India

FOR THE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

WE have good reason to believe that it is the intention of the Indian Parliamentary Committee, on the re-assembling of Parliament, to submit an amendment to the Address in reply to the speech from the Throne, and that this amendment will have to do with the Calcutta Municipality Bill. The terms of the amendment have not yet, we understand, been finally agreed upon, but it may no doubt be assumed that it will direct attention to the worst effect of the Bill—namely, its destruction of the Calcutta municipality as a representative body. As regards the prayer of the amendment it may naturally be expected to raise the point upon which the opponents of the measure have not ceased to insist—that the overthrow of local self-government in the metropolis of India should at least be preceded by public enquiry into the contentions for and against so grave an enactment.

It was announced on Tuesday that the Queen had been pleased to approve the appointment of Lord Elgin to be a Knight of the Garter. It was no doubt this decoration which Lord George Hamilton had in mind when, with a strange disregard of Ministerial etiquette, he whispered to his constituents on January 25, that the Queen was "certain" to bestow some special honour upon the retiring Viceroy. It is quite in accordance with the fitness of things that Lord Elgin's work should be formally approved by the Tory Government whom it has suited so well. *Noscitur a sociis!*

Lord George Hamilton is to be thanked for his candour in stating so plainly that the Currency Committee is a mere farce. In his speech at Chiswick on January 25 (which we discuss at some length on another page) he said:—

> I trust we are within measurable distance of an effective gold standard, which, if once established, will be of incalculable benefit in promoting India's powers of production.

A pretty cool thing for the Secretary of State to announce when a Committee is supposed to be enquiring into the very question whether a gold standard would be advantageous! The financial journals are, of course, furious at Lord George's indiscretion. But this is how India is governed. Sir Henry Fowler's Committee was speedily discovered to be a collection of dummies required to register a foregone conclusion. Hence the refusal of good witnesses to go through the form of giving evidence.

In the House of Commons on August 11 last year, in the debate on the "Indian Budget," Lord George Hamilton attached the greatest importance to the opinions expressed by the secretaries of two Mahometan associations in Calcutta—the Central Mahometan Association and the Mahometan Literary Society—in favour of the new law of sedition. "I ask the House," said Lord George Hamilton, "to listen to their opinion because that opinion, I know, represents not merely Mahometan opinion but the opinion of the great mass of respectable well-to-do Hindu gentlemen." It now appears that the two secretaries are Government officers, one being presidency magistrate of Calcutta and the other a judge of the Small Cause Court. Fine independent witnesses, to be sure! And how does their action in the matter square with the rules to which Lord George Hamilton pointed with indignant alacrity when Mr. Thorburn delivered his unanswerable speech against the "forward" frontier policy?

> It is improper (the Secretary of State declared) for any officer of Government to convey to the public whether in writing or in a speech or otherwise any opinion upon matters of Government policy which are or are likely to become the subject of public discussion.

Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjea, we see, lately gave notice of a question on the point in the Bengal Legislative Council; but the question was "disallowed." No doubt it will be revived in the House of Commons, where inconvenient curiosity is not to be so summarily suppressed.

The *Hindu* draws attention to the fact that bodies hostile to the Congress do not hesitate to pay it the compliment of imitating those national and representative gatherings which it began. Sir Syed Ahmed and the Mahometans were the first imitators, and the Europeans and Eurasians are the latest. The Conference especially protested against those exclusions which the domiciled Europeans, except in the case of Roorkee, generally share with the Indians, and from which they wish to be protected. It also claimed that Europeans and their descendants should again be enlisted in the British army, and that facilities for education in just proportion to those afforded to the Indians should be open to them. It is doubtful whether it is good policy for the Eurasians to cut themselves off from the mass of their fellow-countrymen and throw in their lot with those by whom they are in some measure despised. They were not, it is said, specially mentioned during the Conference. In one respect the meeting differed much from other political assemblies, in that it was presided over by a judge and attended by many high officials; and that it was political there can be no doubt. Mr. Carleton of Lucknow said that "experience taught all that a tame acquiescence under the disabilities they were subject to was not the best way of removing them." Mr. Barker proposed a monster petition to Parliament. Mr. Pugh threatened an appeal to the British public and Parliament if their cause did not receive the impartial consideration of the Government, and said that in Wales "the people considered it right that appointments in the country should go to the people of the country in preference to outsiders. In the same way the domiciled European community claimed that, qualifications being equal, those domiciled here should have a preferential right over candidates from home." Mr. Madge of Calcutta complained that "taxation in India had gone on increasing from year to year." It cannot, therefore, be said that the meeting was not political; nor can it be denied that many of the sentiments uttered harmonised admirably with the principles of the Indian National Congress.

The question of the status and position of our Indian fellow-subjects in the Transvaal still, we regret to say, wears a very ugly aspect. On November 19, a Government notice was issued to the Fleld Cornet of Pretoria town requiring him to notify "the coolies and other Asiatic natives, who are not as yet residing or carrying on business in the appointed location," that they must "reside and carry on their business in the appointed location before the 1st day of January, 1899;" a special grace of three or six months being permitted to some according to the magnitude of their business and the consequent difficulty of sudden removal. Field Cornet Marais issued his "Final Notice" on December 1, at the same time informing the unfortunate Indians that he would, on application, indicate to them a stand in the location, for which, at the office of the Civil Commissioner, is to be paid the sum of 7s. 6d. sterling per month, "said amount being payable three months in advance." A week or two ago we learnt

that these notices were suspended in view of a settlement on a different and presumably more equitable basis. Now however it is stated that they are to be put in force peremptorily on February 1. Thus our hopes of a sensible and humane accommodation are dashed to the ground. The result is far from creditable to our "Imperial" Colonial Secretary. We shall be interested to see what he will have to say to this when Parliament meets.

Tayob Hajee Khan Mahomed, the plaintiff in the recent test action in the Supreme Court at Pretoria, has addressed to Mr. Chamberlain a fresh memorial, as "representing the British Indians residing in the South African Republic." He recalls the main points of the memorial of 1895, regarding the award of the Chief Justice of the Orange Free State in the arbitration. We have dealt with these points on several occasions—the lying allegation of unsanitariness among the Indians (but for which the obnoxious Law 3 of 1885, with the variations of 1886, would never have been approved); the real reason, trade jealousy; the impropriety of submitting the Laws to arbitration, and such arbitration; and the final award, which was no award at all. The Imperialism that could idly acquiesce in such treatment is a very contemptible affair. But the main purpose of the present memorial is to draw special attention to the nature of the judicial pronouncements of the judges of the High Court, and the dire significance of the result to the memorialists. "Had her Majesty's Government not accepted the arbitration to which your memorialists objected, or had her Majesty's Government insisted upon the interpretation of the law by the arbitrator, your memorialists respectfully submit that such an undoing as the above would not have taken place." We have already pointed out to Mr. Chamberlain a way out of the unhappy situation.

The Full Bench in Mahomed's case consisted of three judges—Messrs. Morice, Jorissen and Essex. Judge Morice's chief, if not his only difficulty, arose from the case of Suleiman, decided in 1888. Article 2A of Law No. 3, 1885, as amended in 1886, reads: "The Government have the right, for sanitary purposes, to point out to them (*i.e.*, persons of the aboriginal races of Asia) defined streets, wards and locations for habitation" *(ter bewoning)*. The point, noted by the memorialists, that not a man of them comes under the expression "persons of the aboriginal races of Asia," was not taken by any of the judges. But in 1888, the full bench had decided in Suleiman's case that "habitation" included business place as well as residence; and Judge Morice felt bound by that decision, though expressly admitting that "if the case had been *res integra*, I probably would have decided in favour of the plantiff." Judge Jorissen said, however, "this case cannot possibly be taken as a precedent." For, "when it was heard, the law of 1888, which decides this case"—he referred to the Volksraad Resolution of July 5, 1888, where "a subtle and clear distinction is made between dwelling and business places"—"was not yet published." An appeal had been made to Act 9 of the Constitution: "The people do not recognise equality of the coloured races with the white inhabitants, either in Church or State." To this Judge Jorissen replied:

> The "coloured people" in this article are those coloured people who were here at the time, namely, the Kaffirs. That the Coolies are not included hereunder appears also to have been the feeling of the Volksraad, when they made a separate law for them.

Judge Esser went unreservedly for the Government. It is plain that the memorialists have strong ground for "submitting that, substantially and on the merits, the judgment of the majority of the Court is in their favour." At any rate, such judgment affords not inconsiderable leverage to a skilful diplomatist.

It is worth noting that the Johannesburg *Star* (August 9, 1898) admits that "from a purely ethical standpoint, the judgment is not fair or just." The Natal *Advertiser* (August 10, 1898) also acknowledge that "as a matter of argument, the decision of the High Court is open to question;" and "we doubt very much," it adds, "whether any of the judges would care to be compelled to regard his dwelling-house and his office as synonymous and identical." It may be as well to add that "the appointed location" is "at a considerable distance from the town, near the place where refuse of the town is burnt or deposited on the other side of the river, which is more a ditch than anything else." This neighbouring location must be a salubrious place if one may judge from the late British Agent's account:—

> To be forced into a small location on a spot used as a place to deposit the refuse of the town, without any water except the polluted soakage in the gully between the location and the town, must inevitably result in malignant fevers and other diseases breaking out among them, whereby their lives and the health of the community in town will be endangered.

Some short time since, according to the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, Mr. Egerton, the District Magistrate at Berhampore, expressed his intention of visiting the library of the Kandi English School. When the time came, the masters of the school were in waiting to receive the great man, but he did not come. When at last he did arrive, only the fourth master was there and the library was locked. The magistrate ordered the door to be broken open. The master demurred and made excuses, whereupon the magistrate wrote to the secretary of the school calling on him to dismiss the fourth master, under pain of his displeasure. Mr. Egerton has the reputation of a rigorous magistrate, and the secretary complied with his request. The result is that the fourth master, who is described as a competent teacher and through whose hands several distinguished pupils have passed, finds himself dismissed after twenty years' service in the school.

The *Punjab Times* gives an account of an assault on a Native cartman, named Gabbu, by a European officer of the 3rd Battalion of the Rawalpindi Rifle Brigade. The man is said to have bled a good deal and to have become unconscious. The police were appealed to, but declined to do more than take down the report of what had happened. The *Times* then sent information to the Cantonment Magistrate at one p.m., and finding that this had no result, it sent again at three p.m., asking him to come in order to take the injured man's dying depositions. But this letter was returned on the ground that the magistrate had then left the Court. The case, however, does not seem to have terminated fatally.

