

THE  
TEA INDUSTRY IN INDIA.

A REVIEW OF FINANCE AND LABOUR,  
AND A  
GUIDE FOR CAPITALISTS AND ASSISTANTS.

BY

SAMUEL BAILDON,  
AUTHOR OF "TEA IN ASSAM," ETC.

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# CONTENTS.



## CHAPTER I.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1

## CHAPTER II.

INDIA THE HOME OF THE TEA-PLANT . . . . .	6
---	---

## CHAPTER III.

THE SUPERIORITY OF INDIAN OVER CHINA TEAS . . . . .	20
---	----

## CHAPTER IV.

INDIA AND TEA-PLANTERS . . . . .	85
----------------------------------	----

## CHAPTER V.

THE PLANTER ON LEAVE . . . . .	89
--------------------------------	----

## CHAPTER VI.

THE FINANCIAL ASPECT OF PRODUCTION AND DISPOSAL . . . . .	103
---	-----

## CHAPTER VII.

	PAGE
THE LABOUR QUESTION . . . . .	145

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE SOCIAL PHASE OF TEA-DRINKING . . . . .	228
--	-----

APPENDIX . . . . .	239
--------------------	-----

GLOSSARY . . . . .	247
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## APPENDIX.

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### ORIGINAL HOME OF THE TEA-PLANT.

At a recent meeting of the Royal Botanic Society, a quantity of tea-seed of three special varieties having been received direct from China, and an interesting collection of growing plants of several varieties of both Indian and Chinese teas from the Society's greenhouses being on the table, Professor Bentley took occasion to say that although tea had been cultivated in China for perhaps thousands of years, it is probable that in early times the plant was introduced into China from India, *it being really a native of Upper Assam*. All botanists now agree that many varieties of the tea-plant are derived by long culture from one common origin, and not only so, but the endless varieties of teas known to commerce depend more on the age of the leaf and mode of manipulation for their individual properties, than to the variety of plant from which they are gathered. The Secretary said that although the tea-plant had been so long under cultivation in China, it had comparatively only recently been introduced to England. It was of easy culture, and being a true *Camellia*, the treatment under which the *Camellia Japonica* was now so generally grown would suit it, and probably, with a little attention from our leading horticulturists, as interesting varieties in the flower might be obtained as is now seen in the leaves of the tea, or in the flowers of the *Camellia*.—*Home and Colonial Mail*, February 18, 1881.

The foregoing was forwarded to the author by the kindness of the Editor of the *Home and Colonial Mail*, when the Appendix proof-sheets had been returned to the printer. This Botanical *testimony* singularly bears out the author's *theory* as to the home of the tea-plant.

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## LAND RULES OF THIRTY YEARS' LEASE.

1 to 2 years	.	.	.	No rent.
3 to 6	„	.	.	3 annas per acre.
7 to 10	„	.	.	6 „ „
11 to 20	„	.	.	8 „ „
21 to 30	„	.	.	1 rupee „

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THE districts in which tea is grown in India at the present time are — Assam, Cachar, Sylhet, Darjeeling, Chittagong, Neilgherry hills, Chota Nagpore, Kangra, Kumaon, Sikkhim, Nepaul, Dehra.

I take these two lists from the Map and Index recently compiled in India by Mr. F. Linde, whose large experience, extending over many years, is a guarantee for the greatest accuracy obtainable. Areas are increasing almost daily, and agencies changing frequently. With this allowance, at all events for the purposes mentioned in this book, the work may be taken as thoroughly authentic. It is procurable in London from Messrs. D. J. Keymer and Co., 1, Whitefriars Street, Fleet Street, at the following rates:—

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## 300-ACRE GARDEN.

