## FROM THE CEYLON OBSERVER. February 9th, 1875.

## EDITORIALS.

THE OIL TRADE OF BRITAIN.

As a very large proportion of the Cocoanut Oil which is imported into Britain owes its origin to Ceylon, (Cochin, the Islands of the Pacific, &c., supplying the remainder) the figures for our own exports with which we recently dealt, - which shewed an enormously overdone trade in two years, ending in a proportionate reaction in the third,—sufficiently explain the rapid and great fall in the imports of Cocoanut Oil into Britain during the past three years as well as the recent improvement in price. Quantity and value are thus indicated:-

1872 ... Cwts. 432,425 ... £819,691 1873 ... , 266,744 ... ,,460,576 1874 ... ,, 137,374 ... ,,246,811

The decrease in quantity in 1874 as compared with 1872 is more than two-thirds, the fall in value being greater still in proportion. We are aware, however, that an improvement in prices and demand took place in the latter portion of last year, and it may be taken for granted that a fresh spur will be given to the trade or to exports direct, by the abolition of the soap duties in Holland. Palm Oil, the African rival of Cocoanut Oil, must have superior merits in quality or price—it is certainly preferred for candle-making, -because, in the face of the disturbing influence of the Ashantee war, the imports have kept up, 1874 shewing Palm Oil introduced in a seven-fold proportion to that of the cocoanut. A trade which has gone beyond a million of cwts., and reached nearly £1,800,000 in value is worthy of notice amongst the leading imports of Britain. The figures for the past three years, look as if Palm Oil was supplanting Coconnut in addition to holding its own,—thus:—

1872 ... Cwts. 995,006 ... £ 1,785,229

1873 ... , 963,926 ... , 1,677,938 1874 ... , 1,045,143 ... , 1,755,103 In this article, also, it will be seen there was a fall in value, the larger quantity by 50,000 cwts in 1874 being rated £30,000 less than the smaller quantity in 1872. The import of Petroleum had increased largely,-from 25,300 tons in 1872, to 65,630 tons and 85,630 in the succeeding years. The value of the import of 1874 was slightly over the round million. Sporm Oil, on the other hand shews a slight decrease,—from 18,486 tons in 1872 key to our contemporary's paragraph: to 17,129 in 1874, the evalue in the latter year being £755,000. Olive Oil had fluctuated from 23,996 tons to 35,145 and 22,628; the value of the latter quantity being £1,014,224, against £1,560,000 for the large import of 1873. Seed oils of all kinds had gone down from 19,931 tons to 17,903, the value of the latter quantity being £631,000. Oil of Turpentine had risen from cwts 218,6070 to 275,554, the value of the latter quantity being £373,845. The Oil Seed Cakes imported had risen from 134,441 tons to 157,476, the value in the latter case being £1,576,904. The above figures shew the great importance of oils and oleaginous matters in the trade of Britain, apart from the large and valuable imports of Tallow. In Sperm Oil, from whales and seals, we must look for a decrease rather than an increase, and it is curious how Petroleum seems to have been discovered just as the old source of light-material was getting exhausted. But for the discovery of the earth oils in such enormous quantities in America, Cocoanut Oil would not have gone down in price as it has done from about £55 a ton to £35. within a recent period. At present, we suppose, Cocoanut Oil is mainly used as a base for soap and as a dressing for woollen cloth. Rosin, though not an oil, is allied to Turpentine and of this substance the import in 1874 reached 1,066,000 cwts valued at £422,000. Tar again was imported to the extent of 233,000 barrels valued at £270,000.

To add a few miscellaneous article:-Besides the Pyrites roasted in Britain, the imports of Brimstone in 1874 (mainly, no doubt, for the manufacture of sulphuric acid) reached 1,036,000 cwts valued at £347,000. Alkalies were imported to the extent of 109,000 cwts. value £166,000; Cochineal 39,000 cwts., £472,000; Indigo 85,000 cwts., £2,153,000; Lemons and Oranges 2,403,000 bushels, £1,158,000; Potatoes 4,000,000 cwts., £1,035,000; and, finally, the article which some people in America take over-night to enable them to rise early in the morning,yeast, dr ied, 153,000 cwts., £396,000.