In our issue of January 20, we commented on the extraordinary passage in the *Times of India* connecting Balkrishna Chapekar, the brother of Damodar (who was hanged for the murders of Mr. Rand and Lieutenant Ayerst), with the Brahmin community. Our contemporary has promptly and frankly apologised, in these terms:—

> In the communication from Hyderabad in yesterday's issue which reports the arrest of Balkrishna Chapekar, there is a passage which describes Balkrishna as having been "sheltered by Brahmanical influence, and supported by Brahmanical money," and "the instrument of Brahmanical intrigue." The letter in question, by an inadvertence, was not submitted to editorial revision or this passage would not have appeared. It is due to the Brahmin community at large to say that we in no way endorse the statements there quoted, and that, so far as we are aware, there is no evidence to warrant them.

The charge, says the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, though "false on the face of it," yet "has naturally given the Poona Brahmins a fright." Why so? "Because the Government had, on a previous occasion, shown its weakness in listening to such lies, and the Poona Brahmins therefore can never feel themselves absolutely secure when they are again assailed by their former enemies in a similar manner." If the *Times of India* had been a Native paper, we should probably have soon heard of an application of Section 153A of the Penal Code, which runs thus:—

> Whoever by words, either spoken or written, ... promotes or attempts to promote feelings of enmity or hatred between different classes of her Majesty's subjects shall be punished with imprisonment which may extend to two years, or with fine, or with both.

But a white skin makes a difference.

Those who still entertain vague suspicions of the loyalty of the Indian National Congress should read the account in the *Champion* by "One who was there" when the new Viceroy was welcomed by the Madras meeting:—

> Bengal's orator was entrusted with the graceful resolution welcoming the new Viceroy. "We approach the Queen's representative," he exclaimed, "because we are loyal subjects of her Majesty, and because we are drawn to him by the sympathetic words he has used in speaking of us." The audience was thrilled, and the Indian listeners, wrongly termed unemotional, punctuated with cheers the burning words of their favourite speaker. Later on, the gracious answer of Lord Curzon came, in telegraphic haste, to the Congress—"His Lordship acknowledged the cordial welcome of the National Congress"—and once more gladsome cheers sprang from hundreds of excited men.

The writer, if we mistake not, is a very cool-headed and shrewd Briton, not likely to be taken in by a profession of that which is not. But, apart from that, it would seem to be a curiously elaborate exercise for such an assembly to feign in such life-like a fashion a loyalty that the component members did not feel. It would be a pity to discourage loyalty by injurious suspicions, where destitute of basis in fact, and reflecting only an imaginative distrust on the part of those who refuse to examine the facts. The notable thing is the alacrity of Indian response to the most ordinary demonstration of sympathy.

The *Pioneer* is again among the prophets. In a recent discussion on the best way to officer the Indian army, a writer in the *United Service Magazine* proposed that each company should have at least three British officers, on the ground that without British leaders it is certain that Native mercenaries would not face European regular troops. To which the *Pioneer* answers:—

> That Native troops will face European regular troops without British leaders has been proved against ourselves over and over again, in our wars against the Sikhs, the Gurkhas, and quite recently the tribes on our North-West Frontier.

Our contemporary, while thinking one British officer sufficient with each detached unit, considers that to pretend that three are necessary with each company of Natives "is to ignore their fighting traditions, and to destroy absolutely the position of the Native officer." Moreover, if no place were left for the Indian, the greatest prize the Sepoy has to work for would vanish, and with it "the greatest incentive to good men to enlist." But the financial position alone would render the proposed addition of European officers impossible. The *Pioneer* concludes by declaring that the most important of all remedies for the want of officers is "to spare no effort to improve the status of the Native officer, to train him higher, to develop his initiative, to get more out of him, and to offer him more." We agree.

The bad effects of the continual transfers of officials in India, the loss of a sense of responsibility and the ignorance of their districts which these birds of passage necessarily show, has been often adverted to in these columns, but it is only when the actual numerical statistics of changes are studied that the magnitude of the evil becomes apparent. The *Madras Mail* has lately issued in pamphlet form some articles on the subject which had already been printed in that paper. From this it seems that of four civil servants in the Southern Province one had been transferred twenty-nine times in twenty-three years, another twenty-three times in nineteen years, a third sixteen times in twelve years, and a fourth fourteen times in eleven years. Of course these transfers were sometimes to districts in which the officer had already served, but in a fifth case the officer was stationed in twelve districts during twelve years' service, and another in eleven districts during fourteen years. In fact the *Mail* comes to the conclusion that most civilians have been in six or eight districts at the end of ten years. The *Pioneer* says:—"It is a curious state of things that for an evil which everyone from the Viceroy downwards admits the Government seems to have no remedy and no desire to find one;" and it declares that it is easier to get a Bill affecting millions of people through the Legislative Council than to "impart the smallest momentum to the executive agency."

Bangalore is in the Native State of Mysore, but in dealing with the plague not only is the civil and military station under British control, but the authorities can hardly avoid carrying out the wishes of the Government of India. It is, therefore, much to be regretted that in place of the conciliatory policy now triumphant in Bombay the old methods are employed that worked such havoc. According to a "European eye-witness" writing in the *Statesman*, segregation is the one method applied, and that with the invariable results. Such is the terror inspired that every effort is made to conceal disease. In one case a boy suffering from fever went out to die in the streets so as to save his family from suspicion. In another a man committed suicide rather than be removed to a plague camp. The disinfection of houses by outcasts increased the popular distrust, and when it was found that the burial of those who had died from plague entailed segregation on the survivors, the people began to fling their dead into the streets or throw them into wells and tanks. The results of course were terrible, but when to prevent this a house-to-house visitation by British soldiers was resorted to the measure produced an even greater abhorrence than all that had gone before. The *Tribune* may well ask why no better use has been made of the experience gained in other parts of India.

A very successful meeting (writes a correspondent) was held at Lewisham Radical Club on January 29, when Mr. Romesh Dutt spoke for more than an hour on "The Situation in India." He was repeatedly cheered, and the whole audience seemed greatly interested. After the lecture was closed they continued to put questions and seek further information from the speaker for more than half-an-hour. Mr. Dutt commented severely upon what he described as the two great defects of the present system of British administration, namely (1) its "expensiveness," which necessarily led to over taxation; and (2) its "exclusiveness," which prevented the people of the country from taking a due share in the administration of their own concerns. Under the first head he dwelt specially on the over-assessment of land which was the true cause of the poverty of the Indian people, and of the frequent famines that had occurred within this generation. Under the second head Mr. Dutt dwelt on the recent retrograde Acts of the present Government, and especially on the Bill now before the Bengal Council virtually abolishing municipal self-government in Calcutta. He concluded by saying that such measures of distrust in the people, suspicion and coercion had not succeeded elsewhere in the British Empire, and would not save the Indian Empire which had been built up by a policy of trust and confidence in the people. The speaker sat down amid continued and prolonged cheers, and after the questions and discussion, a vote of thanks was proposed by a Conservative, seconded by a Radical, supported by an "Imperialist," and carried unanimously.

Mr. Donald N. Reid writes:—A controversy on Indian affairs is generally conducted on the lines that broke up the society upon the Stanislaus, since the railway expert, the irrigationist, and the scientific farmer fly at the throats of one another on the slightest provocation. Sir Antony Macdonnell is now trailing his coat with the best of them; and the Calcutta correspondent of the *Times* informs us that a sop was thrown to the railway expert, and a sly kick administered to the irrigationist by our fighting Lieutenant-Governor at the opening of the Elgin railway-bridge across the Gogra. Sir Antony Macdonnell says that the great Saida Canal scheme would do more harm than good. This, however, would not be the case if the canal helped to lower the prices of food-grains in the densely populated districts of Oudh and of Behar. When prices for food-grains are high, the rayats in North Behar cultivate the sweet potato in preference to the rabi cereal crops, so as to be able to feed their families and keep body and soul together. This does not look as if high prices for food-grains were appreciated by the rayats of this Province. The sweet potato has certainly been extolled by Shakespeare, in the "Merry Wives of Windsor," in the following words: "Let the sky rain potatoes, let it thunder to the tune of 'Green Sleeves,' and hail kissing-comfits." On the other hand, Sir Antony Macdonnell's countrymen, the Irish peasants, are not so keen on a potato diet as our friend Falstaff, since they sing a melancholy dirge called "Over Here," the last verse of which runs as follows:—

> Oh, I wish we all were geese,
> For they live and die at peace,
> Till the hour of their decease,
> Stuffing corn, stuffing corn.

The above is the opinion of men who have a practical experience of a diet composed principally of roots and tubers. And with all due respect for the judgment of Sir Antony Macdonnell, I, as a practical planter with some knowledge of agriculture, think that it would be better for the rayats of Oudh and Behar to be "stuffing rice" instead of subsisting on sweet potatoes during the cold weather months of the year. I have had considerable experience of the working capacity of the man who has been obliged to keep base life afoot on sweet potatoes—and it was not pleasant.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON AT CHISWICK.

IT is scarcely fair to criticise an after-dinner speech with the same care as if it were delivered under other circumstances; but the remarks of Lord George Hamilton at Chiswick are taken so seriously by the *Times* and are so characteristic of the speaker that it may be allowable to discuss them at greater length than was possible in our last issue. The same vague expressions of good-will accompanied by an under-current of bitterness and contempt and in strong contrast with the actions of his government, the same misstatements of the intentions and wishes of his opponents which have characterised his speeches on India in the House of Commons are painfully apparent in the words he addressed to his constituents on this festive occasion. To say that his "earnest desire is to advance in every way that is feasible the moral, intellectual, and material condition of India's many nationalities," while at the same time he finds no reform to be feasible, is neither a great nor a useful effort of benevolence. It is indeed an empty sympathy which does nothing to relieve the drain on the country for Home Charges or the load of taxation. Nor does it strengthen our belief in Lord George Hamilton's sincerity to find him repeating the old talk about the subversion of the empire, the anarchy from which that empire has saved India, and the revolutionary changes which all those who criticise the Indian Government wish to bring about. The British Empire in India is not of quite such flimsy stuff as his lordship seems to imagine, and its greatest enemies are those who would base it on distinctions between conquerors and conquered, who would disfigure it with injustice, and would associate it in the minds of the people with insulting exclusions and eternal servitude.

