

The exportation of coffee has been as follows, viz.—

TABLE I.

Country.	Quantity. lb.	Value. £
Germany	23,075,027	923,001
United States	16,843,903	663,756
England	8,049,724	321,988
France	3,305,975	132,239
Austria	303,953	12,158
South America	149,933	7,197
Italy	73,030	1,721

The total number of Coffee trees now standing is estimated to be 64,186,924, there being this year an increase of 25,138,994.

Messrs. Lewis and Peat to Royal Gardens, Kew.

6, Mincing, Lane, London, E.C.

Dear Sir, August 28, 1893.

In reply to yours of 31st ultimo, we give you for what they are worth the following remarks on coffee.

After a period of comparatively low prices, the value of this product rose rapidly about six years ago, since when prices of the finer grades (plantation sorts) have remained fairly steady. We look upon the position of this particular kind of coffee, which is that which a European planter would aim at producing, as a strong one, the supplies from both Ceylon and East India having fallen off (in the former case they have almost entirely ceased), and their place being only very imperfectly filled by the finer coffees from Costa Rica, Guatemala, &c., especially Vera Paz and New Granada. Among the British colonies the West India Islands, or some of them, Trinidad, Dominica and Jamaica, offer perhaps the best field for the cultivation of this product, the very serious drawback being possibly the difficulty in obtaining an adequate supply of labour. Fortunately the requirements in this respect are not so great with coffee as with some other products, as after the ground has once been cleared and planted the trees have only to be kept clean, pruned, and manured, when they will last for many years, giving, after the fifth year, their yearly crop of fruit, varying in quantity and quality according to the season and to the care bestowed on them. The number of hands required is, of course, much larger during crop time than during the rest of the year, but a good deal of the picking, &c. is done in many parts by women and children.

The machinery required for preparing the bean for market is not expensive, especially when there is sufficient water power available to work it, and no drying power beyond that of the sun is required for drying the produce. The climate in the higher parts of Jamaica is very pleasant, and suitable for Europeans to live in, and we understand that in the centre of the island there are large districts in which land very well suited to the cultivation of coffee may be obtained, though there is, we believe, this disadvantage, that heavy crops are not obtained in the very highest altitudes more than about once in three years. The difficulty, as we have said before, may be the securing a sufficient amount of reliable labour, but this is a difficulty common, we think, to almost every part of the globe, and, at the present time, to all industries. If this can be surmounted, as we doubt not it can be to a sufficient extent, with care and energy, we should consider that a young Englishman, with some knowledge of outdoor work, and with an inclination towards a planter's life, would have the prospect of a good future before him in coffee planting, supposing always that he is possessed of sufficient capital to buy, clear, and plant his land, and to keep his estate going for the four or five years before payable crops can be harvested, without having to borrow for the purpose at a heavy rate of interest.

The statistical position you have doubtless already before you. Notwithstanding the increased crop

from Brazil during the past few years as compared with the previous production from that place, there has been little or no accumulation of stock at the consuming centres of the world, while dealers in the finest descriptions find frequently considerable difficulty in satisfying their requirements.

Always at your service,

We are, &c.,
(Signed) Lewis & Peat.

D. Morris, Esq., C.M.G.,
Royal Gardens, Kew.

—Kew Bulletin.

VARIOUS PLANTING NOTES.

COFFEE AND BANANA CULTIVATION IN COSTA RICA.—The cultivation of Coffee in Costa Rica, is said by Consul Sharpe to be increasing, and lands are being taken up, especially on the Line of railway between Cartago and Reventazon, which, although an experiment bids fair to become a most productive and profitable undertaking. All suitable Coffee lands in the interior have long ago been utilised; but many estates have been neglected in past years, when Coffee was unremunerative; consequently the production has not increased with the growth of years. Nevertheless, greater attention is now being given to them by manuring and replacing old trees, as also to a better class of machinery, which will all tend to improve their plantations, and give better value to their coffee in foreign markets. The cultivation of Bananas is also extending, especially on the lower lands of the Atlantic coast, where several concessions have been granted with the view of planting Bananas and Cocoa. The export of Bananas will be considerably increased in the course of the year 1894, notwithstanding that many of the old lands are now past giving good shipping fruit. Preference is given to Banana-planting, on account of its rapid growth and quick returns, but Cocoa is also very profitable though it requires from four to five years before yielding a crop.—*Gardener's Chronicle*.

THE CAMPHOR TRADE OF CHINA.—Some idea of the extent of the Chinese traffic in camphor may be gathered from a Customs Report on the trade of Tainan for 1892. The yield was less in 1892 than it was in 1891, owing to the district of Tokoham (one day from Tamsin, and whence the Tainan export is largely drawn) having been raided by the aborigines, who destroyed every still. This fact, coupled with the somewhat smaller production in Japan, and the cholera scare in Europe, which raised the demand considerably, caused the price to rise gradually in Hong-Kong. Meanwhile large tracts of camphor forest have been opened up south of Tokoham, which it was estimated would soon bring the prices to the usual level. Some tribes, whom the Chinese are trying to conciliate by larges, have made treaties with foreign firms, allowing them to build stills, the head men of these tribes, receiving a monthly stipend of 30 cents for each still. Such treaties are easily ratified—a few pigs supplemented by some samshu and followed by a carousal, are the only essentials. The loss in weight of camphor between shipments at Tainan and re-shipments at Hong-Kong is great, some 15 to 20 per cent, partly due to the wetting after production, and partly to the amount of essential oil given off by the article during transit. It is said that North Formosan firms have commenced to press the camphor immediately after leaving the stills, thereby removing the excess of oil and moisture before packing. The stills are said to be poor, and are manufactured by natives on the spot where the trees seem likely to yield the best return. Foreign stills would be too cumbersome for transportation inland. The difficulty of transporting machinery over inaccessible places in which the camphor trees usually grow forbids the use of foreign appliances. Around Chip-chip, vast forests of camphor exist, and it is hoped that the day will soon arrive when these, now under a ban through internal disturbance, will be opened to foreign enterprise.—*Ibid*.