

XXII.—*Note on the late Mr. Crawford's Paper on the Migration of Coffee, Tea, etc.* By Dr. CAMPBELL, M.D., late Superintendent of Darjeeling.

[Read June 9th, 1868.]

ABOUT ten days before the death of our late lamented President, he sent me a printed copy of his paper which has now been read. He asked me to make whatever remarks occurred to me on it, and hoped that at the "reading" we should have some discussion on the different subjects treated by him.

My acquaintance with the subject is from two sources. At the International Exhibition of 1862 I exhibited the teas of all the tea-producing provinces of India, including the government teas from Kumasu; and I was a member of the jury on articles of food at the same exhibition, when all the articles treated of from all parts of the world came before us. 2ndly, I had a great deal to do with the introduction of tea into the district of Darjeeling, of which I had civil charge, and there I became well acquainted with the cultivation and manufacture of tea and coffee.

Mr. Crawford says that coffee migrated from the west—Holland—to the east. This was only the case to a certain extent, for I find in a report by Colonel Onslow, of Madras, that it was introduced into India about two hundred years ago by a Mahomedan pilgrim who brought seven *berries* only from Mocha to Mysore and put them in his garden; and that from this source it spread very slowly, although at present the produce is considerable. It is principally grown in the Madras and Bombay presidencies. In 1861 India exported to all parts 20,000,000 of lbs., of which one half came to France. It is known in commerce as "Cannons Mysore", and is of excellent quality.

The cocoa is not grown in Continental India. One sample only from Singapor was exhibited in 1862.

The discovery of tea in India and the progress of its cultivation and manufacture is very remarkable. About twenty years ago the plant was discovered in Assam, where it is believed to be indigenous, although it is possible it may have reached that province from China overland. It was also some years later discovered in the neighbouring province of Cachar, where it had attained the size of small trees. At first it was believed

that this great discovery was a mistake, and that the plant was a species of *Camellia* which, in all its botanical characters, very much resembles the tea plant. A commission of inquiry, headed by the late Dr. Wallich, was deputed to examine and report on the plants discovered, when it was decided that they were the veritable tea plant. The only important difference between the two plants being that in the one the seed pod when ripe opens along the back of the seed—which are three in each pod—while in the other it opens along the interstices of the seeds.*

There were twenty-eight exhibitors of Indian teas from seven provinces in 1862. One hundred and fifty-three different kinds of tea were examined. Four "Medals" and seven "Honourable mentions" were awarded, and the teas were of most excellent quality. The manufacture is rapidly increasing. 7,000,000lbs. are expected this year in England. A good deal is used in India, and the export of it to Thibet and Central Asia has commenced from the north-western portion of the British Himalaya, *viâ* Lâdâk : where we now have a British agent to look after our commercial interests, which have been so long obstructed and interfered with by our tributary ally, the Raja of Cashmere.

The teas of Java and Brazil were found to be very inferior to the Indian ones, and still worse were sampled from Natal and Victoria.

On the "Mahte" or Paraguay teas, I have little to remark. It is a wretched substitute for tea. It is brought to Europe packed in skins with the hair outside, and keeps for a long time I believe.

Besides the samples from Brazil, there were nine other exhibits from the French Colonies of Reunion, Guadaloupe, and Miguelon.

Mr. Crawford has remarked on the extraordinary discovery of the edible coffee by simply roasting the raw seed, which has no fragrance, and in its fresher state of a pulpy berry has no attractions for the palate. The discovery of tea-making is still more wonderful; and the man who first eliminated the most refreshing and delicious of drinks from a harsh and bitter leaf by a complicated and very delicate process, may, in whatever age or country he lived, be surely ranked among the greatest benefactors of the human race.

Much is said by medical men in England and others about the injurious effects of tea. I am not competent to judge of

* *Camellia* leaves will not make tea; but this test could not then be applied, as no one in India could make tea at that time.

its effects on the people of the British Islands who consume, however, 120,000,000lbs. per annum, or about 3lbs. per head of it, and seem none the worse; but I have lived a very long time on the confines of Thibet where tea is used to an enormous extent, and where the people are extraordinarily robust and healthy. It is the same in Mongolia, Mantchooria, and all through Central Asia to the regions of the Caspian; yet no one ever considers that it is in the very least degree injurious, while all delight in it, and among all it is considered very nutritious.—(See Vamberg's *Travels*, Hue and Gabet, Hooker, &c., on this head).*

* My friend, B. H. Hodgson, Esq., late of Nepal, having read the above note, informs me that, before the discovery of tea in Assam, the plant was growing in the residency garden at Kathmandoo, where it had been received overland from China.