There is one misstatement of his opponents' case which is so glaring and so unjustifiable that it calls for a more particular notice. He spoke throughout as if those who professed to represent educated India wished for some vast change, and had some universal panacea which would involve India in a stupendous revolution. Now it is quite true that some Indians have long cherished the hope that some of those institutions which Englishmen most prize may one day be the possession of India. Whether it is a wise hope or not, it at least shows the admiration which so many Indians feel for the civilisation of England and is no small sign of their loyalty to the English connexion. But if Lord George Hamilton persuades his constituents that the chief efforts of his opponents are directed to the extension of the British Constitution to India, or even to any new measure of reform, he woefully misleads them. He and his advisers have taken care that they shall have work of a much more urgent kind to do. Not to extend their liberties, but to keep such small privileges as have already been granted, is the business of the hour. But whether it will really strengthen the empire to impress on the minds of the people that the longer they are under its rule the less fit for freedom their rulers consider them, is a matter on which even the Conservatives of Chiswick should have no difficulty in forming an opinion.

In Lord George Hamilton's opinion he is the especial guardian of British rule in India. It is apparently a very sickly plant requiring the most careful management. The wicked are always on the look-out to "subvert" it; and the educated Indians who are its products are ready to turn their hands against their parent. To point out evils, or still worse to seek for remedies, seems to endanger its feeble vitality. But in reality this is an entirely fanciful picture. The educated Indians are quite as well aware as Lord G. Hamilton that their future is bound up with British rule, and even if they wished in defiance of their interests to subvert it they are much more certain of its strength than he appears to be. The real danger of our empire in India does not spring from any attempts at its subversion, but on the one side from misery, overtaxation, and impending bankruptcy, and on the other from the growth of such a distrust between rulers and ruled as would make all government impossible. How these dangers can be increased by redressing grievances or by giving Indians a greater share in the government of the country it is difficult to see. But if the subversion of the Empire should ever become possible, nothing would do more to forward that event than for a belief to grow up in India that in no other way could the Indians obtain any real political power or authority in their own land, that the English were too weak to redress injustice, and were already afraid that the days of their rule were numbered. The Secretary of State for India by constantly speaking of modest and practical proposals as directly or indirectly "tending to subvert or weaken British rule in India," will end at last in raising a feeling that the Empire is a merely temporary arrangement which it would take very little to destroy. This no doubt is far from the desire of Lord George Hamilton, but it is the irresistible conclusion that will be drawn when it is found that every measure of reform is submitted to this test. Statesmen of a stronger order would take care to treat British rule in India as something so firmly established that no proceeding of the Government and no movement among the governed could in any way affect it. But it is a characteristic of small men to seek to gain their objects by playing with large ideas, and to sacrifice permanent interests in order to withstand the assaults of the moment.

One argument which pleases the *Times* reads curiously in the light of some recent proceedings. It is the fashion of persons connected with the Indian administration to meet all demands for an extension of Indian liberties by proclaiming the great differences between India and England. It is a perfectly valid argument if it be used against proposals to introduce laws and institutions into India merely because they have been successful in this country. But it can have no application to such fundamental human feelings as dislike of arbitrary arrest or of finding that none but aliens are ever to have any real share in the government. And it is an argument that tells fatally against Lord George's own policy. The greater the difference between the civilisation of East and West, the more need that the alien rulers of India should be in sympathy with the people, the more need that Indian officials should be associated in the higher ranks of the service with those who have come as strangers from England, the more need that the Press should fully and freely discuss current events, and so furnish the rulers with a means of finding out the thoughts and wishes of the people, whether those thoughts and wishes be wise or foolish, practicable or incapable of realisation. The *Times* speaks of the necessity of prolonged experience of Indian life, but in this how far must the most experienced European official be behind his Indian colleagues; nor must it be forgotten that by the universal consensus of the older Anglo-Indians the new generation of officials has both less knowledge of the people and less sympathy with their feelings than had their predecessors. The official is now much more a bird of passage and much more exclusively European in his ideas, and this deficiency can only be made up by associating a larger and larger number of Indians in the government of their country.

But the two great arguments to which Lord George Hamilton appeals are the benefits conferred by the British Empire and the disunion of the Indians among themselves. If he had really a clear idea of the benefits conferred by British rule, he would see that the greatest of all is that a feeling of unity has arisen throughout that vast country—a unity of interests and feelings, even though it is also a unity of suffering. This unity is ever growing, and though it may please those who almost openly rejoice in the disunion of Indians to harp on old feuds of race and religion and to speak of "India's many nationalities," this only shows how little they appreciate the real effects of the Empire they have undertaken to defend. The benefits Lord George Hamilton sees are the peace we have brought and the oppression we have put an end to. In order to show these in brighter colours he represents all that went before as outrage and anarchy; but it is surely a mean view of his countrymen's work to suppose that it needs this contrast with anarchy to look fair, and that such a comparison is the only safe one. He says:—

> It is British rule, and British rule alone, that has stopped India from being the happy hunting ground of the oppressor, and has converted it into a sanctuary of the oppressed.

This is the custom, to represent our rule as in every way superior to all that has gone before, to talk of India as having been for ages the prey of conquerors who were not inspired by our nice sense of justice. It would indeed be a small compliment to admit that the English of the present day were superior to the Moguls of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; but poor compliment as it would be, it is not quite so well deserved as Lord George Hamilton thinks. In our official hierarchy we refuse to

advance the Indians on equal terms with the English; we reserve the highest posts for our own countrymen. But Akbar could raise one of the conquered to be his Minister of Finance; and this, we are told, was in the days of oppression. Is it too much to ask that we should rise to the level of Akbar?

LAND SETTLEMENTS AND FAMINES IN INDIA.

By Romesh C. Dutt, C.I.E.
(*Late Officiating Commissioner of Orissa; sometime Member of the Legislative Council of Bengal.*)

In an article which appeared in a recent number of India, I drew attention to the necessity of clearly specifying the rights of the Madras tenant with regard to fixity of rent and tenure in the Tenancy Bill now before the Madras Legislative Council. And I ventured to make some remarks about the uncertainty of executive orders which may be passed to-day with the best of intentions, and may be withdrawn to-morrow without any public discussion, and without any possibility of remonstrance from the people whose rights and interests are affected.

Since the appearance of my article, I have read with the greatest interest a speech which has been made on this subject at the recent annual meeting of the Indian National Congress by Mr. G. Vencataratnam, himself a large landholder, and President of the Godaveri District Association, representing the agricultural population of an important portion of the Madras Presidency. The speech of this representative and public-spirited landlord shows a grasp of details, a cogency of reasoning, and an ability in advocating the claims and rights of the agricultural population which are striking. And after perusal of his excellent presentation of the subject I cannot help feeling how much the Government of India and the Provincial Governments lose in efficient administration, as well as in popularity, by unwisely excluding from Executive Councils all representation of Indian opinion.

Mr. Vencataratnam points out in his speech the three stages through which tenant right in Madras has passed within the last forty years. He points out that in 1857 the Government of Madras declared that "the proprietary right of a rayat is perfect" and considered fixity of assessment as a portion of this proprietary right. He points out that, twenty-five years later, in 1882, the Government of India recognised a modified permanent settlement, and laid down that no enhancement of revenue should be allowed except on the ground of rise in prices. This liberal policy was adhered to till 1895, and in the Board's Standing Orders and the Madras Settlement Manual (until amended in May, 1895) it was distinctly laid down that the existing classification of soils was final, and assessments would be revised solely with reference to rise in prices. This safeguard has now been quietly withdrawn, and enhancements are now made in Madras on the ground of re-classification of soils, as well as on the ground of rise in prices.

Thus Mr. Vencataratnam shows that the rights of the Madras tenant have been steadily sacrificed from time to time. His "proprietary right" with fixity of assessment was recognised in 1857, and was modified in 1882; and his right of fixity of rent under certain conditions was recognised in 1882, and was sacrificed after 1895.

But not only has the safeguards against enhancement been slowly whittled away, the safeguards against frequent re-settlements too have been similarly broken through. Thirty years have always been considered the proper period for settlements in India; but in recent years the Indian Government has attempted to make more frequent settlements in order to obtain more frequent enhancements. It makes one sad to find that when these proposals were made in the interests of the Land Revenue, the agricultural population and the landed classes were not consulted, and not a voice is raised in the interests of the people. Nothing proves more conclusively the necessity of some system of representation in the Executive Councils of India than this silent sacrifice of the people's rights and interests in Madras in the interests of the Land Revenue.

We understand from Mr. Vencataratnam's speech that the proposals of the Indian Government for the introduction of short term settlements and progressive enhancements were rejected by Lord Kimberley, then Secretary of State for India. But after a change of government the Indian Government again pressed its views before the present Secretary of State. Lord George Hamilton too was unwilling to depart from the time-honoured and healthy rule of thirty years' settlements, and in his despatch of October 24, 1895, he laid down that the reasonable expectation of the people based on past practice should be respected; but that under exceptional circumstances shorter terms might be fixed. We sincerely hope and trust that we do not see in this despatch the commencement of the whittling process—a process which it would be interesting to watch if it was not so tragic in its consequences. Every additional facility allowed to enhancement of rents and to frequent settlements means impoverishment of the peasantry—it means more frequent famines, starvation, and death.

To many impartial observers the assessment of land in the Madras Presidency has for years past appeared to be excessive. Mr. A. Rogers, a high authority on Indian revenue settlements, has pointed out year after year the large area of cultivable land which remains uncultivated in Madras, and also the large number of coercive orders which are annually issued for the realisation of rents. These facts admit of only one explanation, viz., that land is over-assessed in Madras; and this view is confirmed by the frequent scarcities and famines in the Province. The *Hindu* of January 2 quotes a remarkable passage from the Madras Standing Information of 1879. The passage runs thus: "The principle on which the land tax of rayatwari districts is at present undergoing revision and re-settlement preceded by a scientific survey is that it should in no case exceed forty per cent. of the gross produce in the case of lands for which irrigation is provided at government cost, or one-third of the gross produce in the case of lands not so irrigated. These proportions are found to be nearly equal to half the net produce."

One reads a passage like this with bewilderment and pain. It was authoritatively stated some time ago in the House of Commons that the Land Revenue in India was about *seven per cent.* of the gross produce of the soil. Sir A. MacDonnell stated before the Indian Currency Committee that the Land Revenue in the N.W. Provinces was about *eight per cent.* of the gross produce. From my personal experience in the various districts of Bengal, I believe I am approximately correct in stating that the average rent paid by cultivators to landlords does not exceed *fifteen per cent.* of the gross produce, while the amount which is paid by the landlords to the State as Land Revenue does not probably exceed *five per cent.* of the gross produce of the soil. When one reads of *thirty-three per cent.* of the gross produce being claimed as Land Revenue, the causes of agricultural poverty in Madras become manifest. The laws of Manu sanctioned one-sixth of the gross produce, which is about seventeen per cent., and I do not believe the Mahometan rulers actually realised a higher revenue, though their demands were indefinite and high. Is the British Government acting wisely in demanding 33 per cent.?