These may seem dry figures, but they have much significance. A considerable proportion of many of the articles enumerated are again exported; but in the process they add to the wealth of a country, the people of which are able to gratify their love of foreign fruit by consuming, in the case of oranges and lemons no less than 2,400,000 bushels. We suppose each bushel may be multiplied by at least 100 for sound fruit; say 200 to 250 millions of oranges and lemons for about 33 millions of persons.

THE CEYLON DINNER IN LONDON (we are told) was held at the "Criterion" on the 4th January; the gentlemen present were Messrs. G. A. Cruwell (in the chair), J. F. McLeod, Wm. Mackenzie, R. P. Master, P. Anstruther, Gow, Swan, C. Scott, Ewen Cameron, Lambert Sim, E. C. Byers, etc, etc. It is intended that a dinner shall be given every year upon the 4th of January.

from a private letter by this mail, that Sir Edward Creasy is still very ill and cannot be expected in any case to return to Ceylon before October. Indeed, the doubt is now freely expressed about his returning at all.

Mr. J. F. Dickson.—It is reported that the Government Agent for the North-Central Province, at present on leave, is likely to be translated to Fiji, where Sir Hercules Robinson thinks his experience of native administration and his business capacity would be invaluable in organizing the revenue and judicial business of the new Crown Colony.

SURVEYS IN LOWER DIKOYA.—We learn that Mr. J. C. Daveran, of the Survey Staff, is to be engaged for some time to come in the Lower Dikoya district, clearing up difficulties which have arisen about old surveys and settling the boundaries of private lands, as well as cutting out fresh blocks of Government forest land when the opportunity offers.

THE PLANTERS' ASSOCIATION AND GOVERNMENT. -A leading member of the Association writes: -" The Governor ought to concentrate all his attention on works that will commence to pay from the time they are finished. Whatever tempted good Mr. White and worthy Mr. Bowden-Smith, in the Lower Badulla Survey matter, to play into the hands of that great obstructive, 'G. W.,' I cannot tell. I dare say they both wish now that they had never said anything about it. The mover of the P.A. railway resolution deserves the thanks of the Planters. More power to Saunders' elbow, and may his shadow never

A "GOAK" OF THE TELEGRAPH DEPART-MENT.—(Communicated by a merchant with an eye to figures):-

"FRIGHTFUL MORTALITY ON BOARD S.S. 'AFRICA.' -47 men, 2 women, 1 child, R.A., and gun lascars embarked yesterday: 30 soldiers arrived at Galle today.—See Telegraphic Bulletin."

This reminds us of the complaint which reached us from a worthy member of the planting community the other day, "a family man," who wished to know what had become of his child, seeing he had left Colombo with three, while the Telegraph, or Master Attendant's, Department only credited him with two on arrival at Galle. Very mysterious indeed are the ways of the Galle Departments.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN? ANSWERS REQUESTED. -We confess to being beaten in an attempt to comprehend the meaning of the followingthe first and leading editorial note—in the morning journal of to-day. It is impossible that a mercantile organ can indulge in mysteries beyond the comprehension of the commercial public, but, as non-commercial journalists, we should be glad of assistance in finding the

STATISTICS relating to the Coffee Trade for the year '74 have already appeared in our columns in various forms. The following summary thereof we insert because of its terseness; the result is put in a form which allows its being easily carried about or pre-

·ved :-		6 months.	Last 6 months.	Total.
		lbs.	lbs.	lbs.
1874	•••	13, 184, 147	13,729,900	26,914,047
1873	•••	13,231.566	13,409,498	26,641,054
1872		12,948,800	12,274,489	25,923,289

THE DOLOSBAGE SHOOTING CASE in which a Burgher Superintendent, Mr. Tissera, shot a Kangany, is to be tried at next Kandy Session.

THE RAILWAY SURVEYORS.—Says a correspondent:-"I think the Survey Commission, like Railway Extension, is at a standstill."

THE ASSEMBLY IN KANDY, as well as the Sunday School Fete take place on Thursday, the 11th, not on the 12th. The band being engaged for the dance will not play at the fete.

ELIOT ALIAS HARRIS (?)—The man calling himself Eliot, alluded to by our Batticaloa correspondent yesterday has, we learn, been arrested and is to be sent to Colombo on suspicion o being Harris of Rest-house disrepute

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT. - We learn that owing tf the change of stations of the Military Medical Officer in charge of Civil duties at Nuwara Eliya, Mr. W. H. Meier, Assistant Colonial Surgeon at Galle, has been stationed there.

