India

FOR THE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

OUR Calcutta correspondent telegraphs an account of another crowded meeting which was held in Calcutta last Monday to protest against the Calcutta Municipal Bill. The telegram will be found on p. 111.

The *Mahratta* of February 5 contains an interesting report of an interview with the elder Natu, from which it appears that his health is still bad and that his movable property, illegally attached, has not yet been all returned. Referring to his imprisonments and to his having had to prepare his own food owing to his caste, he says:—

> Unfortunately being bred in a happy condition through the bounty of the British Rájá I never was apprenticed to a butler, and so you could easily conceive what I suffered and what sort of food I ate. My hands were burnt like a charcoal.

As to whether he had been asked to tender an apology to Government he explained:—

> From the time when I was at Ahmedabad many Government officials, of course in their private capacities and as well-meaning sympathisers, told me to tender an apology to the Government. Being repeatedly asked by me what offence I had committed and for which I was to tender an apology, they could not mention any, and so I could not offer any.

Throughout he shows that absence of rancour and that readiness to make allowances for the difficulties of the time which have so honourably distinguished him throughout his sufferings. Let us hope that he is not mistaken in thinking that the day is not far distant when he may "write a thanksgiving letter to the Government" for his complete release.

Our readers will remember the case of the poor schoolmaster, who after long service was dismissed at the request of Mr. Egerton, the District Magistrate of Murshidabad. The case has led the *Bengalee* to make some investigations into Mr. Egerton's records, from which it would certainly seem that he is somewhat ready to issue warrants, and to throw persons of good character into gaol. In one case a warrant was issued against a lady, and the officer in charge was only prevented from breaking open the door of her house by the resistance of her servant. It was then pointed out that the warrant was illegal, and it was withdrawn. The servant was then arrested for resisting this illegal warrant. He was acquitted; so there was nothing left to be done but to confiscate the arms of the lady and her relatives. It is to be noticed that the High Court has had in several important cases to reverse the judgments of Mr. Egerton and his subordinates.

Mr. M. J. W. Augier, Sub-Deputy Magistrate, for nearly twenty-one years a member of the Provincial Civil Service, was convicted some time ago before Deputy Commissioner McGuire of Purulia for trying to obtain possession of a young Brahmin coolie girl, and sentenced to six months' rigorous imprisonment. The High Court, however, summarily quashed the sentence on appeal. Mr. Augier has now submitted a statement to the Lieut.-Governor of Bengal, in the course of which occurs this passage:

> The register in question he (Mr. Augier) got from Law (a coolie contractor) by a mere accident. He had never told him to get it. When he got the book it struck him that it might throw light on a little girl that Mr. Laing (another coolie contractor) had previously spoken to him about. Mr. Laing had told him about a month before that there was a girl called Deoki in the depôt who was a Brahmin, and he would neither send her to Assam nor send her home, as she was a Brahmin and a minor; and he did not like to send her back to her people as it would be a dead loss to him. Accused told him to at once inform the Deputy-Commissioner about it. Two or three days after they again met, and in the course of a conversation Mr. Laing informed accused that he had induced Deoki to select a husband from among the young coolies in his depôt, and that they were actually living together as man and wife. Accused told him it was very silly of him to tell him these things, and that he hoped that there were not many Englishmen in India who would pimp for coolies.

So the Brahmin girl—under 16—was "eternally disgraced and ruined" (as the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* says), to prevent "a dead loss" of her coolie value to Mr. Laing. Yet, we are told, "the authorities did not take, nor have they yet taken, any step against Mr. Laing." Mr. Law was not only a coolie contractor, but also a District Superintendent of Police. He was let off with a fine of 100 rupees. We await further light on Mr. McGuire's part in the business. Meantime there is food for thought in the facts now stated.

When the administration of justice, criminal as well as civil, is so volubly lauded at home, we really ought to have some active steps taken to secure more consonance between the facts and the representations. From time to time we have cited cases calling for remark. But there would seem to be no more virtue left in the famous Fuller Minute of Lord Lytton or the remarkable Webb Minute of Lord Ripon.

> "If his Excellency (Lord Curzon of Kedleston)," says the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, "were to ask the Local Governments for a return, showing the number of cases within the last ten years, in which Europeans were charged with having killed or wounded the Indians and outraged their females, and how they were dealt with, it would show that some rigorous measures are absolutely necessary, both in the interests of the ruled and rulers, to put a stop to this growing scandal."

It is a peculiarly ugly scandal when such things do happen; and it will be observed that our contemporary speaks of it as "growing." There should be no difficulty in Government's getting out a sufficient conspectus of the facts whereon to base some adequate legal provision for dealing satisfactorily with an intolerable state of things.

Yet more is needed. Even a stringent and detailed formal law will meet the utmost opposition, or will be circumvented by the most astute evasion, unless a more equitable spirit be somehow infused into the Anglo-Indian population. We look to Lord Curzon for a third Minute on the subject, to be followed up by the strictest attention to every such case as it occurs. Government must show clearly and sternly that it will stand no trifling on this matter. But look at the purely judicial aspects. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* recalls the Ranaghat case, where two Europeans committed a dastardly outrage on two Hindu women in a railway carriage last year. What happened? One of the men got off scot-free; the other was sent to prison for eighteen months. Again, there is the Assansole case, a much more shocking affair. Four Europeans were charged with gagging and outraging a Hindu girl of fifteen. One man absconded and is still at large; a second could not be identified; the other two were found not guilty by the European jury, but the Sessions judge referred the case of one of the two to the High Court, which gave the culprit five years' imprisonment. We want the High Court to repeat that dose with reasonable frequency. But what of the recent Ludhiana case? There the culprit was a low caste Indian, who committed a cowardly outrage upon two European ladies of the local Church of England Zenana Mission. He was sentenced to *rigorous* imprisonment *for twenty years and three months*. And this is equal justice!

Lord Curzon replied excellently to the Mahometan addresses, laying stress on the necessity, especially in a community of divergent races and religions, of fellow-

feeling, mutual respect and kindliness. The Mahometans have been somewhat prone to complain that they did not receive their due share of public appointments, but the Public Service Commission reported that they held offices almost in proportion to their share of the population, and the *Tribune* is surely right in thinking that it would be doing them a bad service to relieve them from competition, as this would have the effect of relaxing their energies and handicapping them more than ever in the race of life. As time goes on, they must see more and more how their interests are bound up with those of their fellow-countrymen. And indeed there are not wanting Europeans who are ready to enforce this lesson much more effectively than Lord Curzon's words could do. Not long ago the *Moslem Chronicle* wrote :—

We Mussulmans care very little for the right of self-government, election, representation or liberty; those who have plenty to eat and drink can think of these things.

But a week later, in dealing with the assault on Mr. Ashgar Ali, the *Chroniele* had changed its tone :—

Europeans, like these military officers, are those who, by their treatment of respectable Indians, bring disgrace on the administration and shake the confidence of the people in the majesty of British law. If there be any disaffection among the Indians, we should not be surprised that the best exponents of that disaffection should impute it to the misdeeds of some of the men who are sent out to this country to be the guardians of our peace and the protectors of our rights.

As the *Hindu* says, "It is only burnt cats that dread the fire."

A Bombay correspondent writes (February 11) :—As you may know, India is in a ferment about the latest murders at Poona. I of course cannot say what version has been sent to England, but you can take it as a fact that there is no political conspiracy. The criminals are a set of young "larrikins" of a class to be found in almost every city. The public, Native and Anglo-Indian, is glad they have been captured, and no one here is making political capital out of the incident. The *Times of India* did try at the beginning, but it is now silent. The more we learn of Poona the more certain do we become of the utter injustice of the late policy of the Government.

The *Hindu Patriot* contains the following :—

At the recent annual Conference of the London Indian Society, Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt, C.I.E, is reported to have declared that the time had come for the adoption of other than "peaceable and constitutional methods." It would be interesting to have some idea of the peculiar methods suggested by Mr. Dutt. We fail to see what alternative is open to the natives of India to ventilate their grievances other than recourse to what Mr. Dutt calls "peaceable and constitutional methods." It is fortunate for Mr. Dutt that he was speaking in England and not in India, but surely as an old civilian and a Government pensioner, he ought to know better than use language of the kind he has been accredited with.

The report upon which the *Hindu Patriot* thinks fit to found these remarks evidently attributed to Mr. Dutt the exact reverse of what he actually said. In the speech in question (reported in INDIA of December 30 last, page 346) Mr. Dutt was deprecating the Calcutta Municipal Bill as a reactionary measure. Its authors, he said, were "turning back the hands of the clock and withdrawing the trust which had in the past been reposed in the people." Our report proceeds :—

That surely was a fatal mistake. (Hear, hear.) It was a policy which was to his knowledge arousing grave suspicion throughout Bengal. The impression was gaining ground throughout India that it was not possible to gain new privileges by peaceable methods. That was a dangerous lesson to teach the people, and it was not wise or safe to deepen the impression. (Hear, hear.)