Mr. Vencataratnam adduces other facts which are equally startling. The average rate, he says, is Rs. 2-3-2 in Madras per acre, against Rs. 1-3-0 in Bombay, and Rs. 1-12-0 in the N.W. Provinces. All these facts require a careful enquiry by an impartial and independent Commission. The well-being of the millions of cultivators and the credit of British rule in India require such an enquiry.

We are grateful to the Secretary of State for India for the appointment of the Famine Commission which has just concluded its labours and submitted its report. But Famine Commissions deal mainly with famine operations, not with the causes which bring about famines. To improve the hospitals of a great city is a laudable step, but does not prevent diseases; the physician and the sanitarian look to other methods for the prevention of illness. And we hope and trust that the system of land settlements in the different Provinces of India, which affects the well-being of four-fifths of the population, and which is more intimately connected with Indian famines than is generally believed, will form the subject of a careful, independent and impartial enquiry by a Commission of unprejudiced and well qualified men.

ROMAN SOCIETY IN THE FIFTH CENTURY.[1]

In spite of the illuminating work of Gibbon, the fourth and fifth centuries of the Christian era remain one of the most obscure periods of European history. Why did the Western empire come to an end? Why were the invasions of barbarians more fatal to it now than those other invasions which had occurred at intervals through many preceding centuries? And what was the attitude of the populations of the West towards the invaders? Did they understand at all the significance of what was happening? Did they realise that the old civilisation was being submerged? What part, again, did the conflict between Christianity and Paganism play in this struggle between Roman and barbarian? How far were the Romans Christianised? What was their own feeling about the connexion between the change in religion and the change in the fortunes of the Imperial city? What was the life of the different classes of the community—the nobles, the middle-class, the peasantry—in these troublous times? How much of the old Roman heritage was theirs? And did they perish by their own vices, or were the causes of destruction mainly economic? These are some of the difficult questions that suggest themselves, and that Mr. Dill has set himself to answer in one of the most profoundly interesting contributions to historical knowledge that have been made in England for many years.

The literary materials from which the answer to such questions must mainly be drawn are fairly voluminous. But the information they give is concerned chiefly with the thoughts and feelings of the cultured class; and even there the revelation is often tantalisingly incomplete, and the historian is compelled to resort to the fascinating but dangerous expedient of drawing inferences from silence. Of the letters of Q. Aurelius Symmachus (*circa* 340-402), chief of the senate and at different times governor of several provinces, prefect of the city, pontiff and consul, Mr. Dill says that "probably no public man ever left behind him a collection of letters of so little general interest." More interesting, both in themselves and for the light they throw upon provincial life, are the poems of Ausonius of Bordeaux, the university town of Aquitaine. Further light is shed upon the same generation by the letters of S Jerome and the *Saturnalia* of Macrobius. There is also the evidence of the Theodosian Code. Lastly there are the letters and poems of Apollinaris Sidonius (*circa* 430-485), bishop of Auvergne. Readers of Gibbon will remember the lofty contempt with which he treats this last witness. His panegyric on the emperor Avitus is said to contain "a very moderate proportion either of genius or of truth"; and an admission of the truthfulness of his panegyric upon Majorian is qualified by the assertion that "the obsequious orator would have flattered with equal zeal the most worthless of princes." Very different is the temper in which Mr. Dill approaches the works of the same writer. He finds them "a priceless revelation" of the state of society both in Rome and in Gaul. The man himself was "a good patriot, and in his later years a devoted bishop"; he was also "the Grand Seigneur, believing in his own order with implicit faith, sharing to the full all its love of stateliness and splendour, and its passion for high place and distinction." With a true instinct, as we venture to think, Mr. Dill accepts the testimony of Gregory of Tours as to the good bishop's acts of charity and the agony of loss felt by his orphaned flock when they heard of his decease: *Cur nos deseris, pastor bone, vel cui nos quasi orphanos derelinquis?* It is significant of the more tolerant temper with which we have learnt to approach the ideals and attainments of other generations that Mr. Dill can write with sympathy even of Apollinaris's poetry. Destitute as it is of originality and even as imitation more than "thrice removed from the truth," something ought to be forgiven by the lover of literature to the man who sincerely worshipped Virgil. Surely this is a juster as well as a humaner attitude of mind than that which is evidenced in the judgment of Gibbon: "If Jerome was scourged by the angels for only reading Virgil, the bishop of Clermont, for such a vile imitation, deserved an additional whipping from the Muses."

The picture of society presented in these pages is not that familiar to us from the lines of Matthew Arnold—

> On that hard Pagan world disgust
> And secret loathing fell;
> Deep weariness and sated lust
> Made human life a hell.

It is rather a picture of Paganism elevated before its death to something of the same spirit that breathes in Christianity, of a "pure and lofty Monotheism" emerging in the best minds from the worship of the Godhead under many forms. Such is the religion of Symmachus, "almost the last Roman of the old school," a figure that the author of "Marius the Epicurean" would have loved to imagine; and "as we bid him farewell we seem to be standing in the wan, lingering light of a late autumnal sunset." Turning from Pagan to Christian literature, in the poems of Ausonius we see cultivated society outwardly Christianised, inwardly Pagan or worldly in tone, "enjoying wealth and the sense of irresponsible ease and freedom which wealth can give, and expending its energy in rural sports or business, in a round of social engagements, or in studying and imitating the great classics which were the strongest links with the past." A similar picture stands revealed in the letters of Apollinaris:—

> As we turn the pages of Sidonius, we seem to feel the still, languid oppressiveness of a hot, vacant noontide in one of those villas in Aquitaine or Auvergne. The master may be looking after his wine and oil, or laying a fresh mosaic, or reading Terence or Menander in some shady grotto; his guests are playing tennis, or rattling the dice-box, or tracking the antiquarian lore of Virgil to its sources. The scene is one of tranquil content, or even gaiety. But over all, to our eyes, broods the shadow which haunts the life that is nourished only by memories, and to which the future sends no call and offers no promise.

It must be observed that there is nothing in such pictures absolutely inconsistent with the dramatic contrasts between Paganism and their own faith which Christian moralists have been accustomed to draw. We may well believe that Paganism had its monsters of iniquity, and Christianity its saints of marvellous purity and self-sacrifice. But the evidence is convincing that there was a large body of men on the confines of both creeds, taking life seriously, faithful in the fulfilment of its ordinary duties, kindly in their relations with their fellow-men, yet not passionately devoted to any form of religious belief. If, judged by the highest standard of Christianity, they still lacked something, they were not therefore either vicious or uninfluenced by religion. Then as always the extremes of vice and saintliness were the exception, not the rule.

Why, then, did the empire perish? We have not space to follow Mr. Dill into his masterly analysis of the evidence afforded by the later Imperial code. It must suffice to say that we are shown a state of things in which the rich are growing richer and the poor are growing poorer every day: wealth is mainly obtained from agricultural land, and landed estates continually become larger and fewer; the middle class are burdened by taxation and official corruption to an intolerable extent; they are weighed down by a caste system of Oriental rigidity (pp. 190, 194); the imperial government, thoroughly beneficent in its intentions, grows daily more helpless to effect reform. To a large part of the community barbarian invasion, when it comes, brings relief rather than destruction. In the cultured class belief in the supremacy of Rome is so deeply rooted that it remains unshaken till the sacking of the imperial city by Alaric; and even then the true significance of the event is not realised. Points of likeness between the fifth century and the present day will come home with startling force to the thoughtful reader. Here, as in every study of the past that penetrates below the surface, history justifies herself as "philosophy teaching by example."

[1] "Roman Society in the Last Century of the Western Empire." By Samuel Dill, M.A., Professor of Greek in Queen's College, Belfast. London: Macmillan and Co.

"THE WONDERFUL CENTURY."[1]

In "The Wonderful Century" Mr. Wallace tells of what the century has done and what it has left undone, contrasting its great scientific achievements both with the comparative barrenness of the centuries that went before it, and also with it own shortcomings in some directions, especially its failure to secure a corresponding social and moral advance. The first of these contrasts is not perhaps so great as Mr. Wallace would have the world believe;

[1] "The Wonderful Century: Its Successes and its Failures." By Alfred Russel Wallace. London: Swan Sonnenschein and Co., Limited. 1898.

for he is inclined to minimise the achievements of former ages. A list of the scientific triumphs of the seventeenth century which omits all notice of the generalisation of geometry by Descartes, or of the eighteenth century which passes over Bichat's analysis of the organs into their component tissues, can prove little as to the relative importance of the advances made in those ages. Nor have any of the industrial changes of our time so vitally affected the lives of the workers as the introduction of machinery, and with it of the factory system, into the textile industries in this country in the latter part of the last century. But his account of what has been accomplished in the nineteenth century, and in which by his association with the great discovery of Darwin he himself took so distinguished a share, is very interesting reading. In the second part of the book, wherein he deals with the century's failures, though some subjects seem to be treated at a length quite disproportionate to their importance, and though on many of the subjects opinion is much divided, he nevertheless makes out his main point that the vast material prosperity, the great increase in scientific knowledge and in the application of science to industry has not been accompanied by an equal advance in the better ordering of society or the improvement of morality, whether as between man and man, or nation and nation. Not that Mr. Wallace would deny all improvement in these domains, but only that the advance made corresponds to that which he has recounted when telling the wondrous tale of the progress of science and of Man's mastery over Nature.

Nowhere does the author see the moral failure of the century more strongly marked than in our relations with India and its people. As he vigorously puts it:

> The condemnation of our system of rule over tributary states is to be plainly seen in plague and famine running riot in India after more than a century of British rule and nearly forty years of the supreme power of the English Government. Neither plague nor famine occur to-day in well governed communities. That the latter, at all events, is almost chronic in India, a country with an industrious people and a fertile soil, is the direct result of governing in the interests of the ruling classes instead of making the interests of the governed the first and the only object.

Even the conquests of Cortes and Pizarro, though perhaps more cruel, were hardly more noxious in their effects. As to the nineteenth century conquests in Africa, he says:

> The result, so far, has been the sale of vast quantities of rum and gunpowder; much bloodshed, owing to the objection of the natives to the seizure of their lands and their cattle; great demoralisation both of black and white, and the condemnation of the conquered tribes to a modified form of slavery.