Operations begin by say	Land planted	Growth of Garden		Bearing area	Remarks
		acres	April 1st, 1881		
April 1st, 1881	50		April 1st, 1881		Two-thirds of garden will be planted when first return is gathered
„ 1882	50	100	„ 1882		Half the area will be yielding when planting is finished.
„ 1883	50	150	„ 1883		Between the last planting and full bearing, three years would elapse, in which all factory improvements might be completed—felling timber, making roads, erecting houses, &c
„ 1884	50	200	„ 1884	50	With a sufficient labour-staff in sixth year, and machinery obtained for manufacture, no expenses would need to be afterward incurred for labour
„ 1885	50	250	„ 1885	100	
„ 1886	50	300	„ 1886	150	
			„ 1887	200	
			„ 1888	250	
			„ 1889	300	

At a rough estimate, this garden, if of good *jat* plant, might be valued at two-and-a-half lakhs of Rupees.

## OUTFIT.

It will seem somewhat strange, I doubt not, to begin this head with "Teeth." Persons with questionably sound teeth should have them examined before leaving England for the tea districts. It is a rare thing to find Dentists in the tea localities, and the general—poultry and rice—diet is particularly troublesome for unsound teeth. Chills or feverish symptoms generally affect broken or decayed teeth, and, as a rule, a man has to be his own dentist, or suffer inconvenience until he reaches Calcutta.

Arrangements should be made, before leaving home, for the regular despatch of a good weekly newspaper—one containing plenty of English news rather than a journal of politics, as Parliamentary information is always provided by the Indian press. Monthly magazines or class journals which have been regularly read at home, will be found doubly interesting in India, where literature is somewhat scarce.

Any business of this kind, engaging passages, forwarding goods, receiving packages from India for delivery to friends at home, or any kind of agency business, can be arranged for with Messrs. D. J. Keymer & Co., 1, Whitefriars Street, Fleet Street, London.

A good lamp is a *sine quâ non* to comfort in the tea districts. Hinck's Duplex is largely used in India, and Messrs. Osler & Co. manufacture a very good reading-lamp. The former, or one similar, is better for general purposes; and a small bed-room lamp will prove useful. All, however, must be specially made for India, in being *punkah-proof*, else they will prove almost useless. London prices for lamps are lower than Indian ones. A large supply of wicks, several spare chimnies, and one or two globes, should be also taken, as breakages are certain sometimes to occur, when, unless there are reserve articles, considerable inconvenience is likely to be caused in obtaining substitutes from Calcutta.

Kerosine oil is procurable in Calcutta in half-maund (41 lbs.) tins, in wooden cases ready for shipment.

White clothes and mosquito-curtains are cheaper, as a rule, in India than in London. With a pattern provided, native tailors will make a good number of jackets and trowsers in a few days.

Night-gowns are substituted in India by sleeping-suits—loose



drawers and a jacket. Indian outfitters in London understand this item.

A breech-loading smooth-bore is the most useful all-round fire-arm for the tea districts, although rifles are occasionally handy.

Revolvers are very little used, as planters do not go about their work armed with shooting-irons, and coolies are not partial to being shot. If revolvers are wanted at all, it is in the Texas fashion—real bad; and if one is not to hand, it is never wanted afterwards. It is awkward to get ammunition into India, and should be sent only through a shipping agent who understands the routine. All requisites for sport are obtainable in Calcutta. Advice, being very cheap, leads me to caution the uninitiated against trifling with fire-arms. It is a very inconvenient thing to shoot a native by accident, and pardonable only by its sequel, to shoot oneself. I unfortunately know of both these cases happening, and another of one planter mortally wounding another. This is not sport.

All mediums of occupying leisure profitably should be taken out. Amateurs in photography will find their knowledge greatly in demand. No valuable or prized books should be reserved for use on the voyage. Shipboard literature is generally "*pro bono publico*," and afterwards for the stewards. The climate of the tea districts plays sad havoc with books. A good way to take them out and keep them in India, is to have a tin-lined case fitted with shelves and folding-doors, like a book-case, tin-lined, and fastened with a good lock. The case should be bound with hoop iron, and covered with sewn canvas.

Photographs suffer much in India. Albums may be well protected in flannel bags, which can be tastefully made of scarlet flannel edged with blue silk. Or if my taste is too quiet, try yellow flannel edged with green baize.