No doubt the *Hindu Patriot* will hasten to explain that its censure was based upon a complete misrepresentation.

"Is the millennium upon us?" asks the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* in surprised bewilderment. "Has it followed Lord Curzon?" What is the matter? Why, a very notable matter indeed, namely, a striking "change of attitude in orthodox Anglo-Indian papers." Thus :—

Would it be believed that the *Englishman* is actually giving a fair, though short account of the proceedings of municipal protest meetings. Our contemporary, under the old order of things, ought to have ignored them.

Again, the first article of official faith and practice is to carry out a systematic repression of Indians in every department of public activity to the utmost feasible extent; and when questions of reform are mooted by the National Congress, the subservient Press advise the Government to turn its deaf ear. But listen to the semi-official *Pioneer* :—

We may safely say that there is no Englishman whose opinion is ever likely to count for anything in the settlement of these questions, who is not in favour of a policy of liberality and concession to the Natives of this country, and who does not hope to see them, as time goes on, more and more intimately allied and associated with the Government.

This declaration shows that the difficulty of seeing eye to eye with a bureaucratic Government has become too trying for even Anglo-Indian journalists who refuse to abandon absolutely the prerogative of independent thought.

There is more evidence in the same direction. The claim of Indians to a career in the Indian army has been always viewed with alarm by those who fail to realise our "Imperial" mission, and are still in the bonds of despotic theory. Even we ourselves have not gone farther than to urge tentative steps towards the satisfaction of this essentially legitimate demand—that is to say, in the meantime. But now even the *Civil and Military Gazette* has *esprit de corps* enough to speak out in quite unambiguous terms :—

As it is, no Native of India of the soldier class can carve for himself a career worthy the name, be he the very best Native officer and gentleman that ever served her Majesty. Now this is, we venture to think, a very weak point in our organisation, and is a state of affairs unparalleled in modern history.

This is not at all surprising. For nothing was more striking in the Mutiny—or in recent campaigns—than the confidence of British officers in their Indian commands, and in many cases the touching affection of individual Indian soldiers even in disloyal regiments for their British officers. The Imperial pride of the abler Indians may be trusted to go far when they are assured of a career giving full scope to their talents.

Once more: the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* recalls the part played by the *Times of India* in regard to the imprisonment of the brothers Natu, and points to the new change of front :—

Now the same paper demands to know of the Government why the Natus were deported at all, and why they are yet kept under surveillance. Nay, the *Times* does not even believe in the explanation furnished by Lord George Hamilton. "Lord George Hamilton, when asked," says the paper, "why this condition had been imposed upon the Natus, said it was because their property is in Belgaum. We believe this explanation is as relevant as the famous answer in Wordsworth's 'Lessons of Fathers'."

There is really, however, no ground for surprise in the matter. It is impossible for men that will think for themselves to back up the perverse action of the Government. We have always been buoyed up by the conviction that even Government wrongheadedness must in the long run bow to the logic of facts. The flowing tide is only for those who can discern the direction of the current.

The *Pioneer* refers to the success of the operations for preventing plague in the Hyderabad State, and to the good feeling with which they have been carried on. Lieutenant-Colonel Laurie says of the exodus of the entire population of Kopbal, a town of 18,000 inhabitants :—

The evacuation was entirely spontaneous, and was effected, including the erection of the camps, by the people themselves under the friendly direction of Mr. Stevens. Not a Sepoy or a policeman was employed.

As the *Pioneer* says, "this is a very remarkable manifestation of successful management and of the docility of the people when they are taken in the right way." Still more noteworthy is it that Mr. Stevens is the only European official in a district containing some seventeen infected towns and villages and 35,000 people out in camp, the whole being carried out at the expense of the people themselves. "There are no costly disinfectants, no military cordons, and no expensive staff of inoculators forcing an unwelcome remedy upon a reluctant population." And the moral is drawn "that plague operations can be carried on in India without causing irritation or friction simply by the exercise of tact and common sense." This excellent article is marred by a foolish remark on the danger of risk when Brahmin M.A.'s are employed in plague operations. Were Brahmin M.A.'s responsible for what took place at Bombay, Poona and Garshankar?

The *Times of India* has some pertinent remarks on the "endless obstacles which officialism has in the past thrust

in the way of the development of Indian industries." Lord Curzon had sought in his reply to the Calcutta Trades' Association to show that the Government were not inclined to get from abroad what they could equally well obtain in the country, and he alluded to the order of 1883 instructing local governments to purchase in the local markets wherever possible. But our contemporary points out that the very case Lord Curzon quoted is "a standing example of the obstructive policy which has for years given the preference to English over Indian manufactures," for it took the iron and steel manufacturers ten years' agitation to remove the restrictions which long nullified the order of 1883. Nor is it fair to make it a reproach that the rolling mills in India work only on imported iron; for this is due largely to the former policy of the Government.

Mr. O'Conor, the Director-General of Statistics to the Government of India, when he was in England to give evidence before the Currency Committee, gave it as his opinion that many a year must elapse before the Indian mills can produce the finer classes of cotton fabric which Lancashire exports to India. Thus for the present Lancashire and India cannot be said to compete in the better qualities of goods; on the contrary, the prosperity of India enables it to be a better customer to Lancashire. The *Tribune* draws attention to the corroboration thus afforded to the views of Mr. Naoroji by so high an Anglo-Indian authority. In the opinion of our contemporary, the competition being only in the coarser cottons, the conduct of the Government of Lord Elgin in imposing, at the mandate of the Secretary of State for India, an excise duty on the products of Indian mills is all the more reprehensible.

The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* complains that not only are the avenues to high office closed against the Indians in British India, but that even in Native States, where alone they had a chance of showing their powers of statesmanship, the government is placed in the hands of Europeans, when the titular ruler is a widow or a minor. Now it appears that even the Zemindaries are attacked in like circumstances. When the Mahárájá of Hutwa died his estates were under the management of Babu Bepin Behari Bose, but the Government appointed a Mr. Buskin, who had served under him, to be manager of the estates over him and at double his pay. Mr. Buskin was at last got rid of, being paid the modest sum of Rs. 67,000, and a Mr. Markham appointed at a salary nearly four times that of Babu Bose who had been doing all the work. The *Patrika* may well ask whether such things would be possible in any country save India.

Mr. G. Paramaswaran Pillai's opportune article in the *Asiatic Quarterly* on "The Press in India" will be read with much interest. His main object is to trace the growth of the Indian Press from its origin, and it is only incidentally that he offers a word of comment. The subject is, of course, too wide for an article, except by way of mere outline; it would easily stand a volume, and a picturesque and instructive volume it would make. An adequate treatment, however, would involve a very great amount of research. Has Mr. Pillai the time to tackle it seriously?

The first English newspaper was *Hicky's Gazette*, started at Calcutta on January 29, 1780. "Personal slander comprised a large portion" of it, not the highest-placed nor the most defenceless escaping flagellation. In the time of Cornwallis arose the *India Gazette*, which, on the contrary, was "distinguished for its general 'gentlemanlikeism.'" A good third in the race was the *Indian World*, whose Irish-American editor, William Duane, was incontinently deported to England—a summary step which the Court of Directors is said to have "highly approved." Restrictions on the Press were first introduced by the Marquis Wellesley in 1799. Under these, no paper was to be published until previously inspected by the Secretary to the Government or his deputy for that purpose, the penalty for breach being immediate embarkation for Europe. From time to time further restrictions were added. In 1818, after several years' debate in the Supreme Council, the censorship was abolished, but new restrictions "reduced the newspapers of the day to mere receptacles for colourless advertisements, innocent extracts from English papers, shipping arrivals, details of balls and fêtes, and republications from the Government Gazette." The repression naturally led to revolt. Mr. Silk Buckingham, editor of the *Calcutta Journal*, spoke his mind for a year or two, but the Governor-General's Council resolved to deport him. The Marquis of Hastings, however, overruled them, declaring publicly that a good Government had nothing to fear from public criticism. But Buckingham was irrepressible, and Mr. John Adam, the temporary successor of Hastings, at last shipped him West of Suez. The Court of Directors did not now like deportation as a remedy, but the Board of Control would not interfere.

