

VALUE OF COCONUTS.

Negombo District, Sept. 1st.

DEAR SIR,—In response to your request I give below the range of prices and the average value of coconuts, per thousand, in this district for the concluding years of the quinquennial periods ending with the years 1865, '70, '75, '80, '85, and '90, and for the last 4 years.

It will be observed that the value has steadily advanced since 1891, owing partly to the increased exports of the raw material and poona, and partly to the very large demand created by the new industry of preparing desiccated coconuts.

A notable feature here just now is the demand for seed nuts from this favourite locality, and the price of these has gone up by leaps and bounds. In this connexion let me add a word of advice to the inexperienced who intend to plant up with this invaluable palm. They should be careful to procure nuts, for nursery purposes, from a reliable source, as the success of a plantation largely depends on the proper selection of the seed nuts—a matter which does not seem generally to receive the attention which its importance demands.

—Truly yours,

POLGAHA.

| Years.  | Range of prices, per thousand, for 12 months. |           | Average value per thousand for 12 months. |  |
|---------|---|-----------|---|--|
|         | £ s. d.                                       | £ s. d.   | £ s. d.                                   |  |
| 1865... | 3 2 0   | to 3 5 0  | 3 4 8                                     |  |
| 1870... | 2 18 0  | to 3 7 6  | 1 10                                      |  |
|         | R c.  | R c.      | R c.                                      |  |
| 1875... | 26 25   | to 33 75  | 29 46                                     |  |
| 1880... | 26 50   | to 33 25  | 29 04                                     |  |
| 1885... | 27 50   | to 33 75  | 30 25                                     |  |
| 1890... | 30 75   | to 35 12½ | 32 89                                     |  |
| 1891... | 28 00   | to 37 25  | 32 02                                     |  |
| 1892... | 30 50   | to 40 50  | 34 21                                     |  |
| 1893... | 36 00   | to 47 75  | 40 81                                     |  |
| 1894... | 37 25   | to 39 50  | to end August.                            |  |

TEA RUBBISH FOR CAFFEINE.

Talawakele, Sept. 4th.

DEAR SIR,—I read with much interest your article on the scarcity of Tea Rubbish for the manufacture of Caffeine.

I fancy that a great amount of valuable rubbish is being daily thrown away by every tea factory, viz., the delicate hairs of the tea leaf commonly called "fluff." I have advocated the use of fluff for this purpose amongst the planters here. On Saturday I advised a gentleman to send some to one of the German firms for a trial.

I have made a rough analysis of "fluff" and I estimate that it contains as much theine weight for weight as what the leaf does.

It would also be easier extracted as there is not so much colouring matter etc., to be got rid of.

With regard to the value of the large leaf for this purpose I am not quite sure. But from results I have obtained in studying the chemistry of the manufacture of tea, I would say, that a greater percentage of alkaloids would be obtained from the green leaf.

I am of opinion that in the process of firing there is a splitting up of a portion of the Theine into its constituent parts. But I would strongly advise some enterprising planter to send a packet of "fluff" to the firm you name for trial.—I am, etc.,

P. M. SHORT.

[We must arrange ourselves for a packet of "green leaf" and of "fluff" to be sent to Mr. Christy for the purpose in view.—Ed. T.A.]

THE CEYLON TEA SALES CONDITIONS.

A general meeting of those interested in the tea trade was held on the afternoon of Sept. 12th in the Chamber of Commerce room, just before the weekly sales commenced, to consider Rule XII. of the present Conditions of Sales, and to vest in the Colombo Tea Traders' Association the power of dealing with the conditions of sale generally under the following resolution to be proposed by Mr. J. H. Renton, and seconded by Mr. F. Duplock:—"That Rule XII. of the conditions of sale be altered to read as follows:—Additions or alterations to the above rules may be made from time to time, as occasion arises, at the general meeting of the Colombo Tea Traders' Association to be called for such purpose in accordance with the rules of the Association." Mr. J. H. Renton occupied the chair, and among the others present were:—Messrs. C. A. Leechman, H. Worship, A. C. Gale, C. E. H. Symons, A. H. Ayden, F. F. Street, W. Haslam, H. S. Jeaffreson, A. M. Gepp, E. M. Lestie, J. N. Campbell, H. Tarrant, F. Duplock, W. Seale, W. E. Keele, John Barber and Foster.

Mr. J. H. RENTON, Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, who presided explained that they had been called to consider rule 12 of the present conditions of sale which was as follows:—"Additions or alterations to the above rules may be made from time to time as occasion arises, at a general meeting of the Tea Trade to be called for such purpose, by the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, on the written request of not less than 5 of those interested. At least a week's previous notice must be given in one or more of the local newspapers." He had called the meeting in accordance with a letter addressed to him by five members of the Tea Trade. Most of them had now joined the Colombo Tea Traders' Association, and they wished now to hand the conduct of the Trade over to that Association. It was, therefore, necessary that this rule should be altered and he had given notice of a motion that it should be altered to read as follows:—

Additions or alterations to the above rules may be made from time to time, as occasion arises, at a general meeting of the Colombo Tea Traders' Association to be called for such purpose in accordance with the rules of the Association.

The Committee of the Colombo Tea Traders' Association had met and adopted as their rules all the rules in the old conditions of sale, with the exception of Rule 12, which they had altered as above. The Colombo Tea Traders' Association having adopted all these rules, it naturally only remained for the general body of the trade to hand the conduct of the business over to the Association, and they could best do so by adopting his resolution.

MR. DUPLOCK.

Mr. DUPLOCK in seconding said they had hitherto been a very important body as being engaged in the tea-trade of this island, but more or less a non-descript one, no one knowing who the head was, or with whom they had to deal, and they had done things in a hap-hazard sort of way. Now that they had a President, a Secretary, and a Committee, they hoped to get on swimmingly. It was only right that the conditions of sale under which they bought and sold their tea should be under the guidance and control of a properly organised and constituted Association, such as the Colombo Tea Traders' Association.

AN OBJECTION.

Mr. J. N. CAMPBELL:—I regret that I am compelled to oppose the resolution proposed by