

great advantages. It is an advertisement to the men who deal in the tea. If it succeeded it would establish a direct trade with America. It would be advisable previous to sending a shipment to send a large variety of samples to the American dealers, and get advice as to the most suitable tea for their own purposes, or to invite some dealer to your market and offer him the pick of it at  $\frac{1}{2}$  less than the market price.

As soon as the dealers find that they can sell your teas they will want more than the limited monthly bonus, allowed, and you will have an established demand from the dealers. You can leave them to push the teas when once they are known.

If you care to spend the balance, or possibly the profit on the capital on advertising it might do some good. If you make tea of suitable character it will make it easier for the dealers to dispose of it.

Don't hang your faith on the idea that yours is a superior product; the test of superiority is the preference shown by the dealers.

Get a good tea taster to haunt the auction rooms in New York, to study the sorts and kinds of tea which are paid for at certain prices, and to ascertain whether anything similar can be supplied from Ceylon. Perhaps some of your most despised districts are actually selling their weak teas at a low price which could be sold as first-class teas in America when once they are known.

The Planters' Stores and Agency Co., sent me a Compendium for Tea Planters, and this gives the export to India & Teas for the last 26 years to each country.

The maximum of 676,507 pounds was sent in 1882-83. The amount has steadily decreased till in 1892-93 it is only 49,957 lb. Say that the decrease is made up by shipments from London; this cannot be of much benefit to the Tea Industry. There is only one possible way in which it could be of benefit, and that is in the delay of sending the tea round; it has longer time to mature and lose some of its most objectionable properties.

Still the fact that our tea has not made more headway on its own merits, (whether of quality or low prices); to my mind clearly shows that there is some radical defect in it.

In the "Planter" the subject of maturing tea has been mooted and it is probably one which will gain in importance when once called to general notice. Let us suppose that our tea is sold and into the tea pot, within a year; it is probable that another year added to its age would render it more acceptable to the consumer.

This is my hobby and I always return to it—to suit the consumer. Can any one tell me by what means the dealers take steps to suit the consumer. Undoubtedly they do find out to a certain extent; and when once they find out what teas are preferred they pay more for it; gradually this attracts the attention of the Planters, who by degrees come round to the desired change in character. But all this strikes me as a very round-about way of working and it is time that the planting community appoint experts to discover what can be done in the way of suiting the consumers of all markets, and to lay down rules by which this can be done to a certainty.

Now that withering machines have become available, the Indian Tea crop is less dependent on the seasons; and it would be interesting to find out whether the Brokers notice any marked tendency towards more equal quality year by year.

There are many things that require clearing up, and of which we Planters have the most hazy notions.

How is it that the character of Oachar and Sylhet teas has suddenly been raised from medium to good? Is it due to change in methods, or of manufacture, or to a change in the requirements of the market? We don't know and no one will trouble to tell us.

If these districts attain to their leading place as in 1875-78 the other districts will strive to follow them, but without any distinct knowledge of the reason of the change. Well; it's a wide subject and none of us, as yet, can do more than is done by the Prize essays, and give a few hints from what we consider to be our experience. I am going slightly against my principles in asking you to humour the

dealers as I believe that they are more anxious to make the utmost profit out of every pound of tea than to stimulate consumption by supplying good tea, but I urge this course only as a first step and in order to introduce a large bulk of your teas into America.

In all the forms of advertising I do not see mentioned one very favourite device for introducing new products. And that is the coupon system published in several or certain newspapers. "This coupon will entitle the holders to 5 lb. of Ceylon tea for so many cents or dollars, apply to so and so."

Personally, I think that too much fuss is made over America, and that Canada or any other temperate-to-frigid climates would offer a better hope of success for our comparatively strong teas in the event of our entirely refusing to copy China in the character of her teas.

I was astonished to read, in the essay by "Open Sesame" the following:—"A Temperate Nation, they should certainly be judges of good tea, and where the thick, dirty, China teas, etc., etc."

The epithet of "thick" applied to China tea seems to me contrary to all I have heard of it, but a still greater mistake is the other epithet of "dirty," it is making too little of a really formidable rival, and a reflection on the taste of the Americans which they don't deserve. In Russia, I hear that certain China teas still sell at very much higher prices than we ever obtain for even our best teas, showing that the Chinese have succeeded in meeting the tastes of their customers, whereas we have as yet only succeeded in supplying our customers' wants. "1874."

## UNSUITABLE WOODS FOR PACKING TEA

Kandy, Sept. 20.

DEAR SIR,—At the request of the Committee I enclose copy of a letter inviting attention to the advisability of avoiding the use of unsuitable woods for packing tea.—I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully,  
A. PHILIPS.

Secretary.

(Copy).

Colombo, 3rd Sept. 1894.

The Secretary, the Planters' Association, Kandy.

DEAR SIR,—We enclose a cutting of Tea Leaf, sent us by certain friends of ours in New Zealand, which was taken from a package of a break of Tea bought by us in the Local market. You will notice one (the outer) side has become discolored and has a peculiar and objectionable smell. Our friends say they were so fearful that this smell would affect the Tea, that they disposed of the teas at once. They express their opinion in which we concur, that the discolorization and smell were caused by the use of unsuitable and unseasoned woods for the boxes. We have made enquiries and find the packages, (there were two breaks from different estates similarly affected) were in one case imported from Cochin and in the other locally made.

Our own recollection of the packages was that they were damp and musty and quite unsuitable for the packing of a sensitive article like tea.

Our object in bringing this matter to your notice is, that planters may avoid the use of unsuitable Ceylon woods in future and see that the wood is dry and properly seasoned. As shippers, we could wish Ceylon made packages were never used, as the construction and woods are, as a rule bad and unsuitable.

Japanese momi packages, on the other hand are invariably well seasoned and constructed and beautifully finished, standing the rough usage they must necessarily get, much better, to say nothing of greater uniformity in tares.

The Press would doubtless be the best means of circulating this matter, if you think the subject of sufficient interest for publication.—We are, dear Sir, yours faithfully, (Signed) per pro. Bathgate Pim, & Co., F. STREET.

P.S.—We have mislaid the cutting of lead referred to, but will post you same later. (Sgd.) F. STREET.