The first Native newspaper, the *Samachar Durpan*, emerged from the Serampore press on May 29, 1818. "The Marquis of Hastings admitted copies of it into his council, and allowed it to be circulated at one-fourth of the ordinary postage; and Lord Amherst subscribed for more than a hundred copies on behalf of Government." That was the sensible way to deal with it. The first daily paper published in India was the Bengal *Hurkuru*, which was converted from a weekly on April 27, 1819. It was "thoroughly radical in its principles," adopting Bentham's motto of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number." By this time the journals had considerably multiplied in all the Presidencies. The first English newspaper in Bombay—the *Bombay Herald*—was started in 1789; the first Native newspaper—the *Bombay Samachar*—on July 1, 1822, the Government of Mountstuart Elphinstone subscribing for fifty copies. "The earliest papers that were started in Madras appear to be the *Commercial Calculator*, the *Madras Advertiser*, the *Madras Gazette*, and the *Madras Courier*." The date can only be approximately inferred from the fact that, in 1817, the *Circulator* "complained to Government that a newly-established paper, the *Advertiser*, published 'literary, scientific, or miscellaneous articles,' which it was prohibited from publishing." The Madras Government cuts a strange figure. It at once warned the adventurous *Advertiser;* it called to account the *Madras Gazette* for advertising a French Government lottery at Pondicherry; and its secretary expunged from a proof sheet of the *Madras Courier* a political article on the affairs of Spain. Even a modern Press Committee would hardly go to such ridiculous lengths of journalistic censure.

With the advent of Lord William Bentinck things looked up. Mr. Pillai quotes—as we have several times done in these columns—Lord William's saying "that he derived more information from the Indian Press of the real state of the country than from all the councils, all the boards, and all the secretaries by whom he was surrounded." Yet probably no governor-general was ever so violently assailed in print. Then his successor, Sir Charles Metcalfe, on September 15, 1833, struck off the Press shackles absolutely; and though the Court of Directors reprimanded him, they did not venture to disallow the Act. The new freedom resulted in a multiplication of journals, diligently enumerated by Mr. Pillai. The fetters were again put on in 1857, Canning's "Gagging Act" being passed on June 13 in the first heat of the Mutiny; but when the Mutiny had quieted down the Act was repealed, and the journals flourished more abundantly. It was not till the Mutiny year that the repressive regulations were directed in any special way against the Native Press; before that date they chiefly contemplated Anglo-Indian editors. As time went on, however, Government "began to entertain greater fear from the criticism of the Native Press," till at last, in 1887, Lord Lytton's Vernacular Press Act applied a gag. Lord Ripon repealed this odious statute in 1882; and from that year down to the recent Sedition Acts the journals enjoyed complete freedom. Mr. Pillai gives this general summary:—

> The number of newspapers both in English and in the Vernacular language has increased greatly since 1882. There are now 18 dailies in India, of which five are edited by Natives of the country. According to the last report on the "Moral and material progress and condition of India," there were in 1896-97, 647 periodicals in Bengal, one of which, a periodical in Bengali, was edited by two Hindu ladies; 123 Vernacular newspapers in the North-West Provinces and Oudh; 1 English paper and 3 Vernacular papers in Assam; 181 newspapers and 19 periodicals in Bombay; and 111 newspapers in the presidency of Madras. A total of 1,000 newspapers is certainly not large when the extent and population of India are taken into account; but, considering that the Press in India is only about a century old, the progress may be reckoned as remarkable.

The most curious thing is that the Government, with the history of the Press before it, should ever dream of putting a rasping bit in its teeth.

THE "OVER-POPULATION" FALLACY AGAIN.

MR. PERCIVAL is remembered in India as a skilful and sympathetic administrator. He did excellent work as Collector of Sholapur in the great famine of twenty years ago; and his record as Joint Administrator of the Bhawnagar State with Mr. Gaurishankar showed him to be possessed of all the tact and good feeling which that difficult position required. In fact throughout his career in India he showed himself strenuous in aiming at the welfare of the Indians. When therefore he puts forward his views on Indian questions they are certainly deserving of a careful hearing, they should be examined in the light of his long experience and his proved good-will, and if they are to be controverted they should be approached in all seriousness and with due respect. In view then of the position in which Mr. Percival stands, no apology is needed for dealing at some length with the letter which appears above his signature in another column—a letter in which he seeks to lay the famines and poverty of India at the door of over-population, and in which he discusses the two possible remedies, emigration and the restriction of child-marriage.

Now, as the readers of INDIA know, views of a somewhat different character have from time to time appeared in our pages. Thus in our issue of April 1 last it was pointed out that the population of British India is increasing at a slower rate than that of several countries of Europe, at practically the same rate as that of Japan, and at a slower rate than that of some of the Native States of India, which avoid the terrible consequences attributed to the increase in India. In Baroda, Travancore, and Mysore, the two former of which have a denser population than British India, the population grows at a much faster rate; therefore, on the theory that over-population is the great source of India's poverty, these States ought to be more subject to famine, and the lot of the cultivators ought to be still more desperate and degraded; yet by all accounts the contrary is the case. On the other hand the growth in the valley of the Ganges, where no doubt the population is very great, has long been very small. These facts Mr. Percival has not attempted to dispute. He relies on the old and to some extent discredited theory of population, and on illustrations drawn from other countries where his Indian experience is of little value. He speaks of the "well-known law" that in an agricultural country "population must increase faster than the means of subsistence unless something is done to prevent it." Now this is only true where agriculture is stationary and the poverty of the people prevents all accumulation. In some parts of India, as for instance along the lower course of the Godaveri, thanks to irrigation the produce has increased immensely faster than the indigenous population. In a healthy and progressive society the accumulation of capital and the improvement of agriculture should certainly advance as fast as the growth of population, which is in British India not something unparalleled and enormous, but something very moderate when compared with many other countries.

If we now turn to Mr. Percival's crucial instance—Ireland—the fallacy of his reasoning will be still more plain. In that country at the end of the last century, a people subsisting on a cheap food-stuff was given an artificial stimulus to increase, by the breaking up of pastures and grazing lands in order to grow corn for the English market. The result was that during the first half of the present century the population grew with extraordinary rapidity, far exceeding anything we see in India; and then when England threw open her ports to the corn of the world, when Ireland began to revert to the condition of a cattle-raising country, and when finally the potatoes failed, there came the disaster of the famine. Now here we see that the case is very different from that of India, where there has been neither an artificial stimulus to population nor a great change in the system of agriculture making a large part of the population superfluous. Are there then any other circumstances which are the same for India and Ireland? Yes, there are two. First, both countries once possessed manufactures, and in both these manufactures went down before the rivalry of England, exercised in the one case by means of restrictions on trade, and in the other by the greater cheapness due to the English factory system. No doubt India suffered more than Ireland, for the Irish woollen manufacture was suppressed when it was still in its infancy, while the handicrafts of India had existed from time immemorial; but the effect in each case was the same—to throw the whole population on agriculture for a livelihood. Secondly, and of still greater importance, both have been debtor countries, the one having to export without return great quantities of its produce in order to liquidate the claims due to over-taxation and absentee landlords, while the other has had to do the same to provide for home charges, interest on debt, and all the other expenses which attend alien administration and exploitation. If Ireland and India have both suffered in the past, is it more reasonable to attribute this common suffering to the pressure of the population on the food supply, in which their history has been so different, or to those other circumstances—the loss of manufactures and the drain of wealth—in which their experience has been the same?

And here it may be asked, as it has been asked before, what is meant by "over-population"? Is it that the people are too numerous for the land to supply them with food? Surely this cannot be the meaning, for food is exported from India every year. Is it that with the increase of numbers the energy of the people has to be expended more and more in obtaining the necessaries of life, and there is less surplus to be saved or spent in luxuries? Yet year by year the exports vastly exceed the imports, and all this excess has to be raised by the people in addition to the necessaries of life. How then can a nation be said to have reached the limits of subsistence when it can find this immense tribute? Probably Mr. Percival relies on the comfortable doctrine of the orthodox Malthusians that any improvement in the position of the people will be soon undone by the encouragement to further increase thereby afforded. Unfortunately his second remedy cuts him off from this refuge. English rule having abolished the checks of war and famine, he proposes to decrease the number of births by putting an end to child-marriages. He calls on the leaders of Native opinion to aid. But if child-marriage is really a cause of over-population, it is evident that population would not be increased by lowering the land-tax or lessening the tribute. In Europe it is argued that where things are left to take their course, an increase of prosperity will result in an increase in the number of marriages and so of births; but in a country where child-marriage prevails, it is obvious that prosperity will not have any appreciable effect on the number of births, marriage there preceding the age of child-bearing. In fact, Mr. Percival cannot have it both ways. If child-marriage is the cause of the great increase of population which he sees or imagines, the number of births will not rise with an increase of prosperity except in so far as poverty would have kept some persons unmarried altogether, which for the mass of Indians may be left out of account; and therefore a reduction of rent or of tribute would be so much clear gain, not stimulating an increase of population. It is true that the population would continue to increase at its present rate, but the wealth of the country would also be increasing owing to the drain of exports being diminished. Mr. Percival suggests that such relief would be only temporary. The same applies to his suggested monster emigration, financed by the Indian taxpayer. He proposes to get rid of a part of the population and to keep up or increase the financial drain; but if his theories be true, the population would soon fill up the vacant spaces, and with the tribute undiminished, would be in as bad a state as ever. Would it not be better by diminishing the tribute to leave in the country the wealth to support a larger population?

