







## THE NEW YEAR.

We acknowledge with deep thankfulness the mercy of God, in having permitted us to enter upon another year of grace. This little journal counts its 49th volume this year. In view of the encouragement we have received at the hands of our readers and patrons, we would take this opportunity to thank one and all of them, and to express our hope for increased interest on their part, in the cause of the *Star*. The year commences with a bright prospect. The Governor of the Island is to visit Jaffna about the middle of this month, and to personally ascertain the wants and requirements of the District. Reception halls and pandals are in course of preparation in order to welcome the vice royal party in a manner worthy of the great personage. We hope the need for a railway to Jaffna will be more and more impressed on his mind, as he will be travelling towards the north capital, and the cry of the Jaffna people will be responded to at no distant date. In the meanwhile, the necessity for metalling the central road all along, without any interval will demand His Excellency's immediate attention. Among other matters of importance for the welfare of the people, is a liberal grant from the public Exchequer to encourage education. The ruling power being *in loco parentis*, the people have a right to look to it for the fulfilment of such relationship. We hope for increased prosperity and success in every way, temporal and eternal.

Whilst we wish our readers all prosperity and success in this life, we also desire to address a few words to our non-Christian readers. Dear friends, permit us to assure you of our sincere love to you and ask a serious question. Are you on the road to Heaven? Time flies. The rolling off of every year means that you and we are nearer the end. Mr. Mc Lelland's sudden death on the 16th Dec. 1888, forcibly warns us all, of the sudden summons. Oh! be not deceived. Remember the parable of Lazarus and the rich man. Let not the final condemnation pronounced against Ephraim in the words "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone," be denounced against you. But, on the contrary may the happy words spoken to the son on his return to his father, be your portion.

## JAFFNA'S CLAIMS ON THE GOVERNMENT.

However strongly the Planting Representative in the Legislative Council may have criticised the Governor's Irrigation Policy, the fact stands uncontroverted that Irrigation Works are highly beneficial to the people. The practical unanimity of the councillors (saying of course Mr. Christie, dissentient) in voting for the sums asked by His Excellency, for the promotion of Irrigation Works is indicative of their strong sense of the duty of the Government to render all possible assistance to poor Ceylon agriculturalists. The question then comes, and with considerable force, why the Government is partial to some of the provinces. We hardly desire anything like an imputation of *malis fides* in His Excellency, or his councillors. We only want to point out that the claims of our peninsula for help from the Government are at least as strong as those of the more favored districts in the colony.

Jaffna is a unique place. No river can be found throughout its length and breadth, to make its pastures green or the field fertile. No mound or hill protrudes itself to mar the levelness of its superficies. There is an ever increasing tide of population, crowding over its small area. Sure it is, we have fields and we do cultivate them. But then what can the poor farmer do, when, after the expenditure of all his energy, be it physical or pecuniary, he still finds the clouds unrelenting and pa-simonious? The daily prayers and nightly visions of the helpless farmer in this "land of the sky-gazers," are all about rain. But alas! how often do his prayers prove abortive and his visions turn into mirages? The inevitable consequence of a drought is famine and that of untimely rain is a poor harvest. What then is left to the poor farmer, baffled by the deceitful clouds and sore-pressed with hunger, but to resort to the greedy Chetty of Nattuccoral and with the money raised by pawning his goods or by mortgaging his tiny allotment of land to purchase his food at an exorbitant price?

He has also a sacred duty to perform, and that is to reserve a portion of this money for the grain-tax! As the days roll by in succession the debt swells into a big amount and the land is sold in execution.

Even in "times of plenty," it is a well-known fact that the produce of our fields is hardly proportionate to the labour and physical exertion spent on them, not to mention the money expended. Under these circumstances it is not the duty of a paternal Government to help its subjects as much as it can? We accord all praise to brave Sir Arthur, for his vehement Irrigation Policy, as exhibited in his favors bestowed elsewhere. But are we beyond our rights in asking him, whether our important peninsula, existing as it does in the very province which has yielded so largely in its Pearl Fisheries, should be ignored in all its claims on the Public Treasury? Will not our Representative in Council pour out his eloquence, for the benefit of his old countrymen? It has been suggested that large reservoirs be erected in the various field-districts and the rain-water which so often falls in vain be collected there and utilized in times of need. But it is not suggestions we are in need of. If His Excellency takes to heart to help us poor Jaffnes, bereft as we are of Nature's fertilizing agencies and of civilization's expensive inventions or if our benevolent Government Agent makes it a point to persuade the authorities as to the desirability of their interference in our behalf, we shall rest assured that we have won the day. Com.

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The Annual distribution of prizes to the girls of the Nellore Boarding School took place on Friday the 21st ultimo. All necessary preparations were made to make the occasion a very interesting and happy one. Miss Griffith took a very lively interest in the matter and rendered very valuable help to her parents in making the occasion as enjoyable as possible.

A large number of Europeans and natives were invited. The schoolroom was crowded to the doors and all available space was filled with seats. Among those present were Miss Twynnam, Mr. and Mrs. Worthington, Miss Haines. Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Riggs, Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Howland, Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Smith, Rev. W. W. Howland, Mr. C. Morrison, Dr. and Mrs. Keyt, Mr. and Mrs. Hawkes, Mr. and Mrs. Todd, Miss Oudartje, the Misses Tossaints &c. &c. Several native ladies and gentlemen from the N.C.S. headed the Native Pastors, Catechists and other Mission Agents. Rev. Mr. Griffith made some appropriate remarks touching the progress of the school and called upon a number of girls for recitations in English. Suitable hymns and lyrics were sung at intervals ably led by Miss Griffith on the harmonium. The Farmer's song and the Burlesque Band were admirably performed and caused great amusement.

