productions. The only exception known to me as to this is the case of coffee, which for some unexplained cause or other still keeps up its price. Of course our market has now a very full supply of teas, but it is not in excess of our wants. One thing certainly tells against price, and that is that the breaks sent home are so numerous that the testers cannot find the time to taste all of them, and a great deal is therefore offered on the preference formed by appearance only, and not upon the verdicts of experienced tasters. The ground upon which bids are made is often therefore very uncertain. I still adhere most firmly to my formerly expressed opinion that the Americans will never be large consumers of your teas, whatever Messrs. Grinlinton & Co. may say. The climate of America is opposed to the appreciation of delicate flavourings."—London *Cor.*, July 13.

COFFEE PLANTATION TOOL PROSPECTS.

Manufacturers of coffee plantation and other tropical agricultural tools, and of irrigation implements and appliances, will congratulate themselves on a report just issued from Kew. It refers to the cultivation of a new and very prolific description of coffee plant, of which the first specimen was brought into notice in 1883. It is called the Maragogipe, a variety of Arabian coffee, and is remarkable for its vigorous growth, the abundance and large size of its berries, and of the contained seeds which are the coffee beans of commerce. The Kew plant is now of full size, and has this year produced an excellent crop. Seeds and plant, have been distributed to Ceylon, Java, Jamaicas Trinidad, and Queensland. The only report of the experiments thus initiated comes from Queensland. This is, however, very encouraging, especially with regard to the high productiveness of the plants, and it is stated that a large stock of them will be raised from seed for distribution next year. Unfortunately, the Maragogipe does not enjoy the reputation of its inferior rival, the Liberian variety, of comparative freedom from liability to the attacks of the leaf fungus which has proved so disastrous in Ceylon. Indeed, both there and in Java the plant has suffered from this disease in common with other descriptions of Arabian, from which most of the coffee brought into the markets is grown. It is announced that it does not appear, however, that the Maragogipe is more liable to injury than the related varieties, and its unusually vigorous habit may perhaps warrant the belief that it will prove better capable of resisting these attacks. From the fact that the coffee plant does not reach the stage of full bearing until the fifth year, it may be inferred that we have not yet heard the utmost concerning the possibilities of this new variety. Sufficient, however, is known to safely lead to the conclusion that the discovery is likely to develop the coffee cultivation industry, and thereby to certainly enlarge the demand for coffee plantation tools and implements.—*Implement & Machinery Review.*

PLANTING IN TRAVANCORE.

Crop prospects in the Nelliampathies are very hopeful. In Peermad the crop prospects are excellent both for tea and coffee, and although the rainfall in the low country is deficient in June, it was above the average in June, while this month it is normal.—*Western Star*, July 28.

MR. BENT ON SOUTHERN ARABIA.

A special meeting of the members of the London Chamber of Commerce was held on July 10th, at Botolph House, Eastcheap, when Mr. J. Theodore Bent, delivered an address on Southern Arabia. The President of the Chamber (Sir A. Rollit, M.P.) was in the chair. Mr. Bent last winter made an expedition to the Hadramut Valley, and he described the locality as it was at present compared with ancient times. The Hadramut, he said, was a long, broad valley, with narrow collateral valleys falling into it from the north and from the south and ran for many miles almost parallel to the Indian Ocean, towards which it gradually sloped, and fell into the sea about 420 miles east of Aden. Anciently the Hadramut was very well known; indeed, few places better; but Mahomedan fanaticism blotted it out of the map and obliterated its commercial value. During modern times the valley had been absolutely unknown; a German reached it last year, but, owing to the fanaticism of the inhabitants, had to beat a hasty retreat. Mr. Bent and his wife, with a Government surveyor, a botanist from Kew, and a naturalist, through the hospitality of the Sultan of Shibam, spent three weeks in the country, and were able to do very satisfactory work, and they hoped to return during the ensuing winter. There was hardly a running stream in the whole district, the valleys being, without exception, silted up to a considerable height by sand which in the course of ages had invaded them from the great central desert of Arabia. Beneath the sand water was always found, and all the cultivation had to be carried on by an elaborate system of irrigation.—*O. Mail.*

ECONOMIC PLANTS IN INDIA.

(*From Dr. King's Annual Report on Calcutta Botanic Gardens* 1893-4.)

Attention has, as usual, been given to the cultivation and distribution of plants of economic interest which are suited for cultivation on the plains of India. Rhea plants still continue to be in occasional demand, and supplies of these have been issued gratuitously to various applicants. Seeds of *Coca* have been freely given to various tea-planters. *Coca* is the plant from which the anæsthetic, known as *cocaine*, is prepared. This alkaloid can, from the nature of it, never come into very extensive use, and the demand for it is at present greatly below the supply: But, as high prices have occasionally within recent years been got for batches of coca leaves, planters have been led into taking up the cultivation with more enthusiasm than discretion. Plants of Sissal hemp were in active demand for a time, and these were met as far as possible. *Cola acuminata* (which produces the Cola nut) was also in demand to some extent. Seed of the grass, known variously as *bhabar*, *babui*, and *sabai*, was issued to a few applicants outside of India. This grass (of which the botanical name is *Ischæmum angustifolium*) first attracted my notice as a possible raw material for paper twenty-five years ago, while I was in the Forest Department in the North-West Provinces. It is very common in the Siwalik range, and in the Bhabar forests of the Gharwal and Kama on Himalaya. Samples of it, sent home by me in 1873 to a paper-maker in Scotland, were favourably reported upon; and again in 1877 a sample sent by me to the India Office, having been submitted to the late Mr. Routledge of the Ford paper mills (then a leading authority on paper making), was declared by him to be little inferior to *Esparto* as a raw material for paper. A year or two subsequently to this it was discovered by the help of Mr. J. S. Gamble of the Forest Department, that this grass is common in the forests of Chota Nagpur. Samples of it were accordingly sent by me to the Bally Paper Mill, then the only one near Calcutta. The sample was approved of at Bally, and since then the use of this grass has so increased that it now forms the chief raw material of an industry which, in this country, is yet probably only in its infancy. As seed of bhabar grass is now being applied for from abroad, it is possible that, before long, it may be cultivated in other tropical countries. It is a subject of much regret to me that my efforts to extend the