However good our intentions may have been, our dealings with subject races have been largely influenced "by the necessity of finding places for the less wealthy members of our aristocracy, and also by the constant craving for fresh markets by the influential class of merchants and manufacturers." Hence come the fiscal burdens under which the Indians groan, and "the refusal to carry out the promises made or implied on the establishment of the Empire, to give the Natives a continually increasing share in their own government, and to govern India solely in the interest of the Indians themselves." The worst mistakes of all, more serious even than the perpetual frontier wars, are

> the collection of revenue in money, at fixed times, from the very poorest cultivators of the soil; and the strict enforcement of our laws relating to landed property, to loans, mortgages, and foreclosures, which are utterly unsuited to the people and have led to the most cruel oppression, and the transfer of numbers of small farms from the rayats to the money-lenders.

Hence springs ever-growing poverty and periodical famine. Nor does the author fail to note that the expenditure on railways in preference to irrigation is an evil that outweighs many of the benefits of our rule.

There is another point on which Mr. Wallace speaks with great authority, and that is the injury done to posterity by using up the resources of the earth for the sake of immediate gain—an injury which especially affects the exploited countries of the East. For instance, referring to coffee-growing in Ceylon and elsewhere he says:—

> But the clearing of the forests on steep hill slopes to make coffee plantations produced permanent injury to the country of a very serious kind. The rich soil, the product of thousands of years of slow decomposition of the rock, fertilised by the humus formed from decaying forest trees, being no longer protected by the covering of dense vegetation, was quickly washed away by the tropical rains, leaving great areas of bare rock or furrowed clay, absolutely sterile, and which will probably not regain its former fertility for hundreds, perhaps thousands of years.

Thus does the rush for wealth in our own days, so proud of their enlightenment and progress, reproduce the devastation of the worst conquerors of antiquity.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

"ASSESSMENTS AND MONEY-LENDERS."

To the Editor of "India."

Sir,—I have read with a great deal of interest the letter of "Senex" on this subject which appeared in your issue of January 27. I may add that I am always thankful for such discussion of a difficult subject by other experienced administrators, as it enables me to "compare notes," to revise my conclusions where they need revision, and perhaps in some cases to suggest to my friendly critics views which did not strike them in the first instance.

On the subject of revenue assessments "Senex" and I do not materially differ in our opinions. I spoke in my plain and perhaps clumsy way of "enormous enhancements"; "Senex" puts it more neatly and artistically when he says: "The rayat *ought* to be able to pay these assessments with ease; but he *can't*." We will not quarrel about words and phrases, and I am quite content to accept the words used by "Senex" that assessments are made which rayats *can't* pay. I have tried to explain elsewhere why the rayats *can't* pay. The old Hindu law laid down one-sixth the gross produce as the average rental. In Bengal the landlords do not as a rule get more than this as rent, and the share of the State is much less. In the North-West Provinces, as we learn from Sir A. MacDonnell's evidence before the Currency Committee, the land revenue comes to about eight to ten per cent. of the gross produce. If then in Madras the settlement officer demands one-half the net produce—which, according to official records, comes to thirty-three to forty per cent. of the gross produce of land—is it a wonder that the rayat *can't* pay? You may object to the adjective "enormous," and use any other milder word from the dictionary; but the fact is startling, and to me most painful; and it explains to me the chronic poverty of the cultivators in some parts of India.

When we come to the subject of the cultivator's right to mortgage or sell his occupancy right to the money-lender, "Senex" and I must agree to differ. Fourteen years ago, when the Bengal Tenancy Bill was under discussion, it was proposed to restrict this right in Bengal to save the cultivator from the effects of his own supposed folly and improvidence. I was among those who opposed the proposal, and pointed out that the cultivator had used this right freely in almost every district in Bengal; that the cultivator's position had nevertheless improved and had not deteriorated in Bengal; that the withdrawal of the right would be an arbitrary and unjust confiscation of the marketable value of almost the only property which the cultivator had on earth. I am glad to state that these views found favour with our then Revenue Secretary, Mr. MacDonnell (now Sir A. MacDonnell), and the Tenancy Bill was passed into law in 1885 without interfering with the customary rights of the Bengal cultivator.

Three years ago the question was raised once more, and high administrators, full of a philanthropic desire to help the Bengal cultivator, proposed once more to relieve him of his right to mortgage or sell his occupancy right. I may be pardoned for mentioning that, as Commissioner of Orissa, I felt it my duty once more to point out the absurdity of the proposal. I showed from figures taken from registration offices how freely the right had been exercised, and I proved that lands had not passed out of the hands of the cultivating classes, and the danger apprehended was a myth—a nightmare! I am glad to add that the most experienced revenue officer in Bengal, Mr. C. C. Stevens (now Sir Charles Stevens) took the same view, and the philanthropists had to drop their proposal. And the Bengal cultivator has been saved, for this generation at least, from his "friends" who would help him by depriving him of the marketable value of his lands.

Now my point is this, that the Bengal cultivator is neither wiser nor more provident than the cultivator of Madras and elsewhere; and what is good for the Bengal tenant would be good for the Madras tenant *if the latter were not over-assessed*. That is the real evil, and we obstinately close our eyes to this real evil. We obstinately decline to make assessments more moderate, more in conformity with the old Hindu practice, more in agreement with the actual state of things in permanently settled and prosperous Bengal. We demand in Madras fifty per cent. of the net produce, answering to thirty-three to forty per cent. of the gross produce; we demand in some parts of the Central Provinces sixty per cent. of the rents, *plus* about twelve per cent. as rates and taxes, and thus teach the Malguzar to squeeze the cultivators in order to eke out a fair income for himself. And when these operations drive the rayat to the hands of the money-lender, we legislate in a manner which virtually prevents the money-lender from lending.

Surely our legislators and administrators must by this time be beginning to feel that the real evil in Madras and the

Central Provinces and elsewhere is over-assessment; and that neither the establishment of agricultural banks nor hanging the money-lenders all in a row would remedy this evil. There is one and only one method of effectual relief to the impoverished agricultural classes of India, and that is to boldly and honestly moderate the State demand; to decrease it where an impartial Commission would find it to be excessive; and to revive Lord Ripon's rule of *allowing no increase of assessments in the future except on the single ground of increase in prices.*—Yours, etc.,

January 30. ROMESH DUTT.

MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI IN LANCASHIRE.

MEETING AT DARWEN.

The following report of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji's speech at Darwen on January 19 is taken from the *Darwen News*:—

Mr. Naoroji who had a cordial reception, said that he felt very much obliged to the citizens of Darwen for having given him an opportunity of addressing them on the question of India. The question of India was not only of the highest importance to Indians themselves, but he ventured to say it was of as high importance to Englishmen. In point of population India formed four-fifths of the British Empire, for out of a population of about 350,000,000 there were 300,000,000 in India. Therefore they might realise the responsibility which rested upon this country. He addressed his audience that night not in the spirit of any party, for he was glad to see Conservatives as well as Liberals before him when he spoke on the subject of India—(hear, hear)—because every Englishman was as much bound by certain duties of responsibility as any other Englishman. His address, therefore, was to Englishmen as Englishmen, and not either as Liberals or Conservatives. (Hear, hear.) But he had a greater and more important reason to address the people of Lancashire, for, as the Chairman had said, to Lancashire India was very important, but of all questions with which Englishmen were troubled and which engaged their mind at the present time there was no question more important to them than that of India, for the simple reason that India formed the largest portion of the British Empire—in fact, it was India that made the British Empire. The colonies were only child's plays compared with the responsibility and with the power we had in India, for that country contained nearly one-fifth of the whole human race. He had come to Lancashire to impress upon Lancastrians the enormous extent of the responsibility that lay upon them, because they were the most intimately connected with India. Lord Curzon, the new Viceroy, had said that "whatever may be the loss to Britain in any other way Britain would survive it, but if India is lost the British Empire's sun is set." Any Englishman who gave any attention to the question of the relations between England and India would easily understand the importance of those words. His (Mr. Naoroji's) first appeal to Englishmen would be, not on the score of their own interest or the interest of the native Indians themselves, but on the score of the duty of Englishmen towards humanity and towards those who now come under their control and were now at their mercy. Each Englishman had a vote, and each one had his responsibility for the condition of India—which had no vote, no voice in its own government—and the Indians could only appeal to those who possessed those votes, and ask them to exercise those votes in their true English character, and do their duty. Englishmen rightly claimed that they had been in the van of true civilisation, and that could be proved by their acts in this century, especially in the thirties and forties, when the whole country rose as one man to abolish slavery, and to emancipate the Catholics and the Jews; but he would ask them whether or not they had done their duty towards the Indian people? England had begun the administration of India in the most unfortunate manner, and the seeds of a system of rule had been sown which unfortunately stuck to India up to the present day, and in its effects, though not in its appearance, that rule was even worse now than ever it was before. The blood of Indians had been shed to build up the British Indian Empire, for the army that fought for Britain when the land was conquered consisted of about 200,000 Indian soldiers, with only about 15,000 or 20,000 English soldiers. It was Indian soldiers therefore that made the Indian Empire for Britain. India had found every farthing for building that Empire, and the cost of maintaining it had been borne by her right up to the present day. England not only had had the whole empire presented to her by the Indians, but she had drawn from India thousands of millions, impoverishing and making India one of the poorest countries in the world. Those were facts that were not realised by the British people. The Anglo-Indian Press always misrepresented the whole character of the rule that existed in India—(hear, hear)—and the Press in England, guided by what the Anglo-Indian Press said, made matters worse, until the British public thought that India was the most blessed country in the world because she was under British rule. That was the romance of the affair, but the reality was quite different, and that reality the British people did not know. An examination in the thirties into the system of British rule in India showed that the system was a wicked and a vicious system, and that the result would be nothing but the degradation of the people, so the Act of 1833 was passed, in which men like Lord Macaulay, Lord Lansdowne, and Sir Robert Peel took a part. Lord Lansdowne introduced the Act into the House of Lords, and there was a portion of Lord Lansdowne's speech which he (Mr. Naoroji) would like to bring before his audience that evening. Lord Lansdowne had said, in referring to one particular clause in the Act, that he was confident that the strength of the Government would be increased by the happiness of the people over whom it presided, and by the attachment of those nations to it. Lord Macaulay, too, on that occasion made one of his most splendid speeches, and he said, "I must say that to the last day of my life I shall be proud of having been one of those who assisted in the passing of the Bill which contains this clause." The clause to which Lord Macaulay and Lord Lansdowne had referred only consisted of two or three lines, but it was really grappling the whole question, and trying to root out that canker which had made the previous administration one of the greatest curses that ever any country suffered from. The words of the clause were: "That no native of the said territories (India), nor any natural born subject of his Majesty (William IV) residing therein, shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, or any of them be debarred from holding any place, office, or employment in the said Government." There, continued Mr. Naoroji, the whole thing was put on a just basis, namely, that the natives of India, the subjects of his Majesty were to be put upon the same footing as his Majesty's subjects at home, without any reference whatever to caste, creed, or colour, and the only distinction was to be a distinction of merit. If an Indian was more capable than an Englishman to perform a certain duty that duty was to be confided to that Indian. They might ask him very properly: What more did he want? and he would say he wanted nothing more, and he never wanted anything more, but to pass an Act was one thing and to give effect to it was another. Did the British public and Parliament take care to see that effect was given to that Act? No, nothing whatever was done. When 1853 came round, when the East India Company's Charter was to be renewed, the Indians roused themselves up a little, and three associations were formed, one at Madras, one at Bombay, and one at Calcutta. He took some small part in the formation of the Association at Bombay, and when he made his first political speech he expressed his faith in the justice and conscience of the British people, and he was glad to say that after all his disappointments he could stand there and conscientiously say again that he had the same faith in the British people at present. (Applause). It was because he had that strong faith that he could stand before them and tell them hard words, because he wanted them to understand their duty. Well, in 1853 the renewal of the charter came and then came also a man whom his audience revered and whom they would never forget, but they might be sure that his name would never be scratched out of the hearts of Indians—he meant Bright. (Applause). Bright took up the cause of the Indians when this new charter was to be given to the East India Company, and fought for them. The condition of affairs in 1853 was just the same as if the Act of 1833 had never been passed. In 1853, although Parliament did not make any alterations in the Act of 1833, yet they did not take any particular care to make the East India Company carry out its provisions, and the efforts of Mr. Bright and Lord Stanley (the late Lord Derby) were in vain at the time. But in order to give his audience an idea of what Bright did for the Indians and how he fought their battles, he (Mr. Naoroji) would read a few words from Bright's speeches. On one occasion he said, "We must, in future, have India governed, not for a handful of Englishmen, not for that Civil Service whose praises are so constantly sounded in the House of Commons. You may govern India if you like for the good of England, but the good of England must come through the channels of the good of India." (Hear hear). There were other words that Mr. Bright said, and he hoped these would sink deep into the minds of his hearers. They were as follows: "The moral law is not meant for individuals alone, but for nations. The sword of heaven is not in haste to smite, nor yet doth linger." Although it was satisfactory to know that the Act of 1833 remained intact, it remained a dead letter, and existed up to the present day. Then came the Mutiny of 1857. The causes of the Mutiny were not in any way affecting the people themselves. The people were entirely innocent of the whole affair; it was the result of our own army being mismanaged, and of the conduct of our own governors, who openly declared one of the most monstrous iniquities, namely, that England should take every opportunity of depriving the Native princes of their states. The statesmen of the day were wakened up, and they learned the lessons of the Mutiny, and they gave to the Indians, in the name of the Queen and with the consent of the British public, a proclamation. The proclamation repeated the Act of 1833 with greater emphasis, and in more significant words. He would read the words, and they would see what a responsibility and an importance was attached to them. That proclamation was made in the face of the whole world, and not only that, for England called upon God to witness and bless it. It was as follows: "We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and these obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil." What more could Indians want? All they said was fulfil faithfully and honourably this declaration and they would be happy and England would be blessed. And the proclamation went on: "And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects of whatever race or creed be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity duly to discharge." The Indians wanted only justice, and to be treated equally with the British youth. They did not want any concession, they did not want any milder tests. If they did not come up to those tests the fault would be their own, and if they did come up to the tests they had as much right as any other British subjects to have the service in their own country given out according to the merits of those who applied for it. (Applause). The last paragraph of the proclamation should sink deep into the minds of every Englishman: "In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward, and may the God of all power grant to us and to those in authority under us strength to carry out these our wishes for the good of our people." There, then, proceeded Mr. Naoroji, England gave to India this hope and this pledge for the second time, the most solemn pledge that ever any nation could give to another nation. What was the result? The same thing as before, for this proclamation was as dead a letter as the Act of 1833. He would therefore ask Englishmen once more to consider the whole question for their own sake, or India, perhaps, might some day be our Nemesis. He