The STEAMER Rajpootana, of the Wilson line (no, British India Company) will leave Gravesend on Monday the 18th instant for Colombo, Madras and Calcutta. She will take out for Ceylon the following passengers,—Mrs. Campbell and Messrs. Baird and Walker .- Times correspondent.

THE AUDITOR GENERAL.—Mr. Douglas has been to Nuwara Eliya and Badulla recently on a tour of inspection, and it is likely that he will inspect the proposed Railway Extension lines as the Chairman of the Commission appointed by Government.

ECCLESIASTICAL.—We understand that the Rev. J. R. Brotchie, Colonial Chaplain of Wolfendahl Church has, owing to ill health, applied for three months privilege leave of absence. It is believed that Mr. Rulach will act for him during such absence; Mr. Burnet will then be Acting Colonial

Chaplain of St. Andrew's Church, on half salary. Passengers.—The B. I. S.S. Africa left Colombo for Calcutta and intermediate ports yesterday, taking as passengers :- Mr. S. Cameron, Mr. J. Churchward, Mr. W. S. Anderson, Captain Younger, R. A., and a detachment of the Royal Artillery. The Ethiopia, for Bombay and coast ports, left this morning, with Messrs. G. Power, G. Frethen, and

G. Berrard, as passengers from Colombo. THE CASE BETWEEN A POINT PEDRO MERCHANT AND THE COLLECTOR OF SEA CUSTOMS, MADRAS .- A Jaffna correspondent, writing on the 3rd, says:-"Possibly it may interest a portion of your readers to know that the great opium case of Punniar Sithamparam, of Point Pedro, vs. the Collector of Sea Customs, Madias, has been dec cel in favour of the plaintiff. The judgment was given on Monday, and it was immediately telegraphed to Jaffua."

GALLE, 8th February.—Says a correspondent :-"Your correspondent from Galle was not quite correct in his statements about the Police Court. I believe the cases in arrear are reduced to a minimum and I know I am not singular in my opinion that our present Magistrate writes as quickly and certainly better with his left hand than a good many do with their right. I hear the Galle correspondent' of the Morning Daily has again changed hands, but whether it was funk o ithe Galle Hospital Case or whether there is a Ittle iaccount still due, I cannot say. However, as the halese Carters" being engaged in this affair, thees

SIR EDWARD CREASY.—We regret to learn, I style of news supplied is about the same as before ! I fancy all private parties, pic-nics, &c., will still be reported, and when these fail, I dare-say he will inform the public what the Galle Upper Ten had for dinner the night before."

THE "DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE."-A private telegram, tendered for transmission in Calcutta at six p. m., and delivered in Colombo at nine on Saturday, announced the arrival of this vessel at Calcutta. She left Madras on February 2nd, (Tuesday) having spent Monday in discharging cargo.-A letter from one of the passengers no less than eight large steamers here, a very rare occurrence. When we arrived there were only three and we were the first of five others which arrived yesterday. Amongst them was the Mirzapore, the Mecca, the Himalaya, the Assyria, Ethiopia, Athol, and Elgin, all steamers, besides the war-ship Glasgow and a number of trading

CATTLE MURRAIN.—We (local Times of the 8th instant) are glad to learn that at last Government has begun to show some signs of interest in the Cattle murrain in the Central Province. Four Police Inspectors have been sent to the following places to make full and positive euquiries regarding the plague. Inspector Van Langenberg to make enquiries on the Nuwara Elliya road; Inspector Sour Jah on the Dimbula road; Inspector Illaugakoon on the Dickoya road; Inspector Georgesz, who is stationed at Badulla, to inspect the road leading thence to Nuwara Elliya. In addition to this the Government Agent has issued circulars to all managers of estates in the Central Province calling for immediate returns of effects of the murrain. An Assistant Agent is, however, we believe, already itinerating upon the loads.—["At last Government," &c. The orders were given the moment the necessity was apparent.—En. C. O.]

