

Shanghai  
23<sup>rd</sup> Feb<sup>ry</sup> 1877

Sir,

Since the arrival here of Mr Yoshikawa he has shown so much interest in <sup>the</sup> subject of Japan tea which I have already - in previous despatches - touched upon very fully to Mr Kichikata Hisamoto of the Dai-jo-Kuan, that at Mr Yoshikawa's request I again proceed to lay my views fully before you.

Kiushu Tea - The tea produced in the island of Kiushu has up to this period been looked upon as very much inferior to the Tea produced in the more central districts of Japan. There appears to me to be no sufficient reason why such should be the case - The soil ~~and climate~~ of Kiushu is equally fertile, and the climate of that island if anything more favorable than the climate of the central provinces for the cultivation of tea, the elevation being also more favorable if anything.

In China the districts producing the Tea most appreciated in Europe and America are between the 28<sup>th</sup> and 33<sup>rd</sup> degrees of Latitude, the very best districts being between the 27<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> degrees of latitude, so that Kiushu enjoys the best position.

Possessing all these advantages there can be no reason why if sufficient care and attention

and attention

is devoted to the cultivation, picking, preparation and packing of the leaf, the Kiushu tea should not be improved to take its rank equal to the tea in the more favored districts.

1<sup>st</sup> as regards cultivation, the tea in Kiushu is allowed to grow to some extent almost wild, little attention is paid to the nature of the plant - The following remarks regarding the cultivation of Tea in India and China I have taken from the report of Mr Hanson who has scientifically studied the matter -

The Tea shrub although grown in almost every soil and aspect, succeeds most in hilly sites of moderate elevation, where it is best able to benefit by the fertility of soil, heat and moisture, so necessary to a plant, particularly in need of all the aid nature can give to renovate its vitality, often interrupted by the stripping of its leaves. The most suitable soil is that which contains a moderate quantity of vegetable matter, compact enough to supply a healthy moisture to the plant without being liable to be dried up and baked during the alternations of sun and rain, and yet sufficiently porous to prevent the water from lingering about its roots. The best aspect is one fronting the south east, or receiving the morning sun.

The plant is generally raised from seeds which are gathered in October, dried in the sun, and kept mixed up with sand and earth during the winter. In the spring the seed is sown broadcast, and is allowed to grow for a year, when the seedlings

by this time nine to twelve inches high, are transplanted in rows at a distance of two to three feet. The damp, moist weather at the time of the monsoon in April and May enables the young plants to establish themselves. In the course of the first year the main shoot is cropped, to reduce the height to about 3 feet, and cause the plant to grow bushy. After this, little is done but the necessary weeding of the ground, and an occasional stirring of the earth, until the time for cropping, which is generally in the fourth or fifth year, according to the strength or weakness of the shrub.

2<sup>nd</sup> As regards the picking, the following is the custom all over China.

The picking commences all over China on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April or 15 days after the Tsing-ming or festival of the opening of Spring, which is always held on the 5<sup>th</sup> April. The second crop is gathered about the middle of June, and in October the fourth or last crop is plucked. On account of autumn rains, this is frequently better than either the second or third crops. Each class (of leaf) is gathered by different men, first, the top leaf, consisting of the convoluted leaf bud, with its expanding or expanded leaf, then the fine leaf tea, consisting of the second and third leaves; and finally the fourth and fifth leaves which form the middle leaf tea. After the fourth gathering the shrub will again exhibit an abundant display of foliage, but these leaves must be left to restore the exhausted energy of the plant.

3<sup>rd</sup> As regards the preparation, this naturally depends upon the place of growth and the different descriptions of plant. The operation requires considerable experience but the principal object is to repel the moisture and at the same time to retain as much as possible of the aromatic and other desirable secretions of the herb.

4<sup>th</sup> The packing of the leaf is an all important matter, the packages should be such as to exclude the damp and atmosphere and to preserve the aroma in the leaf. In Kiusiu it has been the custom to treat the leaf as inferior stuff and to pack it and leave it in the godowns like so much hay or wheat, but with a little more care even in this respect will add much to the market value of the Tea.

