

REPORT
ON
TEA CULTURE IN ASSAM

FOR THE YEAR

1904.



SHILLONG :

PRINTED AT THE ASSAM SECRETARIAT PRINTING OFFICE.

1905.

Price 9d.]

Price Eight Annas

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ON

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1904.

THE total number of tea gardens in the province at the close of the year was 743, or 21 less than at the end of 1903. Seven gardens were closed during the year, 14 amalgamated with other gardens, and 2 abandoned. Two new gardens were opened, one in Sylhet and the other in Sibsagar. The statement annexed shows the total area held for tea cultivation (including the area taken up by planters but not planted) to have increased from 1,096,167 acres to 1,118,306 acres. The area actually under tea, which was 337,821 acres (30 per cent. of the area held), showed a decrease of 457 acres, as compared with the previous year. The area of land newly planted was returned and estimated as 4,278 acres, and that of cultivation abandoned as 7,137 acres. This would give a net decrease in cultivation of 2,859 acres, as compared with a decrease of 457 acres shown by the return of area actually under tea. As the figures in both cases depend to some extent on estimates, and can only be considered as approximately accurate, it is impossible to reconcile this discrepancy. The area under mature plants increased by 907 acres, and that under immature plants decreased by 1,364 acres. The decrease in the area under cultivation is attributed to the abandonment of old unprofitable areas and to the difficulty in obtaining sufficient labour.

2. The majority of the gardens are under the superintendence of salaried managers.

Management.

Of the area actually under cultivation, 326,267 acres are owned by Europeans and 11,554 acres by Indians.

3. The average rainfall for the previous five years, and during 1903 and 1904, is

Character of the season.

Stations.	1903.	Average for the previous five years.	1904.
1	2	3	4
	Inches.	Inches.	Inches.
Silchar ...	125.70	119.29	173.06
Sylhet ...	152.42	156.99	166.80
Dhubri ...	95.70	93.89	75.79
Gauhati ...	67.89	64.79	72.26
Tezpur ...	65.65	73.12	86.43
Nowgong ...	86.11	82.02	99.75
Sibsagar ...	120.20	98.34	93.17
Dibrugarh ...	104.84	110.40	96.52

given in the margin. The rainfall for the year was fairly evenly distributed and the season was on the whole favourable to the tea industry, although a few gardens suffered from hailstorms and blights in the early part of the year. In some districts the rainfall at the beginning of the season was in excess of requirements.

4. The favourable season was responsible for an increase in the outturn of tea for the province from 145,199,101 lbs. to 152,848,997 lbs. In the

Outturn of tea.

Brahmaputra Valley the yield increased from 78,649,026 lbs. to 82,360,173 lbs., and in the Surma Valley from 66,550,075 lbs. to 70,488,824 lbs. It is stated, however, that the increase in outturn in the Surma Valley was partly attributable to coarser plucking in some gardens. Of the total outturn 3,113,481 lbs. were green teas, of which 797,588 lbs. were manufactured in the Assam Valley and 2,315,893 lbs. in the Surma Valley. A decrease of 170,974 lbs. in the outturn of green teas in the Surma Valley is attributed to a fall in prices.

5. Four hundred and eighty-eight maunds of tea seed were exported from and

Import and export of tea seed.

14 maunds imported into the Brahmaputra Valley, while 183 maunds were exported from the Surma Valley. These figures show that seed was almost entirely obtained locally.

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given in the margin. The rainfall for the year was fairly evenly distributed and the season was on the whole favourable to the tea industry, although a few gardens suffered from hailstorms and blights in the early part of the year. In some districts the rainfall at the beginning of the season was in excess of requirements.

