

,529, as against 29,699 cwt. of the value Rs. 440,504.

There was large increase in the total value of the trade of the Province, the imports in 1895 being of the value of Rs. 5,407,264 and exports Rs. 9,304,436 compared with Rs. 5,179,696 and Rs. 9,075,702 respectively in 1894.

THE PUTTOOR WELL.

The people of Jaffna having anxiously awaited the commencement of the operation of pumping out the water of this remarkable well which they generally believe to be of a fabulous depth with an inexhaustible supply of water, a large number is daily attracted to the spot to see the pump working, the motive force being supplied by a stationary steam engine. To many who have not been outside Jaffna the working of the pump by the aid of steam force was a curious sight and College students also flocked in large numbers to see the pump and the engine in working order, to see things which they have studied with the help of woodcuts in works on Physics. Those who have read a description of the well in Tennant's History of Ceylon, extracts from which were published in the Hindu Organ sometime back will find the description very faithful. From experiments made with a bottle with weight attached to it and provided with a cork the water at different depths was tested in the presence of Dr. Thornhill our Colonial Surgeon. At a depth of 50 feet the water is fresh, as good as any water obtained in the neighbouring wells, but when the line was let down to a depth of 140 feet, the water was found to be brackish almost like sea water, and at a depth of 100 feet the water was slightly brackish though it was not so much as water at 140 feet depth. It seems therefore clear that there is a quantity of fresh water of more than 50 feet in depth (the exact depth of it can be ascertained by a number of careful observations with the bottle) lying on the surface of a mass of salt water filling the lower cavity of the well. The water brought from a depth of 140 feet, besides being brackish, gave out the characteristic smell of rotten eggs, the smell by which the presence of sulphurated Hydrogen is detected by chemists. Here is a problem for the man of science. He has to explain the cause of the phenomena of fresh water lying to that depth over the brackish water. The water went down to a depth of an inch, by the first day, pumping out. If during the night the water would again rise to the old level, the inference would be that the well is fed by fresh water springs. After pumping out for a number of days, the Provincial Engineer in charge of the work will be in a position to supply the Government with information as to its capacity of fresh water supply. In the meantime it is necessary that the water taken in different depths should be tested by chemical analysis, to know that there are no ingredients injurious to health and that it is fit for drinking purpose. The water that is pumped out is used by the neighbouring farmers to irrigate their lands, and in a few weeks it will be known whether it is good for cultivation or not. We thank the Government for having voted a sum of Rs. 2000 for the experiment and hope that the careful observations that are being made by Mr. Tomalin will lead to some profitable conclusion and that the piece of Nature's break as we suppose it to be in reality the design of the All-knowing Father to supply the people of this peninsula with constant supply of fresh water to irrigate their lands. When clouds have proved to be so niggardly over our land this well shall be a blessing and a mine of wealth.—Com.

LOCAL AND GENERAL.

THE WEATHER—We have had no rain as yet. Every thing looks parched and dried up. It is reported from several parts of the District that cattle are dying in large numbers. The poor cultivator looks to the sky in vain, his fields being not ready for sowing. The coconut planter is equally distressed when he sees the leaves of his trees are drooping. Every one is praying for a good down pour. The drought has now lasted more than seven months.

The Government Agent—Mr. Ievers is still away in Colombo attending the meetings of the Durbar of Government Agents in the Queen's House. We hope good result will come out of these meetings. So far the past conferences have not conferred any benefits, at any rate on

one of Jaffna. It is reported that Mr. Tomalin will leave Colombo tomorrow and visit the Island of Delft on his way to Jaffna.

Puttoor Well—Mr. Tomalin is busy at this well since last week. The pump and engine which have been brought down from Colombo having been fitted operations were commenced yesterday. We sincerely hope the undertaking will be a success and the Jaffna Town will receive a large supply of good water from the Puttoor well.