It is a great mistake to discard old cloth clothes before going to India. They are very useful in the cold weather, on wet days, and during fever bouts. Jackets are more useful in jungle-life than coats.

The more flannel is worn, in shirts, trousers, jackets, and sleeping-suits, the better. Silk and wool is also a very comfortable material to wear. "Oxford" shirts (generally called Jute in

India) are much worn in the tea districts, but nothing can equal flannel. All shirts should be made with turn-down collars attached, of a size larger than those worn at home, and a breast pocket or pockets (outside).

Pipes are articles of general use amongst tea-planters; and as the climate (or some other cause) conduces to their speedy decay, spare ones should be taken.

I would recommend that all necessary articles be taken from London, as the cost is less than in India. A dinner and breakfast service for six or nine, ironmongery (enamelled), plated ware, and cutlery of medium quality only (as natives believe in sand for cleaning), glassware, filter, &c. &c.

Boots require to be mentioned particularly. They never wear out in India, but break out, the work giving way through damp and rain, and, consequently, are rendered useless. Good, strong, nailed shooting-boots, with fixed tongues, and of the stoutest make procurable, should be taken, and several pairs of them; and a large supply of laces, and Dubbin (or any similar good preparation) will be of great service. A pair of light riding-boots should also be included in the outfit, together with a pair of stout leggings, fastening without springs.

Umbrellas are used for sun and rain. Silk ones are of no particular glory in the jungles, strong alpaca or zanella answers all purposes. London outfitters have very useful umbrellas for the sun—white cloth lined with green, and a light cane handle—which I would recommend.

A mattress of some kind will be wanted. Coir ones are procurable in Calcutta bazaars at a very low rate; but cork ones are far more serviceable, comfortable, and convenient in travelling. A waterproof sheet to cover same will sometimes be invaluable.

The following are all more or less requisite or useful for the voyage or in India, but cannot be noticed in detail —

Blankets.	Soiled linen bag.	Shoe-horn.
Sheets.	Scotch cap.	Boot-brushes.
Pillow-cases.	Courier bag.	Despatch box.
Towels.	Corkscrew.	Stationery.
Table-cloths and napkins.	Flask.	Compass.
	Canvas shoes.	Lantern.

Dusters.	Overcoat.	Clock.
Rug and strap.	Riding-breeches.	Saddle, cloth, and
Easy chair.	Dress suit.	bridle.
Binoculars.	Needles, threads, and buttons.	Clipping machine.

It is unnecessary to enumerate the articles ordinarily contained in a dressing-case, or those in daily wear. A top-hat will not be admired in the tea districts.

All tailors' and hosiers' measurements should be left at home, so that after-supplies of clothing can be obtained.

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#### HEALTH.

Under this head I have very little to say, being quite sure that as many relatives and friends as can possibly squeeze in a word on the subject will do so. All I need say is that excessive eating or drinking in any country is bad, but particularly so in a hot one—therefore avoid excesses. Never bathe shortly after a meal; take as little medicine as possible, and that only when it is needed. Allow Nature to manage itself as long as it can. No one with the least tendency to Rheumatism ought to go to the tea-districts. Avoid the general failing of new assistants of taking to drink—not from the bottle, but from the tea-pot. Could Dickens have seen how young planters generally absorb tea, it is possible that Sam Weller's "mother-in-law," or the young person who drank nine breakfast-cups of the beverage at one sitting, would never have come into notice. Excessive tea-drinking is very injurious. For complete guidance to health, I strongly recommend every assistant to obtain Surgeon-Major Moore's Indian domestic medicine book, published under Government auspices, and obtainable from Messrs. Thacker, Spink & Co., of Calcutta, at (I believe) Rs. 7.8a. The new assistant will act wisely in learning, as soon as possible, the nature and treatment of cooly complaints.

It is useless to worry oneself about health. Where a decision has been made to go to India, a negative acceptance has been given to whatever health may follow; so the wisest thing to do is to be careful of oneself, and wait until sickness arrives, instead of rushing out to meet it.

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## WEATHER.

