

hills of Southern India, but experience has shown that where it does not flourish it is but a sign that the soil and climate are more favourable for tea. Ceylon has proved this beyond a question, and in Travancore the truth of this dictum has also been fully established. South Wynaad is following suit and the new clearings of tea there are giving a promise which, if the district were only in Ceylon, would ensure the proprietor being able without trouble to start a Company successfully and he so wished it. Rentier telegraphed to us yesterday that the most noticeable feature in the London market is the remarkable rise in all the best Stocks due to the plethora of money and to the bankers reducing the rate of interest on deposits to  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. This plethora of money is also causing people to pay more attention to investments other than public funds, railways and mines. The following paragraph which appears in the money article of *Vanity Fair*, received by last Mail, is but a sign of the times:—

We have been told that we do not give sufficient attention to the actions of Tea Shares, which—if we may believe all that we hear—run Consols a close race for security while completely out-distancing them in the matter of interest. Without subscribing to every extravagant encomium upon Tea Shares which is uttered by the true believers, we yet regard the following selection as being fairly good opening for the investment of a moderate amount of capital.

The selection includes some half dozen Companies in Assam and one in Ceylon. In another English contemporary we see it stated that there is beginning to arise an increasing desire among investors on the Continent, more particularly in France and in Holland, to turn their attention to tea-planting shares, owing to the good returns afforded, and in this connection it has been suggested that, to meet the requirements of foreigners, some of the larger companies might with advantage issue a portion of their capital in the shape of "Bearer" shares, the same as is done by most Continental industrial companies, and as has latterly been done by not a few English industrial and commercial companies as well. All this gives evidence that the investing public is beginning to evince more interest than formerly in tea-property. There is at the present time no new district that gives better promise than Wynaad. Within the last two years some five hundred acres have been opened in the southern part of this district, 320 acres by the Honourable Mr. Romilly, and 170 acres by the Pandora Company, all of which is doing marvellously well. We understand the latest machinery is to be put up and every care bestowed on the manufacture of the leaf. The heavy yield which old tea can give in this district has already been established at Perindetty and the samples sent home from Richmond Estate in South-East Wynaad some two years ago, showed what superior quality can be produced here by bushes of good jāt. Extensions of tea in Wynaad are not likely to be of any very great size for some time to come, but now undoubtedly is the time for investors, when there is plenty of land in the market and therefore a good choice at reasonable prices.—*M. Mail*.

#### AVARAI (CASSIA AURICULATA) BARK:

##### A NEW INDUSTRY IN THE NORTH OF CEYLON.

The collection of this bark has been extensively carried on this year in the Mannar district, and has afforded employment to the distressed villagers there. The plant grows wild over the district and other parts of the Province.

A Mahomedan merchant of Madras, who attended the fisheries of 1887 and 1888, and invested largely in pearl oysters, tried in the beginning of the year to get a monopoly of the trade in this bark. The bark is said to be used for tanning.

The following information is furnished to me by the Adigar of Musali regarding this industry:—

The quantity of avarai bark collected in 1893 in

the Mannar district was 288 tons, viz.:—

	Tons.
Mannar .. .. .	15
Vidattativu .. .. .	157
Silavatturai .. .. .	87
Uyilankulam .. .. .	24
Kallikaddaikadu .. .. .	5

and the whole quantity was exported to Colombo. A sum of R2 was paid as royalty per ton, and the amount of cost to the traders per ton was from R35 to R40. The amount for which a ton was sold in Colombo was between R80 and R100. Deducting all the cost, there is a net profit of about R30 per ton. The persons engaged by the traders to collect the bark are paid at from R1-12 to R1-78 per cwt. —*Mr. Twynam's Report*.

#### RUBBER.

Under the heading "Rubber-yielding trees," the Government Botanist (Nilgiris) after relating the want of success, which attended the tapping-operations for rubber, performed on the *Ceara* and *Castilloa* trees, growing in the Burliyar Gardens, suggests the advisability of Government applying to the Chief Commissioner of Assam with a view to obtaining the services of an expert rubber tapper, in order to ascertain whether the non-success hitherto experienced in the tapping of these plants was due to the unskilfulness of the operator.—*Nilgiri*.

#### COSTA RICA REDUCES THE DUTY ON COFFEE.

The Bureau of the American Republics has been officially informed that the government of Costa Rica, by decree of June 8th 1894, has reduced the export duty on coffee to 4 shillings, English money, for each 46 kilograms. When the coffee is exported in its inner husk, the said duty shall be reduced by making an allowance of 18 per cent. on the gross weight. This decree will be in force on and after October 15th 1894. —*American Grocer*.

#### LIBERIAN ARABICA COFFEE HYBRID.

We hear that Mr. Lamb of Vythery, to whose interesting find of hybrid coffee plants we alluded some months ago, is very sanguine as to the value of his plants. He had in the first place two plants only which are now  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years old. A year ago one bush yielded 330 cherries (or seeds, we are not sure which) and this year 1760. Last year's crop Mr. Lamb sowed and the resulting seedlings are to all appearance true to the hybrid type.

The coffee of the hybrid has a very thin skin, in which it is very superior to pure Liberian, and it shows a strong tendency to run to peaberry. By 1896 Mr. Lamb hopes to be able to supply seed to the public and he has meantime himself taken up 300 acres of land which he intends to plant with the new coffee. Of course it remains to be seen whether later generations will remain true to type, and it also has yet to be seen how far it will be proof against leaf disease and the other ills to which coffee is heir. Those however who have seen the plants, either at Pandora or in Mysore, appear to be very hopeful, and, as we have before remarked, if these fulfil a title of what their owners anticipate, they will be of very great value.—*South of India Observer*.

JAVA TEA.—On page 203 will be found an interesting letter about the total exports of tea from Java (9,400,000 lb. in 1892-3) and the consumption in Holland, which has doubled in ten years being 3 million lb. in 1893. More than half the Java crop is still sent to the London market. This is a pity. We should like to see the Java planters more alive to pushing their produce into new markets on the Continent of Europe.