CLEVER CAPTURE OF A CROWN DEBTOR BY IN-SPECTOR DAVID.—One Pedru de Mell, a Crown debtor, an arrack renter, was (says a correspondent) largely indebted to Government and Civil warrants at the instance of Government against him were out for the last eight years, but the efforts of the Fiscals and Headmen having proved of no avail in catching the man, the warrant was entrusted to the police in November last, and the Inspector General handed it to Detective Inspector David with the pretty certain hope of having the man arrested before long. The Inspector at last succeeded in capturing him at Panadure on the 5th instant, and he is now lodged in jail. It would seem that at the latter end of November, while at Galle engaged in the O. B. C. frauds, case, Inspector David had a chance of arresting the accused, but owing to a certain defect in the writhe was advised both by the Government Agent and the Deputy Queen's Advocate there not to execute it; consequently he was obliged to return the writ to Kurunagala where he obtained a fresh writ, and proceeded in search of de Mell on the 29th of December last and captured him, as we have said, on the 5th instant. By those who know all the facts of the case the arrest is held to be very creditable to the clever officer to whom the writ was entrusted for execution.

on good authority that it is probable that the Presbyterian Church of Jaffna will shortly be provided with a Scotch Minister, all reports to the contrary notwithstanding. The Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland does not, it is stated, apprehend the same amount of difficulty as before in securing well-trained ministers for service in the Churches in the Colonies: as the Canadian Churches do not now draw upon Scotland for ministers, but train them in their own Colleges. This must sound as glad tidings to the great body of Presbyterians in Jaffna who have for the last several years kept together wonderfully well under various discouraging circumstances and who are now left without a minister. Our sympathies for the Presbyterian body arise from our leaning towards the self-supporting system in Church Establishments; for the Presbyterians of Jaffna, though not numbering amongst them many weak thy and influential persons have in a very exemplary manner contributed towards the support o a minister of their own. It is true that the same principle is now being gradually introduced into the Native Churches of Jaffna; but we should recollect that most of the members of the socalled native Churches are in some degree the paid agents of the Mission, employed on either educational or Evangelistic work. The independent element, however, predominates in the Presbyterian Church. We may almost say it is exclusively so: and the amounts that some persons contribute who are known as not, in easy circumstances could only be accounted for by their zeal to keep up their Church. We wish this were more generally adopted throughout the country; and that the funds and Agencies of foreign Missions were set more free to undertake and carry on the more legitimate work of further aggressive action as regards absolute paganism. Wealthy Churches such as that of Wolfendahl, Colombo, would, willingly help those who like the Presbyterians of Jaffna make such zealous, steady and sustained effort to help themselves, and the Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland would see the obvious duty of placing men and means at the disposal of a Church which exhibits such hopeful symptoms of vitality and healthful activity.—Jaffna

COFFEE IN FIJI.-Mr. H. Cottam hears from Fiji that the coffee he planted there is in bearing at two years' old.

MATALE East, 8th February.—We are now having very hot weather; crops are all over and estimates as a rule have been realized.

COFFEE BLOSSOM.—We hear of a good blossom having already appeared throughout the Kaduganawa district. From Maskeliya, too, we hear of one blossom out and another in spike on many estate8

DIKOYA, 8th February.—Weather splendid. A fine blossom in spike. Carts rather more plentiful. Rates to Nawalapitiya 24 cts.; from this to Colombo 56 cts. The disease amongst the cattle seems considerably abated.

"Coffee," (says a Mincing Lane correspondent, writing on the day the last London Mail left,) "seems to be looking up a little and the new crop which has just arrived is very good indeed and sells well.-5 p. m. The Coffee market to-day was very strong and it seems as if they were going to send it up again."

THE RIOT IN DIMBULA.—The "Native Correspondent" contradicts the statement about "Sinbeing "no Sinhalese carter within half a mile of the spot where the coolies committed with ot." But, as the matter must now be considered

ub judice, we can insert no more correspondence, KOTMALE, 8th February.—A fair sprinkling of blossom outto-day, and weather all that could te desired for hardening the wood and forcing out more blossom. Our Church was well attended yesterday notwithstanding the disgraceful state of the road leading to it, the weeds have actually to states: - "Yesterday (February 1st) there were | be pulled up at the door of the Church to effect an entrance. It is really high time something was being done by the responsible parties, to save people (who attend the Church) the trouble of taking jungle catties with them. Cattle disease disappearing rapidly.