The prizes were kindly distributed by Mrs. Worthington. These consisted of books, fancy boxes, money &c. Prizes were awarded for scripture knowledge, English recitations, good conduct, cooking, singing &c.

The most pleasing scene was the last one and that was the plucking and distribution of fruits from the Christmas Tree, which had been kindly supplied by our respected Govt. Agent and bore plenty of fancy and attractive articles supplied by ladies in England. A good number of readable books were also given by Rev. Mr. Griffith to the Mission Agents and others. Every one present received something from the Christmas Tree. Com.

## LOCAL AND GENERAL.

—A piece of timber 27 cubits long by 9 in circumference and valued at ten pounds floated ashore on Karadive a few days ago. It was transferred to Kaitis.

—We are sorry to learn that the cattle disease which prevailed at Pungertive lately has broken out in Karadive. All cattle which have been exposed should be promptly isolated by the headmen. They should be kept in close compounds not allowed in the road and watered from tanks not used by others until it is sure that they are passed all danger of giving the disease. This is the only way such a contagion can be stopped, and all owners of cattle should insist upon its being done. Any trouble connected with it would be only slight compared with the disaster of a wide spread cattle plague. It should be looked after sharply by the headmen.

—A child was found dead on the shore of Valany one day last week.

—Pandals are being put upon the esplanade in expectation of the proposed show and Governor's visit. At Batticootta and other places pandals are also being erected.

—THE PUBLIC HEALTH. It is reported that fever prevails in this District to a great extent. This is an unhealthy season. Dew is very heavy in the mornings. We have had no rain for more than a week although the sky is almost continually cloudy.

—CHANGES IN THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT. Mr. J. P. HARWARD, we hear, is ordered to proceed to Vangaly in the Manjar District, and Mr. U. Tamper, to succeed him. The former has been serving the public for many years in malarious districts. They are both Jaffna men and would prefer promotions in their native country.

—THE NEW GOVERNOR GENERAL OF INDIA. Lord Landsdowne expressed in reply to the address of the Calcutta Trades Association, that he had the consolation to know that the general condition of India is perfectly sound, its commerce expanding, its revenues tending to increase, and that as far as the ultimate future is concerned, there are no serious apprehensions. Madras Mail 24th Dec.

—AN ADMIRABLE LIBRARY. Mr. Gladstone, the famous ex-prime minister of England, has in his Library 15,000 volumes. He is "intimately acquainted" with every one of the 15,000 volumes. 395 books are in foreign languages of these 8 are in Italian, 7 in French, 5 in German, 2 in Greek, 2 in Russian, 2 in Dutch, 2 in Welsh, 1 in Danish, and one in Spanish. The subjects are as diversified as the languages, half the number of books being on theological questions. Madras Mail 24th Dec.

—POLICE COURT. Mr. Sanders having left the District, our District Judge, Mr. G. E. Worthington, is doing duties as Police Magistrate at Jaffna in addition to those of D. J., and will continue to do so until the 6th February and from that date, Mr. C. W. Cathiravalpillai, Magistrate of Kaitis, is Gazetted to act as magistrate of Jaffna, until 22nd March.

—The passengers to India, embarked on board the B. I. Steamer, on the 12th December, experienced a cyclonic storm. Most of the Jaffna passengers engaged their passage to Negapatam, who had to go to Chethamparam to attend a festival. But the storm was so violent, and the sea so rough, landing passengers at Negapatam was found impossible and the ship had to steam off a great way towards the north east in the Bay of Bengal, and then returned to Madras, and landed the passengers there, after some 5 days. Among those that got sick during the voyage, one tobacco trader of Vannarponne named Mootatamby is reported to have died at Chithamparam. Com.

—A notorious character at Thopparam, near Batticootta has recently been sent to the gaol being convicted a second time. He has been a great terror to the people for his crafty pilfering. Concealing himself in the evening and waiting till all were asleep he would steal and make off with pieces of jewelry worn by some sleeper before the alarm could be raised. The fact that he carries a knife or club increased the danger from him. It is now generally feared that when he has served his term in gaol he will again begin his nefarious exploits and be a nuisance and terror to the people. Com.

[Here is a case for the police authorities to exercise their power for the safety of the people. Ed. M. S.]

—We are very sorry to learn of the death of Mr. E. N. Charles, the eldest son of Mr. Charles Sinnatambay of Alavetty. He was graduated from Jaffna College in 1887 and had lately passed the Clerical Examination. We are happy to think that though death came so suddenly he was prepared for the great change.

—Mr. Advocate Nagalingam has gone to India with the view of being present at the meeting of the 4th National Congress held at Allahabad.

—Mr. I. Tillainathar, the eldest son of the Mangar of Valigama west, was promoted as the interpreter of the Provincial Road Committee rendered vacant by the death of Mr. Chockanader. And the eldest son of the late Mr. Chockanader was appointed to succeed Mr. Tillainathar.

—His Excellency the Governor leaves Colombo for Ratanpura to day with the object of proclaiming the new Province of Sabaragamuwa tomorrow.

—Friends and relations of Mr. J. B. Sathupathi, Barrister at law are prepared to give a grand reception to him and his new wife, returning from Pullam. Six p. m. to day will be an enjoyable occasion at the residence of his father Mr. S. Sossipillai. Com.

## INTERESTING BITS.

—There are 3064 languages in the world, and its inhabitants profess more than 1000 religions.

—The coldest town in the world is said to be Worohojansk in Thieria where the temperature sometimes falls to 89° below zero.

—There are on the earth 1000,000,000 inhabitants; it is estimated that of these 33,033,033 die every year; 91824 every day, 3730 every hour and sixty every minute or one every second.

—Pandita Ramabai, the high caste Hindu woman has returned to her own country with Rs. 150,000 collected in America to establish a school in India for widows.