

COLONIAL INTELLIGENCE.

INDIA.

Our advices are from Bombay to the 18th, and Calcutta to the 7th September. Trade continued to improve, especially in respect to exports. Money was now plentiful, and freights had gone down considerably, being quoted at Calcutta at £7 15s. to £8 5s. for sugar and rice to England. The quantity of rain that had fallen had been very injurious to the indigo crop, materially affecting it both in quantity and quality; but later accounts were better, and the total out turn of the season was still expected to be not less than 115,000 maunds. The Legislative Council of Calcutta had passed an act permitting the emigration of Indian labourers to Ceylon, on the Governor-General being duly certified that the Legislature of the island has made such law as he shall think necessary for their protection.

CEYLON.

We have Colombo papers to the 16th September. The new coffee crop was expected to be an excellent one, being both early and abundant in its promise. Above 30,000 coolies had arrived in the island in the course of the previous four months, and many more were arriving daily.

The current revenue of the island would appear to be somewhat more satisfactory than had been expected, and at the same time the Colonial expenditure has been sensibly diminished during the past seven months; how far the island may benefit or suffer from this we are, of course, left to imagine. The revenues for the year 1847 are likely to exceed those of its predecessor, which, by the way, would seem to be very desirable, seeing that the receipts for 1846 fell short of those for 1845 by full £37,000.

The Legislative Council met on the 30th of August, and from Lord Torrington's opening speech we make the following extracts:—

"In concert with the Government of India, I have every hope that, in a short

time, we shall be in a position to adopt such measures as will be calculated to place the immigration of Indian labourers or coolies into this island upon a wholesome and satisfactory footing.

"The importance of a constant and well regulated stream of immigrants, for the extension of our new articles of production, and not less so for the maintenance even of those valuable estates which are already in cultivation, cannot possibly be over-rated. Hitherto the natives of India have annually come over from the neighbouring coast, in thousands and tens of thousands, of their own free choice, without the authorisation, and, in some degree, in opposition to the regulations of the Indian Government.

"Communications have passed between this Government and that of India, having for their object the removal of the restrictions which have hitherto been in force for the prevention of voluntary and unregulated emigration of the natives of India from their own country, so far as relates to the Island of Ceylon. I am given to understand that these restrictions will be entirely removed, so soon as an ordinance shall have been passed by the legislature of this island, to prohibit the re-emigration of the natives of India from it to other and distant parts. Such an ordinance will, therefore, be shortly laid before you.

"But I am persuaded that you will agree with me, that this can only be regarded as the first and initiative step towards more complete and systematic legislation upon the general question of coolie Immigration. Our duty towards them, in fact, begins from the moment they set foot upon our shores: a duty the more sacred, the more imperative, and not less difficult, because they are destitute and almost helpless strangers, seeking, at the distance of several hundreds of miles from their homes, a moderate recompense for the labour of their hands, under European masters, to whom their services are indispensable. Do they not demand, therefore, the especial pro-