A Dastardly Assault—We regret to learn that Mr. Tomalin, the Provincial Engineer, was, on the evening of Thursday last, assaulted by a villager, at Puttoor, when the Engineer was returning to the Town in his bicycle. It appears that Mr. Tomalin had previously the same day, unjustly assaulted a man of Navukeri, at the Puttoor well. It is believed that the assailant of the Engineer was the same man who was thus assaulted, or some one hired by him. The efforts of the Headmen to find out the man who assaulted Mr. Tomalin have been hitherto without success. Mr. Tomalin requires, we are told, that the Headmen should produce the man whom he assaulted in their presence and in the presence of hundreds of others. But even this they are unable to do. It is no doubt very dastardly on the part of the villager to have waylaid and assaulted a high official and a European when he was unsuspectingly going alone on the high road and at daytime, even if the assault on him by the Engineer was very provoking and unjust; and we hope that the offender will be soon brought to justice. But it is also very necessary that European officials should learn to curb their passions and to deal more civilly towards the natives.

Hindu College—We are glad to announce that Master A. Visuvanathan of the Junior F. A. class is the winner of the "Coomaraswamy Scholarship," and Master Suppiyah of the same class the winner of the "Namasivaya Mudaliar Scholarship." These scholarships are each of the annual value of Rs. 80, the donors being the Hon'ble P. Coomaraswamy and Mr. N. Ratnasabapathy of Colombo. The former Scholarship is given to the student who passed the last Entrance Examination of the Calcutta University obtaining the highest mark in English among the students of the College, and the latter to the student who obtained the highest mark in Mathematics. We congratulate these young men who have also passed the Entrance Examination very creditably in the first class on their success. We have also to congratulate Masters K. Sathasiva Ayer of Karativu and A. Eliatamby of Invill of the Priest Class to whom have been awarded after a competitive Examination in Sanskrit and Tamil the "Ponnampalavanasavar Scholarships" of the value of Rs. 40 each which have been also founded by the Hon'ble P. Coomaraswamy to encourage the study of Oriental literature and the Hindu Shastras. The Hindus of Ceylon would also be delighted to learn that the teaching staff of the College has been further strengthened by the appointment as Professor of Mathematics of Mr. Sundram Ayer B.A. and L.T. of the Madras University who arrived here yesterday from India. There are now four graduates of the Madras University connected with the College as Professors.

Personal—Dr. Ponnampalam, Deputy Assistant Colonial Surgeon, Mannar, arrived here yesterday to give evidence in a criminal case in the District Court today. We are sorry to learn that Mrs. Ponnampalam's state of health has been very indifferent since her removal to Mannar and that she has gone to Newra Eliya for the benefit of her health and is under the treatment of Dr. Woutersz there.

—We are extremely sorry to hear that Mr. C. W. Thamotharampillai, Rai Bahadur is lying rather seriously ill at Keerimalai. We hope he will recover soon under the treatment of Drs. Scott and Evans who are in attendance on him.

The Supreme Court—The 2nd Criminal sessions of the Supreme Court will be held in September and the calendar we understand, is not at all a heavy one, there being only four or five cases committed for trial.

The District Court—The retirement of Ellankainayaka Mudaliar, Interpreter of this Court takes effect from the 15th proximo. He has been granted six weeks leave on full pay, and Mr. Nicholas, the Chief Clerk of the Court is acting as Interpreter in addition to his own duties. By his retirement a most familiar figure has been removed from our Courts with which has been connected for

the last forty two years as Interpreter. He has always kept up the dignity of his office and enjoyed the confidence and esteem of his superiors. It is to be hoped that Government will appoint as his successor one who is fully qualified by his social position, character and ability.

Legal—We are glad to note the names of Mr. I. Mudr. Kanagaretnam and Mr. Muttiyah among those who passed the last Proctor's Intermediate Examination. The former is the second son of Ellankainayaka Mudaliar of the District Court and the latter is the eldest son of Mr. Assaipillai, the Coach Contractor.

Matrimonial—A quiet wedding took place on Friday last at the Chundicully Church, the contracting parties being Miss. Heusman the eldest daughter of Mr. Proctor Alfred Hensman and Mr. Edgar Niles who is employed now in Madras. Only the nearest relatives were invited as the family of the bride is in mourning.