Curiously enough, an antidote to Mr. Percival's reasoning has recently appeared in a place where it would be least expected. The *Globe* is a firm believer in over-population as the root of all India's evils; yet starting from this, it reaches a very different result:—

> In former times the problem was simple. Starvation from famine prevented over-population, though the people did not begin to starve until the supply of food was exhausted. Now, the country is admittedly over-populated; and the first hint of scarcity, or even a large demand for grain for export, sends prices up and causes distress, although the foodstocks in the country are ample for all needs. Thus the net result in this matter of our careful protection of the lives of the people of India, is that they suffer much more frequently from the distress caused by high prices, but much less acutely from absolute want of food. The Government can always step in and save them from actual starvation, because the food is in the country, and all that is wanted is the money to buy it and the means to bring it.

within reach of the people. But thinking men see that in place of the old danger of famine a new one is growing up. With the increase of population in excess of the country's requirements, the margin of individual prosperity narrows, and the poor become more and more the sport of each trivial fluctuation in the price of food.

"The food-stuffs in the country are ample for all needs." But the great mass of the people are engaged in agriculture. If although food is in the country, the rayats have not sufficient for themselves, this must mean that they have had to sell their produce. What have they done with the money? Their expenditure on personal luxuries, and even on clothes, is trivial. The one luxury in which they are forced to indulge is the most expensive Government in the world. If "the food is in the country," if "the food-stuffs are ample," it is surely not the number of mouths between whom this "ample" supply is to be divided, but the taxation which forces the peasants to sell, that is the immediate cause of the evil. "The food is in the country," therefore the evil is not that the earth will not produce enough to feed the people. The rate of increase is ·94 per cent. per annum. And it is asserted that wealth does not increase sufficiently to provide for this increase of numbers, while all the time a tribute of millions with all its economic disadvantages is paid by India every year. In one year India exported Rx. 35,000,000 worth of produce without economic return. How can population be said to press on subsistence in a country which can do this?

CLIVE.[1]

CLIVE might well stand at the head of the series of "Builders of Greater Britain." The charm of romance may hover around the names of others in more fascinating halo, but not one of them all was greater in ability or in achievement. The eldest son of a modest Shropshire squire, he arrived at Madras at the age of nineteen, a writer in the East India Company's service. The conflict between the English and the French resulting from the ambitious schemes of Dupleix turned the writer into a soldier; and his defence of Arcot, and still more his victory at Kaveripák, secured the English predominance in Southern India. On his return to England at the age of twenty-seven, the Court of Directors presented him with a sword of honour; and they sent him back as Governor of St. David, with the reversion of the Governorship of Madras on the first vacancy. During his second visit to India, November, 1755, to February, 1760—a period of little over four years—Clive established the ascendency of the English in Bengal. In consequence of the tragedy of the Black Hole of Calcutta, he was appointed by the Madras Council commander-in-chief of an expedition of vengeance and reprisal. In the face of difficulties, hampering and exasperating—the want of most of his artillery and a quarter of his English force (which had been delayed by the monsoon), and the arbitrary and perverse action of Admiral Watson—he promptly recaptured Calcutta, and beat the Nawáb at Dacca. Sir A. J. Arbuthnot publishes, from the MSS. of the British Museum, Clive's account of this battle to the Duke of Newcastle, then First Lord of the Treasury. The battle, or rather the rout, of Plassey (Palási), though not of very high importance as a strategic achievement, yet displayed magnificently the astounding nerve of Clive, and had such far-reaching political effects that historians have universally regarded it as the starting-point of British dominion in India. The Court of Directors, on hearing of it, appointed the victor Governor of Bengal. In 1760, Clive returned to England, where he was first fêted, then involved in troubles with the Court of Directors, and delayed in his expectations of a peerage, which was only an Irish one when it came. For the third and last time he sailed for India in 1764, arriving in Madras in April, 1765. During his five years' absence, the English misgovernment, as Macaulay has said, was carried to a point "such as seems hardly compatible with the very existence of society." Clive's third visit did not extend to two years; he became ill, and embarked at Calcutta for England on January 29, 1767. But "in less than twenty-two months he had reformed the civil service and the army, had suppressed a dangerous mutiny, had reduced the expenditure, had by a wise and liberal economy nearly extinguished the Company's debt in India, and had substituted British for Native rule over extensive and populous provinces." The attacks on Clive in the Press and in the House of Commons need no recapitulation here. He died in 1774, just over forty-nine. Sir A. J. Arbuthnot shows on the map how Clive elevated the Company into a great territorial power; and he describes the internal transformation worked in it by Clive, from a trading concern at isolated posts on the coast to a political government in which Clive already discerned the beginnings of empire.

It is for the editor of the series of "Builders of the Empire," rather than for the author, to explain why this new sketch of the life of Clive should have been written. Confessedly there are no new facts sufficient to justify a new treatment. Nor does Sir A. J. Arbuthnot supply such a discussion of disputed points as might furnish an independent justification. For ourselves we make no quarrel over the matter, believing that not a few will read the present volume who have overlooked other biographies. Sir A. J. Arbuthnot presents a lucid and fluent narrative, and brings into relief the main points in Clive's career on an adequate background of contemporary history. He draws special attention to the extraordinarily brief space—less than twelve years—occupied by Clive in laying the foundations of the British Indian Empire. That single fact marks conclusively the exceptional genius of Clive, both on the military and on the political side. He does not spare Clive's weaknesses, but he is equally removed from intolerant or wholesale condemnation. He finds it "impossible to offer any defence" for the fraud on Omichand. "It was not only morally a crime, but regarded merely from the point of view of political expediency, it was a blunder of a kind which, if it had been copied in after times, would have deprived our Government in India of one of the main sources of its power—the implicit confidence of the Natives in British faith." The inroads upon that confidence in very recent times must deeply affect the author. One readily understands why Sir A. J. Arbuthnot calls it "a discreditable trick which left an indelible stain upon Clive's reputation and upon the British name." That is in the main an abstract judgment; and, undoubtedly, it ought not to be qualified without very cogent reason. Still, when one considers the nature and experience of Clive, the particular circumstances of the moment, and his subsequent open and emphatic adherence to his earlier judgment, one cannot but feel that there is much to be said for Sir John Malcolm's defence; and Sir John Malcolm had as keen a sense of honour as the best of us. Sir A. J. Arbuthnot is much more inclined to extenuate, if not to justify, Clive's acceptance of the large sum of money and the jagír from Mír Jafar. He might very fairly have gone further, were it not that he takes into account principles that had not been yet developed in Clive's time, and that ought in justice to be eliminated from the problem. Clive's own defence seems both manly and sufficient. At the same time Sir Alexander concludes justly that "whatever errors Clive committed in the two transactions above referred to, those errors were nobly redeemed by the energetic onslaught which he made during his second government of Bengal upon the system of oppression, extortion and corruption which then prevailed." Compared with other officials in high places, Clive must be pronounced a marvel of self-restraint and clean hands. His memorable declaration to the Select Committee is amply illuminative:—

> Consider the situation in which the victory of Plassey had placed me. A great prince was dependent on my pleasure; an opulent city lay at my mercy; its richest bankers bid against each other for my smiles; I walked through vaults which were thrown open to me alone, piled on either hand with gold and jewels! Mr. Chairman, at this moment I stand astonished at my own moderation.

The most outstanding suggestion of this history is the immense ability of Clive in contrast with the incompetence of directors and local officials alike. While his hand was on the helm everything prospered with a fulness and certainty that marked the born warrior and statesman. The moment he stood apart the whole business fell into a tangle from which it was felt that he alone could extricate it; and extricate it he did. Fortunately he was succeeded by a man of no less heroic mould, Warren Hastings. Sir A. J. Arbuthnot, we are glad to observe, remarks appreciatively on Clive's brilliant suppression of Sir Robert

[1] "Lord Clive: The Foundation of British Rule in India." By Sir Alexander John Arbuthnot, K.C.S.I., C.I.E. (London: T. Fisher Unwin).

Fletcher's intrigues in the Bengal army, in which he was first brigadier.

Few men in history, placed in circumstances so grave, have acted with a judgment so sound, with a decision so consummate. Not one of Clive's other achievements has surpassed, in the courage which he evinced and in the genius which he displayed, his suppression of this mutiny. Even if it had stood alone it would have marked him as a true leader of men.

It is instructive to note how firmly and continuously Clive insisted on the due subordination of the military to the civil power, and how decisively he laid it down that the safe limits of territorial expansion in the existing conditions had been reached. In connexion with the latter point is his remarkable yet most natural suggestion that the Company's territories should be taken over by the Crown—a suggestion that lay dormant for nearly a century. The greatness of Clive would not have been complete without the final seal of harassment by interested or stupid people at home, in the Press, in the directorate, and in Parliament. Vigilant observation and frank criticism can never be safely left unapplied; but the application should be disassociated from ignorance and malice. Sir A. J. Arbuthnot's useful sketch will do something to make more widely known the great career of the founder of the British Indian Empire—a figure that is, as Elphinstone has fairly put it, "at worst, a rough-hewn Colossus, where the irregularities of the surface are lost in the grandeur of the whole."

