by the wish to carry out experiments in importing Queen Bees from Europe and India successfully. Hitherto the death rate on such ventures has been as high as 70 per cent, and I believe if arrangements could be made with a gentleman in Ceylon to receive consignments addressed to Australia, investigate their condition and after a rest at Ceylon send them on to Australia much good would accrue to the industry here. Thanking you in anticipation,—I am, your obedient servant,  
R. PATTEN.  
[See page 165.—Ed. T.A.]

### PLUMBAGO (GRAPHITE) AND COAL MINING.

August 8th, 1894.

SIR,—"F. H. M." 's interesting paper on the plumbago industry in the Kurunegala district brings back vividly to mind a visit I paid some years ago to one of the largest coal mines in Yorkshire, extending, in its ramifications, even underneath the sea. The means (1) of egress (by the "cage" which is an improvement on the plumbago-pit basket, though awful enough owing to the terrific speed at which it travels); (2) of locomotion inside, by trucks drawn on rails by horses, (3) of ventilation by exhausting the air in the mine and drawing in fresh air; (4) of illumination, by electricity and Davy's "safety," are all very different from the crude methods adopted in plumbago pits as described by "F.H.M."

If any of the metals and minerals mentioned as being found in association with plumbago occur to any appreciable or rather workable extent, how many valuable additions might we not have to our local arts and manufactures and even to our exports.

Steatite or soapstone, if it occurs in masses, might be worked into ornaments, plates, cups and saucers, as in Bengal. Magnetite (ferroso-ferrous oxide) may perhaps be found to be a richer ore of iron than the "black sand" of the coast which experts thought some twenty-five years ago could not be remuneratively worked. Mica, if it could be obtained in large plates, would also have its value.

Some day (?) perhaps we shall hear of metallurgical operations in the island, and of gold, nickel and manganese and iron being extracted from their ores!—Yours, &c.,  
GRAPHITE.

P.S.—Will "F.H.M." excuse me if I point out a little apparent confusion in his para on minerals? I do not know whether it is due to misprinting.