The Chinese say that the 1<sup>st</sup> and second crop teas should not be packed in Japanese wood cases unless the cases are well seasoned as there is a scent from Japanese wood which is apt to flavour the tea. If the Kiusiu tea is packed in paper packages and then in straw as at present, and not left in the godowns in the country subject to atmospheric influences but sent quickly to market its value will be much enhanced. Another great point appears to be that if the leaves are picked before they quite reach maturity, i.e. a few days, the quality of the tea will be much improved and naturally the value.

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Having described the manner of picking and preparing the leaf, and urged that more care should be bestowed on the cultivation, the picking at the proper moment and the packing of the tea in Kiushu; I now proceed to inform you of the results I have already obtained, from experiments made with the old leaf of Nagasaki tea in December 1876.

In December 1876 the Mitsui Bussan Kaisha forwarded to me about 272 lbs. of Nagasaki tea, marked 1-2 & 3 in three equal proportions of 90<sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> lbs each. This tea I had mixed together, and sent to the Chuire manufactory here, and from the 272 lbs. we obtained the following result - viz:

No 1 Gunpowder	- 37 lbs.	valued at	50s.	per picul
" 2 - do -	- 45 "	"	30 "	"
" 3 Imperial	- 10 "	"	35 "	"
" 4 - do -	- 24 "	"	18 "	"
" 5 - do -	- 7 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	"	13 "	"
" 6 Young Hyson	- 26 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	"	28 "	"
" 7 - do -	- 21 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "	"	25 "	"
" 8 - do -	- 16 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	"	19 "	"
" 9 - do -	- 6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	"	15 "	"
" 10 Hyson	- 5 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "	"	29 "	"
" 11 - do -	- 3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	"	18 "	"
" 12 Swankay	- 3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	"	6 "	"
Total	200 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> lbs.			
" 13 Tea sticks	13 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "	"	3 "	"
" 14 " shell	12 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	"	1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> "	"
" 15 " dust	15 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "	"	3 "	"
	242 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> "			
Loss in weight	29 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> lbs.			
Total	272 lbs.			

The cost of preparing this Tea was as follows:

Coolies picking the Tea	-	To. 1.00	per picul
" & firing	"	1.10	"
2 Half chests @ 37 cents each	"	0.74	"
Lead lining for 2 Half chests	"	0.57	"
Charcoal	"	0.60	"
Sifting weighing and sorting	"	1.10	"
Colouring and papers	"	0.20	"
Rent &	"	0.20	"
Total cost of preparation		To. 5.51	"

The original cost of this tea in Nagasaki was  
 No. 1 Yen 14, No. 2 Yen 13, No. 3 Yen 12 per picul  
 or an average price of Yen 13 per picul.

By the result after manufacture as given above, the 242 1/4 lbs. of Tea ~~product~~ (inclusive of the Tea dust & allowing 29 3/4 lbs. for loss in weight in the process of manufacture, would give the average value of the tea produced, as  
 Facts 23. per picul

Less 5.51 Cost of production  
 Total To 17.49 as the value of Nagasaki teas treated;  
 its market value in Nagasaki being 13 Yen

The following result is what was obtained by treating a larger parcel in the same way.

A quantity of similar quality Tea was received as follows:

No. 1 - 19 Bales weighing nett piculs	12.25	Cost 14 Yen
No. 2 - 109 " " "	78.13	" 13 "
No. 3 - 99 " " "	72.95	" 12 "
No. 4 - 149 " " "	94.95	" 11 "
Total nett piculs		258.28

This tea was mixed together, and about 30 piculs of China tea mixed with it and it resulted in Tea being manufactured from it which has been sold at an average price of To. 18 per picul.

In this last trial of 258.28 piculs of Nagasaki tea, you will observe that there is only a very small proportion (12 1/4 piculs of good Nagasaki tea), and that by far the larger proportion is of the common leaf, and yet with this proportion, and late in the season with old leaf picked up indiscriminately in the market, a profitable result was actually realised, for the money was paid for the tea and remitted to Japan.