OUR LONDON LETTER.

(FROM A PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

SINCE I last wrote the House of Commons has been invited to discuss more than one topic which must have had a deep interest for the thoughtful observer of its proceedings. For instance, I listened with almost painfully close attention to a series of speeches delivered last Wednesday on a measure called the Cottage Homes Bill. The name has quite an idyllic, a sort of Darby and Joan and ingle-nook sound. But the subject discussed was one of the most ghastly which can be considered by public men. It was in short that haunting topic of the pauperism of the old. How often we hear it declared on platforms, and even from pulpits, that this is the greatest and the richest country in the world. Statisticians comfort us with wonderful returns. Political economists dwell upon our exports and imports—and so on and so forth. And while all this self-complacent glorification is going on there is a great haggard crowd—a terribly large proportion of our population—living on the very verge of starvation, and only keeping body and soul together by State or rate relief. I sometimes wonder what these poor wretches think of the perorations of our statesmen about the marvellous contrast between the present day and say a hundred years ago, all about railway development and Free Trade and the fleet, and all the other pet subjects of the optimist.

I have been led into these possibly profitless musings by this Cottage Homes Bill. It was a Bill to try to provide something a little better than the workhouse as the last home of the respectable and aged poor. This will be read I expect chiefly by my fellow-subjects in India. There is poverty, ghastly and grinding poverty in that vast and mysterious dependency, I know. And worse even than the existence of poverty there is the fact that not a little of it is preventable, and is caused by our expensive modes of governing India. But it may interest some of the sufferers from a bad system in the East to know that in this country, in England, the home of so much privilege and the example to all the world, one will be treated better as a criminal than as a pauper. Better break the law than fail to have money in your pocket. Poor Tom Hood, that delicate and democratic wit, told the truth when he said that in this country "those who have nought are naughty." And what, the reader may ask, did the House do for the poor when this Cottage Homes Bill came on? The answer is simple enough—it did nothing! An election is not near, and so members are not so keen on explaining how every one shall have a pension in the good time coming as members are when they are on the hunt for votes. They all saw the desirability of something being done for the respectable aged poor; but—and that "but" came in with fatal persistency. There were three difficulties, not to say impossibilities suggested for every proposal.

I do not propose to enlarge at length upon the Government's proposals with regard to the future government of London. I cannot see why the inhabitants of India need care two straws about whether the local affairs in this huge sprawling place called London are attended to by men called vestrymen, or men called councillors and aldermen. I did not notice that many of the London members showed much interest in the fate of the Calcutta Municipality Bill the other day; and why should the people of Calcutta and similar cities care about London? At the same time the friends of democracy should pull together all the world over; and it may cheer those who are fighting for representative institutions in Calcutta to know that the game of trying to smash the London County Council is "up." Even this Government with a huge majority dare not try it on. And so while this London Government Bill is not without a certain cunning and subtle hostility to the London County Council there is no open and direct attack. The last County Council election settled all that.

On Friday I saw what I am afraid is not often seen in the House of Commons. I mean a man of principle, speaking without regard to the ins and outs of the game of politics, but as I think speaking because of inward conviction. I refer to John Morley's attack on the Sudan expedition. Could anything be less inviting and less popular just now than an attack on that policy? Have not the people and the papers raved about the Sirdar as though he had eclipsed all the great warriors of history? Have they not given him £100,000 for his college at Khartum and are going to give him £30,000 for himself? Have not right hon. gentlemen and Lord Cromer declared to all the world that the Sirdar's "body-snatching" performance and his flinging the mouldering remains of the Mahdi into the Nile were "justified in the circumstances"? And yet John Morley stood up and denounced all this! I was glad to hear him. Our continued occupation of Egypt for an indefinite period is the grossest possible breach of repeated pledges. Our advance to Khartum is an unnecessary addition of almost limitless responsibilities in that part of the world, and it cannot be of the slightest good to us in the end. Yet Mr. Morley's attitude is by no means popular with all the Liberal party, while the Tories take up an attitude of furious hostility to his views. Sir Edward Grey bluntly opposed Mr. Morley in the House of Commons; and I noticed Lord Rosebery looking down on the scene from the Peers' gallery. The position of Lord Rosebery is just now peculiarly interesting. Everyone knows that he wants to come back to the leadership of the Liberal party. Everyone thinks that he means to make an open and deliberate attempt in this direction before long, so that should the Liberals win the next general election he will once more get the Premiership. But I am not sure that the Liberal party will "take him on" again. Somehow or other Liberals do not yearn after a Premier in the Lords; nor do some of us care for a Jingo who is hand and glove with the Rothschilds.

I was thinking of these things when I watched Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman and wondered which way he would go. There was Mr. Morley, who had more or less retired from active co-operation with the Liberal party. On the other hand there was Sir Edward Grey, who represents the Rosebery tradition. Between these two Sir Henry had to make his choice—and he went with Mr. Morley, to my great satisfaction and delight. Of course all the Tory papers and the Roseberyite prints on the Liberal side assailed him and said he had blundered badly, but the very force and venom of their attacks showed that he had done the right thing, by disappointing them.

CHRONICLE OF THE WEEK.

THURSDAY, February 23.—In the House of Commons Mr. Balfour introduced the London Government Bill.

Further details were received in Bombay regarding the recent incident at Muscat. It appeared that for some days the Sultan of Oman, hoping for French aid, persisted in maintaining the treaty ceding a coaling station to France. On February 16 Admiral Douglas warned him that if he did not attend a durbar on board the flagship at 2 p.m. the forts would be bombarded twenty minutes later. The Sultan then gave way, cancelled the treaty, which he handed over to the Admiral, and came off to the flagship. On the following day, at a great durbar in the Palace, the Sultan publicly repudiated the French agreement.

The funeral of the late President Faure took place in Paris.

FRIDAY, February 24.—In the House of Commons, on a Supplementary Vote of £885,000 for the army, Mr. John Morley moved to reduce the vote by £100 in order to call attention to the Government's policy in Egypt and to the circumstances of the Nile expedition. After an important discussion the motion was negatived by 167 votes to 58.

The result of the polling in the Rotherham Division of West Yorkshire was declared. Mr. W. H. Holland (Liberal) was returned, receiving 6,671 votes against 4,714 recorded for Mr. Vernon Wragge (Unionist).

It was stated from Cairo that as the Khalifa had assembled a considerable force of his own tribe, the Baggara, in Kordofan, his present movement towards the Nile was being anxiously watched. There was no intention of meeting him in the desert, but should he advance to the Nile in such strength as would render British troops desirable a contingent would be sent.

SATURDAY, February 25.—Sir E. Grey, M.P., speaking at a dinner of the Eighty and Russell Clubs, at Oxford, said the great majority of Liberals accepted existing obligations, but

they were all against further territorial expansion in Africa. He commented on the great increase in national expenditure during recent years. It was largely due to the outlay on the army and navy, but there were some formidable increases in domestic expenditure, such as that involved in the Agricultural Rates Act. The taxation of land values was a legitimate source for fresh revenue.

Mr. Rudyard Kipling, who had been lying ill of pneumonia for some days in New York, was in a very critical condition.

Baron de Reuter, the founder of the telegraphic news agency which bears his name, died at Nice in his eighty-third year.

Mr. W. Moore (Unionist) was the only candidate nominated to fill the vacancy in the representation of North Antrim caused by the retirement of Major-General McCalmont, and was declared duly elected.

MONDAY, February 27.—In the House of Commons the Foreign Office Vote was discussed, chiefly with reference to Uganda.

Mr. Rudyard Kipling's condition remained very grave. Oxygen was being constantly used to maintain respiration. He passed a bad night on Sunday, but was thought to be a little better this afternoon.

TUESDAY, February 28.—In the House of Commons discussions took place upon piers and harbours, county courts jurisdiction, and the mercantile marine.

Mr. Rudyard Kipling remained in a critical condition. The bulletin issued this afternoon was somewhat less favourable than those earlier in the day. The disease appeared to be advancing upwards, and the lower parts of the lungs, which were first attacked, were not yet available for respiration. The principal hope lay in Mr. Kipling's power of endurance.

WEDNESDAY, March 1.—In the House of Commons Mr. Robson's motion for the second reading of the Education of Children Bill was carried by 317 votes to 59. The object of the Bill is to amend the Elementary Education (School Attendance) Act, 1893, by raising the earliest age at which a child can leave school from 11 years to 12.

Lord Herschell, ex-Lord Chancellor, died this morning in Washington, where he was staying as one of the British representatives on the Anglo-American Commission. He was born in 1837.

