

of Algeria, to the Mayors and other officials of his district, informing them that the Government are anxious to place cheap quinine within the reach of all colonists, "who are now often compelled" (the circulars say) "to pay for that remedy at the rate of a franc per gramme. The Algerian Government are therefore prepared to supply any commune with sulphate of quinine to be retailed to consumers who are able to pay at the rate of 0.85 fr. per 10 grammes, or about 2s. 1d. per oz. and distributed gratuitously to indigent applicants. In every case where it can be shown that 75 per cent. of the quinine applied for has been given away to the poor the department will only charge half-price, or about 1s. per oz. for the next batch of quinine ordered. M. Bogelet asserts that the circulars are illegal, inasmuch as they run counter to Act 25 of the Law of 21 Germinal of the year XI., which is still the pharmacy law of the Republic, and which prohibits any persons other than pharmacists from preparing, selling, or distributing medicaments. "If the authorities," says M. Bogelet, with much force, want to distribute cheap quinine to the million, why not employ pharmacists as agents, and allow them a commission on the sale of the drug?"—*Chemist and Druggist*.

BRAZILIAN COFFEE DUTIES.

The Brazilian Government has decided that the export duty on coffee now being levied by the Government, shall in future be wholly collected in gold which will increase the benefit to the Government about three times. This will doubtless be done by Act of Congress, and it is believed no difficulty in carrying the measure will be experienced. Coffee represents fully one-half the exports from Brazil, and in the new year it is estimated that the exportable surplus of that article alone will amount in sterling value to between £25,000,000 and £30,000,000.—*American Grocer*.

INDIAN AND CEYLON TEA.

The question of water accounts, it is said, for the slow progress made in the Indian trade with the United States and Canada, and, possibly, also with Russia, whereas Ceylon tea, many years behind India in point of time, is making headway more rapidly. That the export will expand as years go on seems probable; but, so far, neither the Continent nor America have appreciated even the finest Indian tea and the task of educating them to take it in preference to the China article seems, a difficult one. Although Ceylon tea is sometimes treated as an interest separate from that of India, or even as antagonistic, it is not really the case as far as this market is concerned; for the trade in the two growths moves on parallel lines, and whatever affects the value of the one eventually reacts on the other. They really meet each other in competition very much as teas from different parts of India do, and, together, they practically occupy the attention of the home trade to the exclusion of all others.

The only conclusion which can be drawn from the statistics is one which ought to be eminently satisfactory, namely, the remarkable progress made by British-grown teas in public favour, and the absence of anything approaching a glut in the market. We have not space to deal today with the dividends paid by the companies that are known in London; but, as a proof of the prosperity of the industry, we may add that out of a list of seventy companies which we have before us, there were only eight which failed to pay dividends in 1893.—*Financial News*.

FOOD SUPPLY: CHILAW DISTRICT.

The food of the people consists principally of rice, supplemented by fine grains, fish (both fresh and cured), cassava, plantains, pumpkins, jak-fruit, &c. Bread is more extensively consumed than formerly. The greater portion of the rice was imported, the quantity of locally-grown paddy and fine grain being estimated by the headmen to have been only 43,730 bushels. Neither of the harvests was successful; but the headmen's estimates are extremely low. The actual produce was, I believe about double the quantity given. This would have sufficed to feed the whole population of the district sixty years ago, which was then 13,575, while it is now 63,859.

The yield of coconuts in the district during the year is estimated to have been 318,513,600 nuts, as against 320,734,800 in 1892, the productiveness of the trees having been affected by the drought; but the value was greater, the average price being R35 per 1,000 instead of from R25 to R30. The supply of fish was abundant.—*Mr. Noyes' Administration Report*.

LAND IN NORTH BORNEO.

The British North Borneo Company has just issued new land regulations of a much more generous nature to holders than those hitherto in force. The main point is that those who held land, for which they had paid, were after twelve years liable to have some part taken back by the Company, if a certain proportion had not been cultivated. They now become virtually freeholders, for a 999 years' lease may be considered as equal to a freehold. In the case of those who received free grants they can now pay 20 cents an acre per annum, and retain land that was liable to forfeiture by their grant after twelve years. A feature of the new terms is that they are irrevocable.—*L. and C. Express*.

TEA PATENT.

January 10th, 1893. Tea, Gilbert, W., 2, Mount Pleasant, Elm Street, Gray's Inn Road, London. Tea combined apparatus for mixing, sifting, and cutting.—The tea is charged into a series of oscillating hoppers the mouths of which are opened or closed by a register plate movable between a pair of fixed plates. Fish-head valves opposite the openings in the lower plate serve to adjust the rate of feed from each hopper. The tea falls from the hoppers on to a series of rotating discs by which it is thrown on the conical shelves passing finally into the receptacle. The sifting apparatus consists of a hopper and a flat sieve operated by an eccentric. The cutting apparatus consists of two honey-combed rollers rotating against a fixed knife. The combined apparatus is driven from one handle or pulley.—*Patent Journal*.

INDIAN TEA COMPANIES.—In the *Home and Colonial Mail* of June 22, is published the usual abstract compiled by Mr. Ernest Tye of results of the working in 1893 of 23 Indian Tea Companies, representing a total Capital of £2,435,936 and a planted area of 64,994 acres. The aggregate income from all sources had been £775,828 for the year, while the expenditure amounted to £613,136, leaving a net profit of £163,995. The dividends paid ranged from nil in the case of 4 Companies to 2½, 3½, 4, 5, 6, 7 for others and then 10 per cent for the Doears and Lebong Tea Companies respectively, to 10½ per cent by the Doom Dooms, 12½ per cent by the Brahma-pootra and highest of all 15 per cent by the Chandpore and Moabund Tea Companies respectively. It is to be noted that the figures for the income and expenditure of the Doears Tea Company are not furnished in the list and not therefore included in the above totals.