If such results as I have laid before you are obtained from inferior leaf late in the season, it is evident that with greater attention to the picking, and preparation, and with younger leaf, a far more satisfactory result could be obtained.

The Chinese have great confidence in the future of this branch of Japanese industry, and will be willing to take part in the development of it, in any manner which may recommend itself to the Japanese government.

The present proposition made by Mr Ho-yun-ki, is that he will send as soon as possible - a few Chinese who have had experience in the preparation of China tea - to Japan, and that these men with the permission of the Japanese government shall visit the different tea districts, and report upon the cultivation and preparation of the different descriptions of tea, and further as to how the manner in which they can be most profitably utilised to suit the different markets

in Europe, America, Australia, India &c. -

Japanese Tea can be prepared to suit these different markets in Chinese fashion, and these teas can be realised (so prepared) with ease on the China market at a profitable price.

After the Tea has been reported upon by the Chinese, they propose to send across to Japan about 100 Chinese, who have had experience in the manufacture of tea, to prepare it as most advisable. They will do this in conjunction with Japanese if desired, and will deposit £100,000 as their share of capital, or if desired they will work it entirely themselves paying a certain proportion of profits over and above market value to the Japanese government, in consideration of certain concessions they would ask for.

The samples of China tea sent to Mr Shinagawa by you some time since prepared from Japan tea, ~~is~~ I am now having carefully tested and will furnish you with my report, in the mean time I find generally that the majority of the fine teas so prepared, will sell in this market for Tael per picul, where you have placed Yen per picul.

Trusting you will think this report upon <sup>Japan</sup> Tea, and especially Kuichu tea, really worthy your attention without delay.

I remain, Sir

Your obedient servant

John L. Maw

P.S. Any further particulars I shall be prepared at any moment to supply -

A memorandum of the Tea experimented upon is attached.

P.S. The following is the list of samples of  
Japan Tea handed Mr Yoshikawa.

Tins marked from 1 to 64 }  
" do - " 71 to 79 } Total 73 Tins representing  
the Japan tea prepared similar to China tea, and  
forwarded by Mr Matengata to Mr Shiraagawa -  
Tins marked 1 to 12 Total 12 tins, representing 12  
different qualities of China tea manufactured here  
from A-B-C tea mixed - In addition there  
are 3 tins containing Tea dust, Tea shell & Tea sticks  
also from the same tea -  
\* Tins marked A-B-C-D represent 4  
different descriptions of Nagasaki tea out  
of which the larger quantity of China mentioned  
in my letter was manufactured -

The 73 tins of Japan tea mentioned  
above as sent by Mr Matengata will all be  
specially reported upon by an early opportunity.

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Tea following preliminary reports. There has  
forwarded by Mr. Mahajata  
 been selecting one out of each lot as  
 follows

No.	1	Gunpowder	Colonial	Value	50 to 55	per 100. cwt.
	4	no	"	"	48 to 50	"
	13	no	"	"	25	"
	20	Imperial	"	"	20 to 23	"
	27	Gunpowder	"	"	50 to 55	"
	32	no	"	"	27 to 35	"
	37	Imperial	"	"	22	"
	43	Gunpowder	"	"	45 to 50	"
	47	no	"	"	35 to 40	"
	52	Imperial	"	"	15	"
	59	Hyson	"	"	15 to 18	"
	62	no	"	"	24 to 30	"
	64	no	"	"	37	"
	71	Black Tea	"	"	16 to 18	"
	72	Hupok	"	"	25 to 26	"
	73	King Chow	"	"	16 to 18	"
	74	no	"	"	16 to 18	"
	75	no	"	"	16	"
	76	Hupok	"	"	19 to 21	"
	77	Hyson	"	"	40 to 45	"
	78	no	"	"	37 to 39	"
	79	Young Hyson	"	"	35	"
	81	no	"	"	40	"