4. The favourable season was responsible for an increase in the outturn of tea for the province from 145,199,101 lbs. to 152,848,997 lbs. In the Brahmaputra Valley the yield increased from 78,649,026 lbs. to 82,360,173 lbs., and in the Surma Valley from 66,550,075 lbs. to 70,488,824 lbs. It is stated, however, that the increase in outturn in the Surma Valley was partly attributable to coarser plucking in some gardens. Of the total outturn 3,113,481 lbs. were green teas, of which 797,583 lbs. were manufactured in the Assam Valley and 2,315,893 lbs. in the Surma Valley. A decrease of 170,974 lbs. in the outturn of green teas in the Surma Valley is attributed to a fall in prices.

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Import and export of tea seed. 14 maunds imported into the Brahmaputra Valley, while 183 maunds were exported from the Surma Valley. These figures show that seed was almost entirely obtained locally.

1903.	Brahmaputra Valley teas.		Surma Valley teas.	
	Number of packages.	Price per pound.	Number of packages.	Price per pound.
1	2	3	4	5
London sale ...	599,776	8.60d.	310,481	6.49d.
Calcutta „ ...	129,756	6 as. 6p.	242,097	5 as. 2 p.

1904.	Brahmaputra Valley teas.		Surma Valley teas.	
	Number of packages.	Price per pound.	Number of packages.	Price per pound.
1	2	3	4	5
London sale ...	644,558	8.18d.	335,029	6.09d.
Calcutta „ ...	150,276	6 as.	241,433	4 as. 9 p.

6. The average prices of tea obtained per pound in Calcutta and London as furnished by the Secretary of the Indian Tea Association are given in the margin. Prices fell substantially, the Assam Valley suffering most heavily. The fall has been very generally attributed to the increase in the Home duty, which is said to have lessened the demand for the better qualities of tea. The gross exports of tea from Calcutta and Chittagong rose by 3 per cent., but there was, practically, no increase in the amount supplied to the home market, the excess being due to increased demand in other countries—a sign of promise. The exports to Great Britain, though showing no appreciable increase over those of the preceding year, were substantially larger than in 1902-1903, but no larger than they were five years ago.

7. Notwithstanding the favourable nature of the season and the increased outturn, low prices and a scarcity of labour exercised a depressing effect on the tea industry. The removal of restrictions on sardari recruitment, effected towards the close of the year, will, it is hoped, cheapen labour, and if the opinion is correct that the low prices of the year were due to excessive taxation, the removal of the extra twopence duty should materially tend to improve prospects.

The Chief Commissioner's acknowledgments are due to the Indian Tea Association and to the Managers and Agents of estates who have furnished the information utilised in this report and in the appended statement.

By order of the Chief Commissioner of Assam,

L. J. KERSHAW,

Offg. Secretary to the Chief Commissioner of Assam,

Statement of the Production of Tea in

Subdivision.	Returned and estimated.	Number of plantations on the 31st December.	†Persons employed, daily average.		Changes in area under tea (in acres).	
			Permanent.	Temporary.	New lands planted with tea.	Old cultivation abandoned.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Silchar ...	Returned ...	122	41,966	3,449	228	429
	Estimated ...	11	4,339	181	...	...
	Total ...	133	46,305	3,630	228	429
Hailakandi ...	Returned ...	29	11,932	1,156	214	769
	Estimated ...	2	504	4	...	...
	Total ...	31	12,436	1,160	214	769
North Sylhet ...	Total Cachar ...	164	58,741	4,790	442	1,198
	Returned ...	21	6,798	289	76	449
	Estimated ...	1	115	9	3	176
Habiganj ...	Total ...	22	6,913	298	79	625
	Returned ...	12	8,645	860	126	68
	Estimated ...	...	...	...	...	...
South Sylhet ...	Total ...	12	8,645	860	126	68
	Returned ...	53	36,598	978	117	63
	Estimated ...	2	919	60	...	...
Karimganj ...	Total ...	55	37,517	1,038	117	63
	Returned ...	34	22,988	1,000	232	1,168
	Estimated ...	1	132	6	...	...
Total Surma Valley ...	Total ...	35	23,120	1,006	232	1,168
	Total Sylhet ...	124	76,195	3,202	554	1,924
	Returned ...	271	128,927	7,732	993	2,946
Dhubri ...	Estimated ...	17	6,009	260	3	176
	Total A ...	288	134,936	7,992	996	3,122
	Returned ...	4	269	239	100	300
Gauhati ...	Estimated ...	...	...	...	...	...
	Total Goalpara ...	4	269	239	100	300
	Returned ...	19	1,855	561	78	117
Tezpur ...	Estimated ...	...	...	...	...	...
	Total Kamrup ...	19	1,855	561	78	117
	Returned ...	59	34,684	2,274	239	1,368
Mangaldai ...	Estimated ...	2	1,535	321	...	...
	Total ...	61	36,219	2,595	239	1,368
	Returned ...	26	9,993	3,278	98	203
Total Darrang ...	Estimated ...	...	...	...	...	...
	Total ...	26	9,993	3,278	98	203
	Total Darrang ...	87	46,212	5,873	337	1,571