Mr. Rudyard Kipling's condition was more hopeful, but the doctors regarded his ultimate recovery as by no means certain.

Mr. Choate, the new United States Ambassador, arrived in London.

The result of the polling at Hythe for the election of a member in succession to Sir J. Bevan Edwards (C.), resigned, was declared. Sir E. A. Sassoon (C.) was returned by a majority of 527 over his Liberal opponent, Sir I. Hart.

The French Senate finally passed the Dreyfus Revision Bill by 158 votes to 131.

THE CALCUTTA MUNICIPAL BILL.

CROWDED MEETING OF OBJECTORS.

SPEECHES BY MR. MOTI LAL GHOSE AND MR. ANANDA CHARLU.

[BY CABLE, FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

CALCUTTA, February 28.

A crowded public meeting to protest against the Calcutta Municipal Bill was held in the Classic Theatre, Calcutta, yesterday.

Mr. Moti Lal Ghose, editor of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, who presided, remarked that the proposed system of paying a fee to members attending Committee meetings was demoralising. He deprecated hired interest in municipal affairs, and contrasted the action of Sir Richard Temple's Government when first introducing the elective system for which the European and Indian communities then earnestly appealed on the failure of the bureaucratic system. Mr. Ghose regretted the departure from the practice of consulting public men before introducing important legislation.

The Hon. Ananda Charlu, member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council, and other speakers expressed concern for the fate of the model municipality, and apprehended a disastrous fate for other municipalities in India if the Legislature accepted the principle of the present Bill.

A resolution was passed protesting against the undue haste of the Select Committee, regardless of public opinion; and a memorial was adopted.—*By Indo-European Telegraph.*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

FAMINES AND OVER-POPULATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF "INDIA."

SIR,—In his lecture on the "Growth of the Empire," on February 14, Sir Robert Giffen said, "there are now more than 300,000,000 of people for whose government we are responsible in India, and of these 73,000,000 have been added, mainly by the ordinary growth of population since 1871."

It would be well if the writers in INDIA, who desire to represent the peoples of India and to instruct them, would ponder on these words. India is an agricultural country and the population must increase, by a well-known law, faster than the means of subsistence unless something is done to prevent it. War, pestilence and famine have now hardly any effect. The Government has, by its system of railways and other measures, rendered them innocuous. But, it is said, the Government is responsible for the famines because the cultivators of the soil are not richer, and it is called upon to reduce the land rent and the taxes, and to extend irrigation. Where the population is too thick and is constantly increasing, the remission of all taxes could have but a temporary effect. Wherever an agricultural population is left without proper checks, there will be famines. There was the famine in Ireland in 1848, comparatively worse than any Indian famine; there have been famines in Russia, in Persia, in China, and there will be famines in India as long as her leaders, her educated men, propose no better cure for the present state of things than they are in the habit of putting before us in your paper.

What are the remedies for over-population? The first is emigration as long as the world has unoccupied lands. Ireland has with difficulty been saved by the emigration of half her people. Russia is learning the lesson, and is making great plans to transfer her redundant population to her own vast, vacant spaces. Italy is sending hundreds of thousands to South America. To apply this remedy to India is difficult, for a few individuals going to crowded places where they are not welcome is useless. If a Government had now the power of the old kings of Babylon, it might be possible to transfer fifty millions of Indians to British East Africa. As it is, the British Government is in the singular position of having a harbour at Mombasa, near India, leading to a vast, empty territory, with a railway 700 miles long, rapidly advancing through it, and which wants nothing but millions of industrious inhabitants to make it one of the finest countries in the world. Perhaps by granting all the land in small plots to natives of India, and helping them to go, they might attract the necessary millions.

There is another way of checking the amazing increase from which India is suffering, and that is the one which has kept France prosperous. The people of France will not emigrate like other European nations, but they also will not go on subdividing their lands until there is not enough for a family to live on. They, therefore, do not marry young, have small families, and the population remains stationary. If the leaders of Native opinion would boldly set their faces against the inhuman practice of child marriages, they might do something to lessen the numbers, and improve the strength and enterprise of the coming generations.—I am, sir, yours, etc.,

E. H. PERCIVAL.

LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION IN MADRAS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "INDIA."

SIR,—The outcome of my six years' controversy with the Madras Government with regard to the defects of the system of land revenue administration in that Presidency having at last been a dispatch from that Government addressed to the Secretary of State for India, dated October 20, 1898, enclosing the report of the Madras Board of Revenue, the Secretary of State has forwarded a copy of that dispatch to me, and intimated that the correspondence as far as his office is concerned must close. The usual channel through which I should

otherwise be able to defend myself against what has in reality degenerated into a personal attack on me and my motives on the part of a subordinate department like the Board of Revenue from a discussion on public grounds of a great public question affecting the interests of many millions of Madras rayats having thus been closed to me, I desire to bring to public notice through your columns an epitome of the whole question in order that it may be examined from a public point of view.

My main arguments on the question have been briefly that there are over 6,000,000 acres of arable assessed land lying waste in the Presidency, notwithstanding the existence of a superabundant agricultural population quite sufficient and willing to take it up; that the reason of this is over or uneven assessment of the land to the public revenue in consequence of the adoption of the impossible system of attempting to arrive at a fair classification of soils by endeavouring in the first place to ascertain the actual gross produce of each field; and in the next place by converting that produce into money according to the average market value of certain staple articles, and by fixing the assessment of the land at one-half of what is supposed to be the net produce, arrived at by deducting a certain proportion on account of the difference between cultivators' and merchants' prices, somewhat more to allow for vicissitudes of season, and again extra on account of cost of production in the shape of agricultural stock, and labour according to an average taken for the whole Presidency, inclusive of considerations of climate and locality with regard to markets; that the result of such over or uneven assessment is that the land revenue is only levied by the aid of numerous evictions, amounting to many thousands annually, of rayats from their lands; the right to cultivate which is put up to sale by auction, often together with the personal property of the defaulters, for the realisation of the revenue, and a large proportion of the land has to be bought in by Government at nominal prices for want of bidders.

In answer to these arguments the Board of Revenue, backed by the Government, commencing by saying that the existence of 6,000,000 acres of waste is a myth, immediately afterwards admit that 4½ out of those six millions are in the tract of country peculiarly liable to deficient rainfall, leaving ample room for the remaining 1½ million in the rest of the Presidency.

The Government not being able to deny the fact that numbers of rayats are evicted annually from their lands, and that a considerable portion of the land from which such evictions take place has to be bought in by Government, say that no inference can be deduced from that fact in the circumstances of the Presidency, because lands so bought in are generally either poor lands experimentally taken up for cultivation by the defaulters, or lands belonging to persons who allow them to be brought to the hammer in consequence of temporary pecuniary embarrassment, which are not taken up in consequence of communal feeling on the part of their fellow villagers. Now the Madras Government can be convicted out of their own mouths of the unreliability of the former of these assertions. They enquired into its correctness several years ago with the result I have already mentioned in the correspondence, viz., that out of a total of 3,087 cases of sale of fields enquired into, only 129 were sold that had been held for a year, and the remaining 2,958 had been held up for longer, those occupied for from six to ten years numbering as many as 2,776. With regard to the argument that a portion of these lands is allowed to go to the hammer in consequence of temporary pecuniary embarrassments, and is not taken up on account of a communal feeling on the part of the other villagers, why should people submit to the cost and annoyance of processes of various kinds being taken out against them when they can avoid them by simply relinquishing the lands? There is no call for the exercise of communal sentiment on their behalf when there is plenty of waste land to be had for the asking. The simple fact is that the rent is a rack-rent, with no margin left for cultivators' profits; otherwise, if the land were worth keeping, they would raise money on it by mortgage and pay the rent.

I have been accused of making too much of the hardship of these evictions, because those evicted have rarely their whole holdings sold, so that they are not deprived of their entire means of subsistence. I sincerely hope such is the case, but in one of the Appendices to the report of the Board of Revenue, I find that while 1,703 fields were sold in holdings sold in parts (that is, I presume, holdings not sold entire), there were yet as many as 1,384 holdings sold entire in portions of six collectorates only.

Now the fairest way to judge of the success of the revenue administration is to see, not to what extent actual cultivation has increased, for in this the element of increase of population, which is not taken into account by the Madras authorities, when they merely adduce the fact that the holdings of the rayats have increased by 3,000,000 acres between 1862 and 1893 (and magnificently leave that fact to tell its own tale!) but to enquire to what extent such increase has been brought about by substantial cultivators. The population of Madras according to the census of 1881 was about 31,280,000, and in 1896-97 had increased to 35,630,440, or about 4,350,000 in fifteen years. Applying this to the thirty-one years alluded to, the increase probably came to some nine millions, so that the actual increase in cultivated area amounted to one-third of an acre per head!