ask nothing; more than that the Acts of Parliament and the proclamation should be faithfully carried out. On the conscience of Englishmen, on their sense of duty, on the claims they made in advancing civilisation, he held that our relations with India ought to be based on righteous principles, and not on the wicked principles on which they had hitherto been conducted. He appealed to Englishmen also upon a lower platform, on the platform of their own interests and their own selfishness. England exported to all parts of the world something like £300,000,000 worth of produce, but to India, with its 300,000,000, with whom he had the most perfect free trade, only a very small proportion of this produce—£25,000,000 or £30,000,000 worth—was sent. Englishmen had some vague notions that this country was carrying on a great business with India. It was nothing of the kind. We sent to Australia goods to the value of £7 per head per annum of the population, but to India we sent goods to the value of only a shilling or eighteenpence per head, and even of that the larger portion went to the Native States. Why, scores of millions of our fellow-subjects in India did not know what it was to have a full meal one year's end to another—(shame)—so was it a wonder that when famine visited the land it carried millions away? This state of things existed because the country was being bled by England, and its whole wealth was being taken away. Did they think that a nation bled year after year could stand that bleeding without perishing or rising in rebellion? The result of the system of government in India was extreme poverty to the people and very little profit to this country as a whole. Suppose India was allowed to become prosperous and say she took English produce equal to the value of £1 per head per annum? Instead of the £25,000,000 of produce which we now sent we should send £300,000,000 worth, as much as we now sent to the whole world, and if we wanted a new market here was a new market of our own of 300,000,000 people. (Applause.) He would ask Englishmen then to be selfish if they liked, but to be intelligently selfish and not blindly selfish. Our interest consisted in this: to be just and honourable to ourselves and to fulfil the promises we had made, and we should be pleased with the result and India would be blessed. (Loud cheers.)

"POVERTY AND UNREST IN INDIA."

The following letter to the editor appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* of January 30:—

Sir,—On opening your issue of January 27, I turned with the greatest interest to the remarks of the Catholic missionary in Northern India communicated in your correspondent's letter on "Unrest in India." Catholic missionaries mix with the people, live among the people, and, as your correspondent says, spend their lives "for the welfare of some of the poorest of our Indian fellow-subjects;" and it is a distinct gain to know the impartial views of such observers, uninfluenced alike by official optimism and gross popular pessimism.

A perusal of the missionary's remarks, however, disappointed me, as they seemed to me a repetition of official opinions, often expressed before, rather than the result of his own observations. On the subject of the material condition of the people (to which subject alone I will confine my remarks) the missionary quotes from the Statistical Atlas, from the Madras Manual of Administration, and from trade returns to prove that "the people are now better off than they were before." But he does not allude to and does not explain facts which he must have witnessed with his own eyes—facts which every missionary, merchant and official in India has witnessed and regretted—the chronic indebtedness of the cultivators, and the famines succeeding every year of bad harvest. Within my lifetime I have witnessed and I vividly remember five desolating famines (in some of which I acted as a relief officer)—I mean the famines of 1860, 1866, 1874, 1877, and 1897—and these famines are estimated to have carried off ten millions of the people. Figures can be made to prove almost anything, but figures will not prove the prosperity of the people of India in the face of these terrible calamities, unexampled in any other part of the world enjoying a civilised rule. The words of John Bright are as true now as they were when he uttered them, many years ago, that "if a country be found possessing a most fertile soil and capable of bearing every variety of production, and that notwithstanding the people are in a state of extreme destitution and suffering, the chances are, there is some fundamental error in the government of that country." It is necessary to seek out the fundamental error in Indian administration.

No one will deny the benefits of a country's foreign trade, but when the increasing foreign trade of India is adduced to prove an improvement in the material condition of the cultivators I consider it necessary to point out (as I have pointed out in my work on "England and India, 1785-1885") that this increase in foreign trade is largely owing to Indian home manufactures and industries being killed and replaced by English manufactures and industries. No one, again, will deny the vast deal of good which has been done by the construction of canals and of useful railways, but canals and railways will not improve the condition of cultivators if they are not allowed a fair and sufficient margin of profit out of the produce of their lands. The over-assessment of land is the root of the poverty of agricultural India, and the Catholic missionary might have found ample evidence of this in backward parts like Madras and the Central Provinces. The old Hindu law, embodied in the Institutes of Manu, permitted the State to demand one-sixth ($16\frac{2}{3}$ per cent.) of the gross produce as land revenue. In Bengal, where the land revenue is permanently settled, the landlords as a rule do not obtain more than this from cultivators, while the share obtained by the State is much less. Now turn to Madras. The State demands as land revenue one-half the net produce of the soil, and we learn from official records that this comes to about 33 to 40 per cent. of the gross produce of the soil. I do not believe that such a high land revenue was ever actually realised by any previous administration, and I do not believe that any peasantry can prosper materially when called upon to pay such an enormous land tax. In the Central Provinces, in some parts 60 per cent. of the rents collected by landlords is demanded from the latter as Government revenue, and this was admitted by the Secretary of State for India in his replies to questions put by Mr. Samuel Smith, M.P., last year. Add to that rates and taxes, which, I believe, come to about 12 per cent., and the landlord has to pay up a total of over 70 per cent. of his supposed receipts to the State. The result is that he squeezes the cultivators, and that the cultivators are in debt and chronic poverty.

We are continuously reminded of the blessings of peace and of the security of life and property bestowed on the people of India by the British rule. No one that I know of is disposed to undervalue these great and undoubted blessings. But it would be unwise, and it would be hurtful to British rule itself, if in contemplation of its excellence we shut our eyes to such defects as it has. I have in my book cited above endeavoured to indicate the weak points in the present system of rule, in the loyal hope that they may yet be removed. In the first place, the present rule is exclusive in its spirit and permits less of real self-government in villages and towns as well as in provincial and Imperial affairs than was allowed to the people under the Mahometan rule, arbitrary and despotic as it was In the second place, the present rule is expensive; it drains the resources of India by its inordinate military expenditure and expenses outside India; and it seeks to recoup itself by raising the land tax to an unduly high rate, thus necessarily impoverishing the masses, who are dependent on agriculture in India. We are grateful for the enquiries recently made in India by the Famine Commission, and the report submitted by it is valuable as far as it goes. But famine Commissions deal mainly with methods of famine relief, not with the causes of the famines. An enquiry into the causes of Indian famines, into the incidence of land tax, and the condition of the agricultural population in the different provinces of India by an impartial and independent Commission would reveal and probably ultimately remove one of the gravest defects in British Indian administration. Such a Commission—and not a Commission which lays down rules for relief operations—can remove the cause of agricultural distress in India, as sanitary improvements, and not the rebuilding and refurnishing of hospitals, can remove the causes of disease in a town.—I am, etc.,

ROMESH DUTT (late of the Indian Civil Service).