MEDICAL OFFICER FOR DIKOYA.—A correspondent writes :- "I hear that Dr. Affleck has applied for the Dikoya appointment which I hope he will get; he is well qualified for it or any other. He holds Diplomas as follows:—Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh, Royal College of Surgeons Edinburgh, Licentiate of Midwifery, Edinburgh, and Licentiate Apothecaries' Hall, London, and holds first class Testimonials from Professor Thorburn for Midwifery, Professor Watson for Anatomy, W.R. Callender, M. P., Manchester, and five years' testimonials from the Board of Guardians having held the appointment as Medical Officer for the district of Stretford for that time.

the death of cattle which have died from the H.C. ON COTTON CULTIVATION IN THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDS, INDIA, AND AMERICA.

## LETTER VIII.

There are many varieties of the Cotton plant: it varies in the shape of its leaf and colour and size of blossom; the height of the plant depends entirely on the suitability of the soil and its treatment whilst

The quality of the staple decides its value in the English market.

Sea Island cotton always commands the highest prices because the quality of the cotton grown near the sea, which gets the benefit of the sea air and the decomposed shells, and coral lime contribute largely to the formatton of large healthy trees; these bear for a period of three years a fine silky stapled sample of Cotton-lint. Lime is undoubtedly the principal ingredient in the chemical analysis of the Cotton Plantations bordering the sea which gives much larger crops than those inland, as well as produce a longer, stronger, and finer staple of lint.

The South Sea Islands sent the best cotton ever known to Liverpool in 1872, and it realized the astonishing figure of 5/. per lb.

This may have been caused by a particularly fine season for the gathering of the crop. In testing the length of staple, one seed only THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—We are informed should be taken at a time and the list attached to it, gently drawn out to its full length. The longest I ever saw in the Fiji Islands measured three inches, and was found amongst a bag of cotton gathered from a two-year-old field that averaged two inches in length all through. I mention this because I have seen coffee planters testing the length of cotton by holding a few seeds in each hand and showing two lengths for one! Cottom requires a loose sandy soil, containing lime, the wood ash will start the growth of the plant, if sown directly after the burn.

Care must be taken to keep down weeds and grass. If planted 5×5 or 6×6 and the trees cover the ground they will exclude the light and prevent in some measure the growth of weeds.

The cotton plant will bear its maiden crop about six months after the seed is sown and under favourable circumstances bear half a ten per acre at the end of the first year. Allowing that a tree only gave alb in the first two pickings if planted a little closer than 5 x 5 that would be equal to half a ton per acre.

Cotton is not properly ripe until it opens its pods and hangs down, if gathered on a wet day it should be carefully dried in the following manner :-

Tables are made with narrow strips of bamboo; these tables measure 20 feet in length, and if a shed is built over them they will do for drying in wet weather; people should be seated on forms around the said table, and employed picking out the stained cotton.

Other tables without sheds are required, made in a similar way to transfer the cotton to. Directly the sun makes its appearance, in the event of the sun re-appearing, and the Weather clearing up, the people may again be employed gathering the cotton. I have seen a crop of cotton gathered under difficulties in Fiji, and the work changed no less than six times a day; gathering when the sun was out, and sorting under shelter during the showers.

As soon as the trees show signs of weakness they should be pulled up and burned, and the fields reploughed or entirely dug over and left in fallow until the next planting season.

Great care should be taken in selecting seed from the best sample of cotton produced on the Plantation to ensure the growth of a healthy tree; seed is often injured by the gin; therefore, picking it out by hand is far preferable although a tedious task; the seed should not be kept too long or it will

fail to germinate. Cotton Cultivation in India is almost entirely confined to the natives, who (I have been given to understand) are assisted by grants of land from Government and supplied with seed, tools, etc., which they are enabled to repay by the sale of their crops.\*

On making application to the Commissioner of Cotton and Commerce to the Government of Bombay for a supply of Cotton seed he was good enough to inform me by return steamer that steps were being taken to forward the seed; he also kindly forwarded me a pamphlet entitled "The Cultivation of Orleans Staple Cotton from the improved Mexican Cotton seeds, as practised in the Mississippi cotton growing region," Publish ed by the "Cotton Supply Association, Manchester."

In the preface we are told its precise and instructive directions are designed for the use of those who are not yet practically acquainted with the cultivation of cotton but who contemplate entering upon this important branch of agriculture.

Its aim is to show the growers of inferior kinds of cotton—such as in the main we receive from India—that by the use of good seed and the employment of the best mechanical implements and modern appliances, the quality of

\*There is a system of Government advances in India, but lands are certainly not granted for ordinary cultivated tion,—ED. C. O.