† Mainly adults.

Assam during the calendar year 1904.

Area under tea cultivation (in acres).			Quantity (in lbs.) of uncured leaf.	Quantity (in lbs.) of manufactured tea.		Area (in acres) taken up by planters, but not under tea cultivation.
Under mature plants.	Under immature plants.	Total under tea.		(a) Green.	(b) Black.	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
43,367 3,704	827 74	44,194 3,778	85,957,138 8,162,064	266,250 ...	21,695,743 2,242,873	146,737 9,074
47,071	901	47,972	94,119,202	266,250	23,938,616	155,811
10,594 350	359 50	10,953 400	28,589,186 800,836		7,250,024 195,569	56,103 2,234
10,944	409	11,353	29,390,022	...	7,445,593	58,337
58,015	1,310	59,325	123,509,224	266,250	31,384,209	214,148
7,392 199	88 5	7,480 204	9,928,888 224,000		2,335,570 56,000	19,027 ...
7,591	93	7,684	10,152,888	...	2,391,570	19,027
9,671 ...	319 ...	9,990 ...	21,114,156 ...	1,120,285 ...	4,158,253 ...	25,828 ...
9,671	319	9,990	21,114,156	1,120,285	4,158,253	25,828
31,446 1,400	564 ...	32,010 1,400	65,740,882 2,504,580	404,218 525,140	16,135,159 101,005	61,795 1,020
32,846	564	33,410	68,245,462	929,358	16,236,164	62,815
20,532 237	642 2	21,174 239	55,263,417 239,080		13,942,965 59,770	27,643 10
20,769	644	21,413	55,502,497	...	14,002,735	27,653
70,877	1,620	72,497	155,015,003	2,049,643	36,788,722	135,323
123,002 5,890	2,799 131	125,801 6,021	266,593,667 11,930,560	1,790,753 525,140	65,517,714 2,655,217	337,133 12,338
128,892	2,930	131,822	278,524,227	2,315,893	68,172,931	349,471
600 ...	100 ...	700 ...	745,146 ...		213,498 ...	473 ...
600	100	700	745,146	...	213,498	473
3,377 ...	282 ...	3,659 ...	2,891,872 ...	100,130 ...	634,872 ...	13,239 ...
3,377	282	3,659	2,891,872	100,130	634,872	13,239
26,732 1,538	683 48	27,415 1,586	42,331,780 2,582,480		10,807,160 643,120	45,263 ...
28,270	731	29,001	44,914,260	...	11,450,280	45,263
10,619 ...	321 ...	10,940 ...	17,008,468 ...		4,331,803 ...	27,200 ...
10,619	321	10,940	17,008,468	...	4,331,803	27,200
38,889	1,052	39,941	61,922,728	...	15,782,083	72,463

Statement of the Production of Tea in Assam.