By the returns of 1896-97 I find that there are in the whole Presidency less than 700 holdings (really 690) of over 1,000 rupees, and out of 3,170,094 tenants, that 2,110,600 had holdings of under 10 rupees a year. In 1889-90 there were 428 of the former, and 1,870,694 of the latter, so that in seven years, while substantial tenants have increased by only 272, the comparatively poor ones are more by 285,611. Does this show any remarkable improvement in the condition of the agricultural population of late years?

I have been accused, among numerous other personal amenities, by the Madras Board of Revenue of making statements with regard to which "one (? the Board of Revenue) might almost think that a quotation was being made from a disaffected Native print in which calumny and reckless misstatement were made to do duty for sober truth and reason." The figures I have here quoted are from the Madras Annual Settlement Reports issued by Government, and my character is too well established to be in any way affected by such petulant schoolboyish remarks by a Secretary of the Board of Revenue. I will only adduce one fact in proof of the accuracy of my position with regard to the system of Madras Land Revenue Administration. Mr. Clerk, a Deputy Settlement Officer (or whatever his official designation may have been) was deputed by the Board of Revenue to make a preliminary report on the incidence of the existing rates of assessment in the Kistna and Godavari districts, and to consider how far and in what manner they needed to be revised. In pursuance of this order that officer reported that the original classification of soils was not uniform, and that inequalities discovered in it had been discounted as far as possible by the group assigned to the village: that the grouping of villages for dry-crop assessment had not been made with reference to markets, canals, etc., but solely with reference to the quality of their soils. He accordingly recommended, quite correctly, that the whole of the soils in the delta, wet and dry, should be reclassified, thus proving that what I have alleged against the system is perfectly correct. The rest of the report contains numerous assertions of incompetence, etc., on my part, which are altogether beneath my notice. I have taken every figure from official records, and endeavoured to trace the evictions that annually disgrace the Madras Presidency to their real cause. The conclusions I have drawn from the facts ascertained have been briefly stated above, and are unaffected by the abuse showered on me by the Madras authorities, whom I now challenge to publish the whole correspondence together with an explanatory letter I have forwarded to them, as well as for publication in the *Madras Hindu*.—Yours, etc.,

A. ROGERS.

(*Late Bombay Civil Service.*)

OUTRAGES BY EUROPEAN SOLDIERS UPON INDIANS.

LORD STANLEY'S SPEECH IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

The following is a full report of the proceedings in the House of Lords on February 14 last on an interpellation by Lord Stanley of Alderley regarding outrages by European soldiers upon Indians. (The matter was summarised in INDIA of February 17 last.)

Lord STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: My Lords, I rise to ask her Majesty's Government whether the Indian Government have taken, or intend to take measures to prevent the outrages committed by European soldiers upon the natives of India, such as have recently occurred at Barrackpore and Poonamallee. A great deal was said last summer about disaffection and sedition in India. Mr. Justice Strachey has given a novel and extraordinary definition of disaffection, and a new law has been passed on sedition. I believe that law has not yet been put in force, but events have taken place of worse effect than that which 10 or 20 seditious articles would have produced in the way of exciting disaffection. Every outrage or death caused by soldiers which goes unpunished, or imperfectly punished, must produce a worse effect on the minds of the natives of India who witness these outrages than could be produced by newspaper articles which they for the most part do not and cannot read. At Barrackpore on April 30 last, three soldiers assaulted and killed an old Hindu doctor without any provocation, and were put upon their trial in July last. The trial, from the long report, appears to have been fairly conducted. The judge, the Chief Justice, did his duty well, but the jury brought in a verdict of grievous hurt against all three prisoners. Under these circumstances seven years' rigorous imprisonment was the limit of the sentence the judge was able to pronounce. After that trial General Baker Russell issued an Order to the troops under his command, in view of the recent outrage committed at Barrackpore by three soldiers resulting in the death of a Native gentleman. The Order wish[ed] all general officers and other officers to impress upon their men the cowardliness of striking or otherwise ill-using natives of India and the serious consequences which may result to themselves. This Order, however, was insufficient because the General who issued it would probably retire from his command within five years, and because it applied only to the forces in Bengal. In the Madras Presidency at Poonamallee at the end of July last, another outrage

took place. A soldier named Knight put a cartridge into his carbine and discharged it into the body of a boy who was seated in a cart in which they and some other soldiers were driving. The boy jumped out of the cart, and they drove on without seeking to know whether he lived or died. Another person carried the boy to a doctor who examined him slightly and sent him on to the general hospital, where he died. Knight was tried. It was said in his defence that he had been discussing with another soldier sitting by him how quickly he could load his carbine, and that he had touched the trigger accidentally. The jury found him guilty of a negligent act. The judge, Mr. Justice Boddam, however, blamed the soldiers for leaving the wounded boy by the roadside, and he blamed the doctor for sending on the boy a further distance to the hospital, and he sentenced Knight to nine months' rigorous imprisonment. If the judge had believed that this death was caused by accident only, would he, or could he have passed such a sentence? I can find no mention of this Poonamallee case and trial in either a Bombay or Calcutta paper, all the numbers of which have reached me. This looks as if the editors of those papers were also of opinion that such cases are worse than seditious writing, and had therefore hesitated to comment on the trial. I have been told that the reason why juries bring in such verdicts, relieving soldiers from the consequences of these acts of violence, is the difficulty of proving malice. No doubt this is true. There was no previous malice either in the Barrackpore case or the recent Poonamallee case, nor in the Dum Dum murder case about ten years ago—November 1, 1889. This makes these outrages all the worse, more inexcusable in those who commit them, more offensive to the relatives and countrymen of the victims. The malice is not against the individual, but against the race. The views which soldiers have already acquired with reference to the Natives is given in an English paper, India, in which a soldier says: "As for the darkies, they are like stones under our feet. If they do not do what we want, we pull their turbans off their heads, and turn them upside down." This paper goes on to remark upon the Secretary of State having described the people of India as savages. Let me remind the House of the Dum Dum case and relate its sequel, since I have met with persons usually well acquainted with matters in India who had not heard of the sequel. Four soldiers—three of the Leinster regiment and one of the Buffs—left the Dum Dum barracks one night with service rifles and Government ammunition to shoot pigs. The Buffs soldier expressed his surprise at the others having obtained cartridges. On the way they obtained some toddy more or less forcibly from the people in the huts. Some of them got drunk, and one named O'Hara pulled a sleeping man from out of his verandah, chucked him into a pond, and then shot him. The poor man crawled back to his house and died. O'Hara was arrested and tried by Mr. Justice Norris, and convicted on the evidence of the Buffs soldier, and sentenced to death. But those who from race feelings wished to prevent the sentence being carried out, moved the High Court, and the sentence was quashed on the pretext that he had been convicted on the uncorroborated evidence of an accomplice. The Buffs soldier was not, however, an accomplice, since he had not started with O'Hara on a criminal expedition. Nor had he consented to anything of which the criminal act was a probable consequence. The consequences of not carrying out the sentence passed on O'Hara were that he re-entered the Army, but justice was not done, and encouragement was thereby given to others to follow his bad example. Sometime later O'Hara again got drunk and shot a sergeant and a soldier, and was then hanged, but not until after he had deprived her Majesty's forces of two soldiers, and burdened himself with two more murders. If soldiers other than good conduct men, whom the colonel can unreservedly trust, are allowed to go out shooting, quarrels with the villagers and outrages are certain to arise, since soldiers ignorantly shoot the tame animals belonging to the villagers; or peacocks or monkeys or other animals whose lives are respected by the villagers. After the Dum Dum affair I made notes of all the cases that were mentioned in the Indian newspapers, and at the end of three months five cases had occurred. I mentioned this to the Private Secretary of the Secretary of State, and he said these things often went in cycles. He might have been right, but I was, and still am, more inclined to attribute that interruption of quarrels and accidents to the good influence of the then Secretary of State, and it is a matter for great regret that he did not resume his place when the present Administration was formed. I would suggest that in future outrages, the soldier should be tried by courts-martial with open doors, and not by juries. Juries will always, in such cases, contain men anxious from race feelings to screen the soldiers, and jurors have less feelings of responsibility than officers of a rank to sit on a court-martial. I have heard it objected a few days ago that this would be to discredit trial by jury; but I need not fear that accusation, after having in this House opposed the attempt made against trial by jury in Bengal. The new Viceroy has recently stated that India is the pivot of the British Empire. I said much the same thing, but in different words, about twenty years ago to the noble Marquess at the head of the Government. Whether it is so or not, the well-being of the Empire requires that the people of India should not be alienated by outrages committed by British soldiers, and it is for that reason that I ask the question of which I have given notice.