The London *Evening News* of November 7th, 1881, said —  
 “The Indian Tea supply is likely to be unusually short this year, owing to the cold weather in Bengal and Assam. Not more than 48,000,000 lbs. will be available for export.” The weather is a very important agent in the production of tea, although it can hardly be said to be of primary importance in all respects. Good weather and poor soil will not result in good tea—although, for that matter, neither will good soil and bad weather. Old gardens are very largely dependent upon climatic conditions for their returns. Wonderful bursts of vigour are sometimes seen in old bushes during good growing weather, and estimates are exceeded under such happy conditions. But one thing is certain—that with the weather unfavourable, quantity and quality of out-turn are alike affected. When, to some extent, quantity is absolutely dependent upon the weather, the practice of estimating for out-turn at the beginning of a season seems quite valueless.

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## DEATH-RATE.

When noticing the death-rate in Chapter VII, I said that in a newspaper-cutting I somewhere had filed, the mortality in the north of England, or in Scotland, was shown to be 80 per 1,000. Against this, the tea-districts' death-rate of 50 per 1,000 did not seem excessive. In the *Echo* of 20th January 1882, a letter from Dr. Allinson says —“Dr. S. Gibbons reports that High Street, Whitechapel, is inhabited on the north by the Jews, and on the south side by Irish and English. The death-rate among the Jews was 20 per 1,000, amongst the Irish and English 43 per 1,000.” What can now be said of the Indian death-rate of 5 per cent., when the mortality percentage in the very heart of the metropolis of the world is shown to be  $4\frac{1}{3}$  per cent. ?

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## GLOSSARY.

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Ap hum ko aisa dik det'ta roj bá roj.	You give worry to me like this day by day.
Ap ka gholám . . . .	Your slave.
Bádját syces . . . .	Fractions-or troublesome grooms.
Bágichá . . . . .	Garden.
Bátua . . . . .	A weed.
Bhai . . . . .	Brother (or acquaintance).
Bháng . . . . .	Indian Hemp.
Burra khannahs . . . .	Big dinners (dinner parties).
Burra Sahib . . . . .	Big Sahib (or the superior).
Chá ka Durpán náták . . . .	Historical Mirror of Tea-planting.
Chá muluk . . . . .	Tea country.
Cutchá . . . . .	Flimsy—of reed and plaster.
Dák bungalow . . . . .	Rest-house for travellers.
Dák gharry . . . . .	Post or travelling carriage.
Darogah . . . . .	Superintendent.
Dástoor . . . . .	Custom.
Dik . . . . .	Worry.
Durwán . . . . .	Door-keeper.
Gharry . . . . .	Conveyance.
Ghát . . . . .	Landing-place.
Gunjá . . . . .	An opiate.
Gupping . . . . .	Gossiping.
Hai . . . . .	Yes (literally, Is).
Hál . . . . .	Cachar land measurement, about five acres.
Háwá khan'na ko . . . .	To eat air.
Hikmát . . . . .	Dexterity.
Hookum . . . . .	Command: order.

Hubble-bubble . . .	Hookah.
Jungly-wallah . . .	Jungle resident (literally, individual).
Kamjari , . . .	Routine of work.
Khábar . . . .	News.
Kheeraki . . . .	Maintenance.
Kismet . . . .	Destiny.
Mátwallah . . . .	Intoxicated person.
Mem-sahib áp ko salaam det'ta.	The lady gives her salute (compliments) to you.
Mem-sahib hai ? . . .	Is the lady (mistress) in ?
Mem-sahib nahin hai, likh-in Missee-bábá-logue hai.	Mistress is not in, but the young ladies are.
Mofussil . . . .	The wilds.
Mouzadar . . . .	Government rent collector (Assam).
Piyadar . . . .	Cess Collector.
Poorah . . . .	Land measurement (Assam); about an acre and a third.
Ryotwari . . . .	Agricultural community.
Salaami . . . .	A present.
Táláp . . . .	Salary.
Thánnah . . . .	Police station.
Tikkhus . . . .	Cess.
Tom-tom . . . .	Native drum.
Topee . . . .	Hat.

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