Subdivision.	Returned and estimated.	Number of plantations on the 31st December.	†Persons employed, daily average.		Changes in area under tea (in acres).	
			Permanent.	Temporary	New lands planted with tea.	Old cultivation abandoned
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Nowgong...	Returned ...	43	10,849	1,612	120	236
	Estimated ...	...	...	...	...	...
	Total Nowgong ...	43	10,849	1,612	120	236
Sibsagar ...	Returned ...	56	31,572	1,757	451	498
	Estimated ...	...	...	...	...	...
	Total ...	56	31,572	1,757	451	498
Jorhat ..	Returned ...	56	34,961	1,888	243	518
	Estimated ...	...	...	...	...	...
	Total ...	56	34,961	1,888	243	518
Golaghat ...	Returned ...	44	21,183	1,129	190	130
	Estimated ...	3	1,111	460	72	...
	Total ...	47	22,294	1,589	262	130
Total Sibsagar ...		159	88,827	5,234	956	1,146
Dibrugarh ...	Returned ...	127	83,907	4,981	1,629	584
	Estimated ...	3	782	...	...	...
	Total... ..	130	84,689	4,981	1,629	584
North Lakhimpur ...	Returned ...	13	9,229	1,950	62	61
	Estimated ...	...	...	...	...	...
	Total... ..	13	9,229	1,950	62	61
Total Lakhimpur...		143	93,918	6,931	1,691	645
Total Brahmaputra Valley.	Returned ...	447	238,502	19,669	3,210	4,015
	Estimated ...	8	3,428	781	72	...
	Total B ...	455	241,930	20,450	3,282	4,015
Total of both Valleys...	Returned ...	718	367,429	27,401	4,203	6,961
	Estimated ...	25	9,437	1,041	75	176
	Grand total C ...	743	376,866	28,442	4,278	7,137

During the calendar year 1904—concluded.

Area under tea cultivation (in acres).			Quantity (in lbs.) of uncured leaf.	Quantity (in lbs.) of manufac- tured tea.		Area (in acres) taken up by planters, but not under tea cultivation.
Under mature plants.	Under immature plants.	Total under tea.		(a) Green.	(b) Black.	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
11,480 ...	377 ...	11,857 ...	17,519,208 ...	...	4,563,544 ...	38,381 ...
11,480	377	11,857	17,519,208	...	4,563,544	38,381
27,271 ...	805 ...	28,076 ...	37,258,163 ...	535,420 ...	10,647,813 ...	69,368 ...
27,271	805	28,076	37,258,163	535,420	10,647,813	69,368
30,371 ...	480 ...	30,851 ...	44,419,464 ...	...	11,172,933 ...	51,335 ...
30,371	480	30,851	44,419,464	...	11,172,933	51,335
18,179 1,109	823 213	19,002 1,322	29,114,399 1,765,400	162,038 ...	7,385,628 477,846	35,015 2,840
19,288	1,036	20,324	30,879,799	162,038	7,863,474	37,855
76,930	2,321	79,251	112,557,426	697,458	29,684,220	158,558
58,531 429	2,337 213	60,868 642	106,466,310 455,364	...	26,962,540 113,841	129,148 2,799
58,960	2,550	61,510	106,921,674	...	27,076,381	131,947
8,037 ...	1,044 ...	9,081 ...	13,865,368 ...	...	3,607,987 ...	15,953 ...
8,037	1,044	9,081	13,865,368	...	3,607,987	15,953
66,937	3,594	70,591	120,787,042	...	30,684,368	147,900
195,197 3,076	7,252 474	202,449 3,550	311,620,178 4,803,244	797,588 ...	80,327,778 1,234,807	425,375 5,639
198,273	7,726	205,999	316,423,422	797,588	81,562,585	431,014
318,199 8,966	10,051 605	328,250 9,571	578,213,845 16,733,804	2,588,341 525,140	145,845,492 3,890,024	1762,508 17,977
327,165	10,656	337,821	594,947,649	3,113,481	149,735,516	780,485

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