January 29, 1899.

THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

FOURTEENTH SESSION.

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT, MR. A. M. BOSE.

(*Concluded from page* 51.)

Brother delegates, I do not expect you to reach to such heights. If Rome was not built in a day, nor are organisations. They are the results of patient labour for many a long day. But let us resolve that at least a beginning, a fair beginning shall be made in the year before us, that when in the closing year of the century we meet once again, we may look back upon some work done, some foundation laid, some progress achieved in the direction I have ventured to indicate. Into the details of that organisation I purposely do not enter. It may be that instead of one central office we may find it desirable to a large extent to decentralise and divide our work, it may be that we may link on our work in the different provinces with their respective provincial conferences. I trust the matter will be fully considered and a working plan formed before we separate. But one suggestion I would venture to make, that though it may be desirable for us to pass resolutions in the Congress on a large variety of subjects, we should select a limited number of them and devote our attention in the coming year, if need be in the years to come, towards carrying them out. This will secure concentration, awaken greater interest, and prevent the frittering away of our not superabundant energies.

And this brings me to the important question of a constitution for the Congress of which indeed what I have said above is a part. I trust Madras, which has been described as the home and nursery of India's statesmen, will have the credit of solving this question which has been before us for many years. The time has not perhaps yet come for a fully developed or an elaborate constitution. But I would ask you to consider whether we might not at least draw up some simple rules relating to our constitution and laying down its framework, which might be worked in the coming year, and which with the light of experience thus gained, might, if necessary, come up for re-consideration and all needed expansion at our next Session. Unless we make at least a beginning in some such way, I am afraid it will be long before we can make a start at all.

SEPARATION OF JUDICIAL AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS.

What that limited number of questions may be, should you decide

to adopt my suggestion, I leave to our leaders to decide. But whatever the programme may be, I trust it will not fail to include the two important and pressing questions of the separation of Judicial and Executive functions and of police reform.

Brother delegates, I will not argue the question of the separation of Judicial and Executive functions. I have seen the present system in practice and in actual experience for more than twenty years, and the more one sees of it, the more deeply one deplores the delay on the part of the Government in giving effect, even partial effect, to the principle underlying that proposal. Yea, that Government seems to have been busy of late, on the contrary, in extending the Judicial powers of its Executive officers. The High Court of Calcutta has pronounced this combination of functions in the same officer as extremely dangerous, and it needs but the slightest of acquaintance with what happens before its Criminal Bench and elsewhere to know the practical every-day evils that follow from this combination. And what I have said of my Province applies, as we all know, just as well, I am afraid sometimes even more, to other Provinces of India. And let me observe in passing, it is not the men, but it is the system we condemn—the system under which the most conscientious and judicial-tempered of men would find it so often difficult to deal unbiassed justice. I have already mentioned the strong condemnation of the system by Sir Richard Garth. Let me refer to the debate in the House of Lords in 1893 on what is known as the case of the Rájá of Mymensingh. It was a petty Executive scandal compared to what constantly takes places in connexion with poorer men, and for which the officer concerned when subsequently threatened with a heavy suit for damages had to make an apology in court to the Rájá; but it attracted considerable attention owing to the position of the victim. In the debate to which I have alluded both Lord Kimberley, the then Secretary of State for India, and Lord Cross, his predecessor in that office, concurred in admitting the undesirability and the inconvenience of the present system of combining the functions. I will quote what Lord Cross said on the subject. Referring to the proposal of separating the two duties, his lordship observed it was "a matter of the gravest importance," and that the plan to his mind "would be an excellent one resulting in vast good"—mark the words—"vast good to the Government of India." And later on when this subject was referred to in the House of Commons the Under-Secretary of State repeated that in the opinion of Lord Kimberley, "the union of Judicial and Executive powers is contrary to right principle."

THE FINANCIAL DIFFICULTY IN CARRYING OUT THE REFORM.

With such high authorities on our side, the very highest one could possibly wish for, it may be asked how is it that the present system is allowed to go on, and the "vast good" to the cause of administration Lord Cross spoke of is still unattained. I will give the answer in Lord Kimberley's words. "The difficulty," his lordship observed in the debate I have referred to, "is simply this, that if you were to alter the present system in India, you would have to double the staff throughout the country." How sad, brother delegates, to think that this is the information as to the consequences of separating the functions which some one at the India Office had placed before Lord Kimberley and which of course Lord Kimberley was bound to accept. Doubling the staff throughout India! Why the information is not only incorrect, but for most parts of the country so materially incorrect that very slight acquaintance with the actual state of things on the part of the official supplying the information would have prevented its being furnished. But before I proceed with this matter I will make one remark. Even if the statement I have referred to were correct, having regard to the importance of the matter would it not have been the duty of the Indian Government to have tried to carry out the reform, to make at least a beginning, even if it were at the price of some reduction in its military expenditure or by curtailment of its expenses in some other way. The debate I have referred to took place in the month of May. Within three months of it a scheme was published by Mr. R. C. Dutt, himself a district magistrate and an experienced and trusted officer of Government in service at the time, going into the matter for the Province of Bengal, and showing that the separation of the two functions could be carried out with but little or no extra expense on the part of the Government, and with increased efficiency as regards the discharge of both the administrative and the judicial duties now vested in the same officer. I will quote here only some concluding sentences of Mr. Dutt's memorandum: "The scheme which has been briefly set forth in the preceding paragraphs is a practicable one, and can be introduced under the present circumstances of Bengal, excluding the backward tracts. I have worked both as sub-divisional officer and as district officer in many of the districts in Bengal, and I would undertake to introduce the scheme in any Bengal district and to work it on the lines indicated above." And he adds, if this separation be carried out "The police work, the revenue work, and the general executive work, can then be performed by the district officer with greater care and satisfaction to himself, and also greater satisfaction to the people in whose interests he administers the district."

This scheme of Mr. Dutt's, which is one on the same simple and readily-suggested lines as some others which had been set forth long before the debate in the House of Lords, was, I may add, with some slight modifications approved on the one hand by Sir Richard Garth, who had held the highest judicial office in Bengal, and on the other by Mr. Reynolds, who had held the highest executive office under the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, having been chief secretary for years, and afterwards senior member of the Board of Revenue for the Province. Here then was a practical scheme dealing with an admitted and a grave evil, drawn up by a responsible and competent person, and afterwards approved by those who could indeed claim to speak on the subject with the very highest authority. But to pursue the history of the matter.

On August 29 of the same year, the Indian Association of Calcutta forwarded a memorial to the Government of India through the Government of Bengal, enclosing Mr. Dutt's scheme, referring to the weighty expression of opinion on the subject in the House of Lords and elsewhere, and appealing to the Government to take that scheme into its earnest consideration with a view to the introduction of the reform. Well, ladies and gentlemen, more than five years have elapsed since that memorial was submitted, and the Association, I believe, still waits for a reply. I would rather, brother delegates, not make any comments on this matter, but leave the simple facts I have narrated to tell their own tale and to carry their own lessons. It remains for me to add that I believe other associations too have in these years moved the Government in the matter; and I will leave the subject with the expression of a strong and fervent hope that this reform, as important in the cause of the liberty of the subject as in the interests of good administration, and supported by a practical unanimity of opinion of the highest weight, will no longer be delayed or trifled with, and the painful scandals which now so frequently occur will soon be things of the past.

REFORM OF THE POLICE.

Brother delegates, I have detained you longer than I intended on this question of separation of duties; but I thought it necessary to deal with this spectre of financial difficulty. As regards the reform of the police my remarks will be few. There is not, ladies and gentlemen, a man, woman, or I might add child in India who requires to be told anything about at any rate this question. Indeed I have heard many good men and true discuss whether the total abolition of the police force, or at least of a very considerable portion of it, would not be much better than the present affliction. There has been a Police Commission, but in its practical results we seem to stand just where we did. The other day, in June last I think, a paper was read on the subject in London at a meeting of the East Indian Association by Mr. Whish; and Sir Lepel Griffin who has seen long and distinguished service in India, and who holds the responsible position of chairman of the Council of that Association, said "there is no doubt that our administration in India is heavily weighted by the unpopularity attaching to the police, who are rapacious and corrupt." This was said in England. Let us come to India. In a reported judgment which appeared in October last, I find the district magistrate of Balia saying with reference to a case before him, "It is refreshing to find riot cases in which the police appear neither to have tutored witnesses, nor to have included for reasons of their own the names of men who did not take part in them, nor what is more common, omitted the names of the most influential participators in the riot." I hope there are here and there some more exceptions, even one of which the Balia magistrate found so refreshing, to prove the general rule.

But, ladies and gentlemen, I must not go on quoting authorities on this subject, or I shall not know where to stop. I think I owe you an apology for having mentioned even these two. If our rulers could only know and fully realise the amount of suffering and oppression caused to the people by the police intended for their protection. I do not think that this blot on the administration could very long be allowed to remain. Here again it is not the men, it is not something inherent in Indian human nature, but the system which is responsible for so much. But instead of asking you to be content in this case with my authority, let me quote just a sentence from the paper of Mr. Whish to which I have already referred. Speaking with the authority of long and intimate personal knowledge, and while describing "the intolerable burden of crime manufactured by the police" and many similar matters, he adds he had no intention of "making any sort of complaint against the Indian policeman in himself; on the contrary, considering the vicious system under which he works, I consider it absolutely marvellous that he should be as good as he is."

Brother delegates, I have mentioned the two questions of separation of Executive and Judical functions and of police reform. To those who have studied the matter, there is an important connexion between some aspects of the two questions into which, however, I do not propose to enter. But permit me to point out that if ever there are questions which affect the masses of our people, the poorest of the poor a great deal more than the rich, it is these two matters. In fact, ladies and gentlemen, I am not sure if a "rapacious and corrupt" police, to use Sir Lepel Griffin's expression, is not often rather an advantage than otherwise to an unscrupulous but well-to-do individual. There is only one more remark I will make before I leave this subject. Here in the Congress we remember with gratitude the labours of our friend Mr. Monomohun Ghose, a distinguished member of this body who had made this question of the judicial powers of Executive officers peculiarly his own, and had worked for its furtherance until the closing hours of his life.

