

TEA PRODUCTION IN CEYLON.

The present season following on diversified experience in the past will probably have some effect in mitigating the fear of "Over-production" which haunts the minds of not a few Ceylon planters. With the immense increase in our crops between 1888 and 1892, when our tea exports rose by leaps and bounds, it was natural to anticipate and to fear that Ceylon was to swamp the tea market. In 1889 our export was 34 million lb.; next year it became 47 million lb.; in 1891 we sent away 68½ million—so that here we had the Ceylon tea crop *doubling itself in three years!* Was it any wonder then if the 100 million lb. export seemed within an easy measurable distance, seeing that the hardy ubiquitous tea plant appeared to flourish from districts on the sea coast up to the mountain slopes overlooking Nuwara Eliya? But if the three years ending with 1891 added 100 per cent or 34 million lb. to our tea crops, let us see what the next triennial period ending with 1894 is likely to do. In 1892 we shipped very little over 71 million lb.; in 1893 our total certainly rose again very considerably, being over 84 million lb. but for the current year it is doubtful if the estimate of the Planters' Association will be made up or 87 million lb. exceeded. This would give us a total increase between 1892 and 1894 of not more than 16, or at most 17, million lb. against double that quantity or 34 million added to our exports in the previous three years.

We do not wish at all to make too much of these figures; but we believe the feeling is growing among thoughtful and practical observers that the dread of local "Over-production" is one that is not justified by the prospect for some time to come. For one thing, there is a growing belief that the cost of production is likely to increase now rather than diminish. Many too hold that the era of manuring and more liberal cultivation generally, is rapidly approaching for our tea districts as a whole, and the price of manures is not likely to diminish. If the average yield of our plantations, throughout the districts, is to be maintained, more attention must be given to cultivation as Mr. John Hughes long ago warned the Ceylon planters would be the case. It would seem, then, that with the check given to extension of planting during the past two seasons, the prospect of our reaching an export of 100 million lb. is by no means so near as was at one time considered to be the case. It is also very clear that more allowance must be made for seasonal influences than people have been inclined hitherto to acknowledge. The present year with the South-west monsoon rains running into those of the North-east for one section of the country, while another has been suffering from drought, shows this. Up to this year, we have been accustomed to believe that if the weather proved unfavourable for flush one month, it was almost certain to be right in the succeeding one. But now we see that an experience of three or four months of continuously unfavourable weather may have to be allowed for. All this goes to affect the fear of "Over-production" and to show that the Tea Industry of Ceylon is by no means exempt from the conditions which govern all other agricultural enterprise on the face of the earth. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread" is what we are all liable too often to forget; and yet there is a "silver lining to the cloud"—if we may be supposed to have indicated a cloud in these remarks;—for if the prospect is of exports only very gradually increasing year by year from Ceylon, this very fact ought not only to give us steadier but better

prices, and so afford ample compensation for any individual disappointments in respect of quantity of outturn.

INDIAN PATENTS.

Calcutta, 22nd Aug. 1894.

Specifications of the undermentioned inventions have been filed under the provisions of Act V. of 1883:—

APPARATUS FOR DRYING TEA, &c.—No. 943 of 1893.—Edward Robinson of 4, Castleman Gardens, Barnes, S.W., in the Co. of Surrey, England, merchant, for apparatus for drying tea, grain and other substances. (Filed 15th August 1894.)

APPARATUS FOR DRYING COCOA, COFFEE, TEA, BARKS, MALT, &c.—No. 27 of 1894.—Richard White, Merchant of 35, Queen Victoria Street, in the City and Co. of London, England, for improvements in apparatus for drying cocoa, coffee, tea, barks, malt and other substances. (Filed 10th August 1894.)

Whereas the inventors of the undermentioned inventions have failed to pay within the time limited in that behalf the prescribed fee, it is hereby notified that the exclusive privilege of making, selling and using the said inventions in British India and of authorizing others to do so has ceased:—

SUPS FOR WINNOWING TEA, &c.—No. 291 of 1889. Mr. W. Robb's invention for improvements in the manufacture of sups for winnowing tea, rice, grain, seeds, &c. (Specification filed 16th May 1890.)

APPARATUS FOR ALLURING AND KILLING INSECTS, &c.—No. 14 of 1890.—Mr. F. Scherer's invention for an improved apparatus for alluring and killing insects, rats, mice and other animals. (Specification filed 15th May 1890.)—*Indian Engineer.*

Calcutta, 13th Sept. 1894.

The fees prescribed in Schedule 4 of Act V of 1888 have been paid for the continuance of exclusive privilege in respect of the undermentioned inventions for the periods shown against each:—

TEA ROLLING MACHINERY.—No. 61 of 1889.—John Brown, of London, England, Engineer, for improvements in tea rolling machinery. (From 10th Sept. 1894 to 9th Sept. 1895.)—*Indian Engineer.*

PLANTING AND PRODUCE.

THE WAR AND ITS EFFECT ON THE TEA TRADE.—The war between China and Japan is a further advertisement for Indian and Ceylon tea, as public attention is directed to the sources of the tea supply. Numerous paragraphs have appeared in the papers pointing out how thoroughly China has been distanced in the tea trade by urging the planters of India and Ceylon to take advantage of the war to push their trade in the United States and elsewhere. The *Daily Chronicle* says, "However the war between China and Japan may be used as a lever to raise the price of tea in New York, the housewives of merry England have little reason to fear that their cheering cup will cost them any dearer. The English supply is not so dependent on China as to give reasonable occasion for any tangible rise, or any rise at all, except in special qualities. The case is very different on the other side of the Atlantic, for America obtains her tea mainly from China. Now is the time for Ceylon to cut in, and this apparently the planters of that island appear determined to do." Both Indian and Ceylon tea planters had determined to cut in long before the war broke out, but this does not affect the fact that their efforts are now recognised at home, and it only remains for them to go in and win. For those who like figures the following serves as a reminder. Thirty years ago India sent about 4,000,000 pounds of tea to London annually, whilst China sent about 100,000,000. From 1879 to 1889 there was a rapid increase on both sides,