EXTRACT.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA gives an interesting account, in the current number of the "Brahmavadin," of an interview between Prof Max Muller and himself at Oxford. The conversation naturally turned on subjects in which the savant and the Swami are so deeply interested. The Swami incidentally mentioned the fact Paramahansa Ramakrishna is worshipped by thousands to-day. The Professor quickly replied, "To whom else shall worship be accorded, if not to such?" What eloquence in that simple question! Indian students of the Vedanta will look forward with great interest to the Professor's promised monograph on Ramakrishna. The Swami asked the Professor whether he was going to pay India a visit after all, adding, "Every heart there would welcome one who has done so much to place the thoughts of their ancestors, in the true light." The rest is best given in the words of the Swami. "The face of the aged saint brightened up—there was almost a tear in the eye, a gentle nodding of the head, and slowly the words came out—"I would not return there, you would have to cremate me there". Further question seemed an unwarrantable intrusion into realms where in are stored the holy secrets of the man's heart."

—The Madras Standard.

"HINDU CASTES AND SECTS."

The above is the title of a book by Mr. Jagendra Nath Bhattacharya, M.A., B.L., President of the College of Pandits, Nadia, and author of several works, which has reached us from Messrs Thacker, Spink & Co., Calcutta. A cursory perusal shows it to be a work of great interest, written by one competent to deal with the subject. Mr. Bhattacharya does not think caste an entirely evil thing: he says—

Caste is often described by European scholars as an iron chain which has fettered each class to the profession of their ancestors, and has rendered any improvement on their part impossible. This view may to some extent, be regarded as correct so far as the lower classes are concerned. But with regard to the higher classes, caste is a golden chain which they have willingly placed around their necks, and which has fixed them to only that which is noble and praiseworthy. Any little split that is caused by caste now and then is far outweighed by the union of races and clans which it has promoted and fostered, and there is no justification whatever for the abuse which has been heaped upon its authors. Though we cannot agree with all his conclusions, we are glad to notice the generally fair tone in which he speaks of various religious beliefs, while at the same time in no way seeking to palliate the abominations practised by certain so-called religious sects. From his preface we quote the following:

The religions of those who are not regarded as Hindus do not come within the scope of this work. But the position which I assign to Christianity, Mahomedanism, Zoroastrianism, &c., must appear clear enough from what I have said in the Introduction to my account of the Hindu Sects, about the evolution of human faiths, and about the different principles on which they may be classified. I have tried my best throughout to avoid irreverence and offensive expressions, and the reader, who is not altogether blinded by orthodoxy, will, I hope, admit that, even with regard to the worst of the abomination-worshipping sects. I have nowhere been harsher than the nature of the case absolutely required. Reverence ought to be by all means shown to persons and institutions that have a just claim to it. But nothing can, in my opinion, be more sinful than to speak respectfully of persons who are enemies of mankind, and to withhold the rotten institutions by esoteric explanations and fine phrases.

It is no doubt extremely difficult to get rid of the effect of early training and associations. But those who claim to be educated and enlightened will, I trust give me an impartial and patient hearing. However strong their faith in Saivism, Sanktism and Radha worship may be, they cannot be altogether blind to the real character of these creeds. One of the greatest thinkers of modern times has, in connection with certain questions of political economy, said:—

It often happens that the universal belief of one age of mankind—a belief from which no one was, nor, without any extraordinary effort of genius and courage, could, at that time be free—becomes to a subsequent age so palpable an absurdity, that the only difficulty then is to imagine how such a thing can ever have appeared credible.

This, I am sure, will before long be the feeling of every honest Hindu with regard to some of the most important features of his so-called religions, and I shall feel I have performed an almost sacred duty if this work promotes in some degree that end. Several of the chapters are devoted to the life and doctrines of Buddha. This book should be in the hands of every Indian missionary and student of religious beliefs.

—The Ceylon Observer.