How many other questions crowd to the mind—many of them of great importance—but I must resolutely turn my face away. There is a limit, brother delegates, even to your indulgence. I have spoken to you of the work to which we might direct our attention in India, which needs to be done, and which I venture to hope will be done. Let me now turn to the other side of that work, the work in England. It is impossible to speak of it without our thoughts turning with deep gratitude to the British Committee headed by Sir William Wedderburn, containing such friends of India as Hume and Caine, Roberts and Naoroji, and many others whose names are so well-known to you, and to their unselfish labours on India's behalf. It is a matter of special satisfaction to us to see the growing number of meetings which are being held in England under the auspices of the Committee, and this cannot fail to create, I trust and fervently hope, amongst the members of both the great parties of England, an increased interest and a greater sense of responsibility in the affairs of this country. And how much we owe to our friends Mr. Chambers and Mr. Dutt, who may be said to have represented Bombay and Bengal in particular, for their eloquent, earnest and informed pleadings on India's behalf in meeting after meeting, carrying conviction and rousing interest. But in this connexion, will you permit me, my friends from Madras, members and friends of the Congress whom I am glad to see present in such large numbers, whose patriotism and self-sacrifice, whose zeal and devotion, have made this session of the Congress such a success in spite of many difficulties, will you

permit me to ask when will your representative—or may I not use the plural number—start to do India's work in the land of our rulers, and hold a meeting not in the Hyde Park of Madras, but in that other Hyde Park where Londoners love to congregate. As to the methods and lines of expansion of the work in England I need not speak. I had occasion not long ago to say a little on that subject in Bombay. But, brother delegates, what I would specially draw your attention to is the need and the great importance of that work in England, the need of funds, and not less but even more, of men, capable and earnest, who will go from India, meet English audiences face to face and inform them of the actual state of things. That such men will meet with patient and sympathetic hearing, and find amongst English people a desire to do full justice to the claims and aspirations of India, all past experience has shown.

A Meeting at Cambridge.

Let me as an illustration refer to one meeting, and it will be only one. On November 9 of last year it was my privilege to be present at the first meeting of a political character during my recent visit to England. After a lapse of three and twenty years, I found myself once again in the hall of the Cambridge Union Society with its many associations of the past, where the motion for debate that day was one condemning the "Recent Policy of Coercion" in India. And brother delegates, after a full discussion in which every shade of opinion was represented, a house which in its ordinary composition is Conservative in the proportion, I believe, of more than two to one, passed that resolution condemning the action of the Government of India. There have been many meetings since then which Mr. Dutt and others have addressed, and amongst audiences of every variety; but I refer to this particular occasion, not only on account of the character of the meeting, in its political composition, and that was remarkable, but also on account of the culture and the position of those taking part in it, and the possibilities in the future open to them. There was one remark in that debate from an ex-president of the Union who spoke in favour of the motion, which struck me very much. England, he said, after referring to her colonial policy, had learnt how to attach to her in bonds of affection people of her own race in distant parts of the world by following a liberal policy of wise concession. But it would be, he added, a far prouder day to her when she succeeded in knitting to her and making her own, people of another race in her great Indian Empire, by following the same wise policy. I do not know whether my friend will ever come out as Viceroy of India. But ladies and gentlemen, we shall have soon amongst us as our Viceroy an ex-president of the sister Union Society of Oxford. Let us trust that it will be given to Lord Curzon, endowed with the double gift of "courage and sympathy" of which he spoke, to steer the vessel of State and carry it on towards that goal, which we know is also the high ideal which he has set before himself in assuming his office.

There is one word more, ladies and gentlemen, I must say. The English are often supposed to be a reserved nation. But speaking from experience of kindness which will remain engraved in my heart so long as memory lasts, of cordiality and even warm friendship from men whom I had never known before, I doubt if there are kinder and truer men and women than are to be met with in that country. Permit me, brother delegates, from this great gathering to send not alone my own heart-felt gratitude for all this kindness, but your acknowledgment also for help ungrudgingly given by them, for sympathy unstintedly shown and for interest whose warmth left nothing to be desired, on behalf of the cause of India and her people.

Gratitude to Government.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have felt it my duty to examine and criticise some of the recent proceedings of the Government. But I have a far pleasanter duty to perform before I close, the duty of expressing our deep gratitude to the Government for its changed attitude in regard to the policy of dealing with that calamity of the plague which has now been afflicting this country for so long, and which indeed is not, as I am speaking, very far from our doors. Let whatever of mistakes, be they light or be they grave, which may have been made in the earlier stages, be forgotten; and I am sure, brother delegates, it will be your earnest endeavour as indeed it is your bounden duty, to render every possible help to Government in its efforts to meet this dire foe. And we thank the Government of Lord Sandhurst in particular for the considerate and deep spirit of sympathy in its last resolution dealing with the nature of plague operations, and let me add for the generous resolve to which I believe it has lately come not to charge to Poona the cost of the punitive police force, and for its opening the prison door to Mr. Tilak. We venture humbly but very earnestly to hope that all these are happy indications of return to a policy of conciliation, sympathy and trust, and of increased touch with the people.

Encouragement to Education.

I shall presently refer to a liberal example of endowment in the cause of education; but before doing so permit me to note with gratitude the generous and magnificent offer which Mr. Tata—a true benefactor of his country—has made in furtherance of the cause of higher scientific education. Perhaps I may also mention the offer by the Mahárájá of Mymensingh, in my Province, for the establishment of some scholarships for the encouragement of technical education by sending students to Europe, America, or Japan. All these, ladies and gentlemen, are truly encouraging signs, and let us hope there will be many in every part of the country to follow their noble example, and help on in this and in every other direction the cause of Indian progress.

Death of Sirdar Dyal Sing and the Maharaja of Durbhanga.

It is with deep regret we heard in September last the news of the sudden death of Sirdar Dyal Sing Majitia of Lahore, a tried and staunch friend of the Congress, as indeed of every good cause, on whose invitation and in no small measure by whose liberality the session of the Congress was held at Lahore five years ago. It is a satisfaction to know that [illegible] death he did not forget the cause of his country, which was ever so dear to his heart; and knowing that education was the basis on which every cause that makes for the progress of the country must rest, has left a munificent endowment for starting a first grade college in his native Province. And now in the closing month of the year, not a fortnight ago, has passed away to the realm beyond one of the noblest and the most illustrious of India's sons, illustrious not by birth and position alone, premier nobleman of Bengal and the head of its proud aristocracy, but illustrious by that which is a higher nobility by far than that of birth and wealth, God's own nobility of a rich heart and a rich service in humanity's cause. In the Mahárájá of Darbhanga, the British Government loses a loyal subject and perhaps the most trusted and honoured of its councillors, the country one of the greatest of its benefactors and staunchest of the defenders of its rights, and the Congress a friend, a generous helper, a warm supporter—none warmer—whose value no word that can fall from our lips can adequately express. Can memory fail to go back at this moment to that scene when two years ago he came to the Congress Pavilion in Calcutta, the last he lived to attend, when the whole assembly rose as one man with an enthusiasm that knew no bounds, to welcome this true friend alike of the Government and of the people. To me, I am not ashamed to confess, the death of Sirdar Dyal Sing and of the Mahárájá of Darbhanga come with the suddenness and the poignancy of grief at the loss of two who were personal friends whom I had eagerly hoped to meet after a long absence. But they have, ladies and gentlemen, left examples behind, marks in the foot-print of time, which we trust and pray may be an encouragement and a guide to others of their class and to all true and loyal sons of India.

The Mother-Land.

Ladies and gentlemen, I began with a reference to Mr. Gladstone, and I will finish too with a reference to that great man. It was a cold morning, and closely muffled up, pale and ill, the great statesman was entering his carriage at Bournemouth, making the last journey of his life, on his way to Hawarden, there to die. A crowd had assembled at the station to bid him farewell, to have a last look at the face not much longer destined for earth. In response to their cheers and salutations Mr. Gladstone uttered these words—the last he uttered in public—he who had so often held audiences of his countrymen spellbound by the magic of his voice, "God bless you all, and this place, and the land you love so well." The words were few, and the reporters added the voice was low. But there was in them the last words of the parting hero, a pathos of farewell and of benediction, a deep thrill as of another world, which produced an effect not less perhaps, but more than the efforts of a happier time. And let us, too, following those simple words of Mr. Gladstone, ask God that He may bless us all and this dear land of ours.

PUBLIC MEETINGS ON INDIAN QUESTIONS.

THE WORK OF THE BRITISH COMMITTEE.

Sir W. Wedderburn, M.P., has consented to address a meeting of the "Liberal Forwards" on February 28, on "India in Parliament."

On Monday next, February 6, at Holloway Hall, London, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji will address a meeting of the North Islington Liberal and Radical Association on "England's Responsibility for India." The chair will be taken at 8.30 p.m. by Mr. H. G. Chancellor, supported by Dr. Napier, L.C.C., Mr. W. C. Parkinson, L.C.C., Dr. D. J. Chowry-Muthu, and the Executive Committee of the Association.

In "Notes and News" will be found an account of the meeting at Lewisham on January 29, which was addressed by Mr. Romesh C. Dutt, C.I.E.

On January 22 a lecturer on behalf of the British Committee addressed a large gathering at the Hanley Labour Church on "India and its People." About 600 people were present.

On January 23 a lecturer on behalf of the British Committee addressed the Bilston Women's Liberal Association on "India and its Needs." The room was filled to overflowing. The lecture was illustrated by lime-light views.

On January 24 a lecturer on behalf of the British Committee addressed a large gathering at the Liberal Club, Burton-on-Trent, on "Some Liberal Reforms for India." Questions and discussion followed.

The Liberal Club Lecture Hall at Padiham was crowded on January 25 to hear a lecture, illustrated by lime-light views, from a lecturer on behalf of the British Committee. Councillor Crocker presided.

On January 26 a lecturer on behalf of the British Committee delivered an address in the large hall of the Y.M.C.A., Liverpool, on "The Industrial condition of the Indian people." Mr. E. Bathgate presided over a good attendance.

On January 27 a lecturer on behalf of the British Committee lectured at the Horwich Liberal Club on "India," illustrated by lime-light views. An excellent discussion followed. Many questions were answered by the lecturer.

A lecturer on behalf of the British Committee writes (January 31): "The attendances last week were excellent. Altogether I addressed about 1,850 people."

Meetings have been held this week at Accrington (February 2) and Shipton (February 3).

For next week meetings have been arranged at Wibsey, Bradford Women's Liberal Association, East Bradford Liberal Club, Cowling, and Sowerby Bridge.

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