The Under-Secretary of State for India (The Earl of Onslow): My Lords, the question the noble lord has put on the paper is to enquire whether her Majesty's Government have taken or intend to take measures to prevent the outrages committed by European soldiers upon the natives of India. Your lordships will have heard that the cases the noble lord referred to are not very numerous. Two only occurred in recent years, the Dum Dum case having happened some eight or ten years back. The Government of India have been consulted in this matter and they report that in the opinion of the Commander-in-Chief there is no ground for taking any special measures as regards British troops in India. Cases of this nature are of comparatively rare occurrence, and the ordinary law provides for the punishment of the offenders. The noble lord himself has told your lordships that in the case of the outrage which took place at Barrackpore the jury unanimously found the prisoners guilty of causing grievous harm, and they were sentenced to seven years' rigorous imprisonment each. As regards the Poonamallee case, which the noble lord has been unable to trace in certain papers that he has consulted, I may say that Poonamallee is in the presidency of Madras, and if the noble lord had consulted Madras papers he would have found a full report of the case and of the sentence. I think under these circumstances your lordships will be entitled to agree with me that there is no necessity for taking any exceptional measures for dealing with such cases as these, should they unhappily occur.

Lord Stanley of Alderley: My Lords, I should like to say that the answer of the noble earl is extremely unsatisfactory, and I am sure it will be found so in India.

Imperial Parliament.

Thursday, February 23.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

STAFF CORPS OFFICERS.

East India (Staff Corps Officers),—On the motion of Sir Seymour King a return was granted for "Copies of Correspondence to date relating to the recommendations made by the Government of India in order to prevent the supersession of Staff Corps Officers by those in the Line (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 472, of Session 2 of 1895)."

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

East India (Income and Expenditure),—On the motion of Sir Henry Fowler an address was granted for "Return of the Net Income and Expenditure of British India, under certain specified heads, for the eleven years from 1887-8 1897-8."

THE MUSCAT INCIDENT.

With reference to the question reported in our issue of last week, the following supplementary questions were asked:—

Mr. Labouchere: Will the noble lord say whether this obligation not to alienate territory is by treaty?

Lord G. Hamilton: The arrangements alluded to between the Indian Government and the Sultan of Muscat was arrived at some time back.

Mr. Warner: Can the noble lord say whether there is any record kept of this arrangement?

Lord G. Hamilton: Yes, there is a record.

Mr. Gibson Bowles: May I ask whether it was made by order of the Indian Government?

Lord G. Hamilton: Her Majesty's Government and the Government of India have been in constant communication, but there is not complete telegraphic communication between Bombay and Muscat.

ENTERIC FEVER AMONG EUROPEANS.

General Russell asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he could state the result of the investigations which on May 5, 1898, he stated were then proceeding relative to the causes of the great increase of enteric fever among Europeans living in India:

Whether he could state the number of cases that occurred in the years 1897 and 1898, and how many ended fatally; or if he had any objection to a return being made furnishing these particulars:

And, whether it was true that inoculation had been widely introduced as a preventive against the disease.

Lord G. Hamilton: I am unable at present to add anything material to the information which I gave my hon. and gallant friend on May 5 last, on the subject of enteric fever in India. The matter continues to engage the attention of the military and medical authorities. Inoculation has not, however, been adopted as a preventive.

The number of cases of, and deaths from, enteric fever among the troops in India for 1897 will be shown in the Report of the Army Medical Department for that year, which may be expected shortly; the figures for 1898 will not be available for some time to come.

THE ANNUITIES OF RETIRED CIVILIANS.

Sir Seymour King asked the Secretary of State for India whether he had under consideration the expediency of extending to retired officers of the Civil Service in India the privileges enjoyed by military officers of commuting a portion of their annuities:

And whether, since in the case of covenanted civilians a portion of their annuities had been provided by deductions from their pay while in service, there was any objection in principle to allowing members of the Civil Service to commute such proportion of their annuities as had thus been provided.

Lord G. Hamilton: It has been held that, as a portion of the annuity of a Covenanted Civil Servant is provided by deductions from his pay while in the service, the recognition of a legal assignment of such an annuity cannot be refused; and, consequently, there is the less reason in his case for allowing commutation, which, as stated in a Treasury circular of 1882, "exposes the State to the frustration of its policy for securing a life-long provision for its servants." It is, therefore, opposed to the public interest and I cannot hold out any hope of departing from the previous practice of the India Office.

INDIA AND THE PASTEUR INSTITUTE.

Sir William Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India, if he would explain what were the circumstances under which nine English soldiers were sent, on October 8 last, from Bombay to the Pasteur Institute at Paris, to be treated for hydrophobia; what was the evidence in the possession of the Government showing that the dogs which had bitten these men were rabid; under what official supervision these men were sent; and whether it was true, as stated by the Director of the Paris Institute, that these nine men arrived in Paris without any credentials or anything showing when or where they had been bitten.

Lord G. Hamilton: I am aware that nine soldiers were sent from India, early in October, to be treated in Paris for hydrophobia; but

I have no information as to the circumstances. Such cases occur not unfrequently; and on this occasion the usual arrangements were made for their journey from Marseilles to Paris, and for their accommodation while under treatment. I have received no complaint or representation on the subject from the Director of the Paris Institute, and I should have thought that the men themselves could have been capable of explaining to the authorities of the Institute when and where they had been bitten.

Friday, February 24.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE MUSCAT INCIDENT.

Lord REAY, who had a notice on the paper to ask the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he was able to give any information with regard to the difficulties which had arisen from recent acts of the Seyd of Oman, said that when he put the question on the paper he was not aware that a statement was to be made yesterday in another place. He begged, therefore, to ask the noble lord whether he had any additional information to that which was given in that statement.

The Earl of ONSLOW: I have very little to add to the statement made by the Secretary of State in the House of Commons yesterday, because the Government have received very little additional information since then, but I have no reason to suppose that the telegrams which have appeared in the morning papers are otherwise than correct. The noble lord is no doubt aware that the Sultan of Oman has been under obligations to the Indian Government for a considerable number of years. The Government of India undertook to pay the Sultan the subsidy of 40,000 crowns a year which had been paid to his predecessor, on condition that he was faithful to his treaty engagements and manifested his friendship towards the British Government. The French and British Governments engaged reciprocally in 1862 to respect the independence of the Sultan of Muscat, and her Majesty's Government have never departed from that agreement. They obtained in 1891 an engagement from the Sultan, which placed him under a special obligation as to the assignment and alienation of his territory. Notwithstanding his obligation the Sultan lately admitted that he proposed to cede to the French Government a port called Bunder Jisseh, five miles south-east of Muscat, a harbour capable of being made a strong naval port, but where at present there are no coolies, or facilities for storing or moving coal. On hearing of this by accident, for the transaction had been concealed from him, the British agent was directed to protest against the execution of an agreement which would have been contrary to treaty. At the same time the Sultan's attention was drawn to other claims which the Government of India had upon him, and his Highness after some delay has complied with all demands. The demands included one that the Sultan should cease from levying duties upon British subjects at a different rate to that imposed on his own subjects. This was felt to be a matter of some importance by the Government of India, inasmuch as nearly all the trade to Muscat was carried on with India. It has been said that the British Government has already got a coaling station at Muscat; but that is not the fact. What has happened is this. More than 20 years ago the Sultan of Muscat gave permission within his own capital, the town of Muscat, that certain coal sheds should be made for the purpose of coaling her Majesty's ships and mercantile ships, but it is not correct to say we have any coaling station, in the proper sense of the term, either at Muscat or on the Oman coast. That is the only explanation I can give the noble lord of the transactions that have taken place there, but I am not in a position to say that what has appeared in the papers is otherwise than true.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

EDUCATION IN INDIA.

East India (Education),—Copy presented—of Progress of Education in India, 1892-3 to 1896-7; Third Quinquennial Review by J. S. Cotton, M.A. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

INDIAN PARCEL POST.

Mr. BILL asked the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, whether it was the case that the postal regulations of India did not allow the contents of any parcel sent by parcel post to exceed £50 in value; and, if that was so, whether, as that regulation conflicted with paragraph 41 of the English regulations for the Foreign and Colonial parcel post contained in the Postal Guide, the Post Office would, in the interests of trade between the two countries, undertake the transmission and insurance of parcels of far greater value.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS, on behalf of the Secretary to the Treasury, said: Until the beginning of this year it was the case that the regulations of the parcel post with India prohibited the transmission of any parcel above £50 in value. But on January 1 last, the Imperial and Indian Post Offices undertook the insurance of parcels in both directions up to a limit of £120.

INDIA IN THE SUDAN DEBATE.

THE "FORWARD" POLICY.

Mr. JOHN MORLEY, in the course of his speech on the Government's policy in the Sudan, said:—I ask, with the experience of India before you, do you suppose for one moment that you will be able to keep your dominions as if they were enclosed in a ring fence? We have all been reading within the last few days about the movements of the Khalifa. You will see that circumstances will make it almost quite impossible for you to remain within your ring fence. It is no secret that there are powerful men in more than one quarter who announce that they would like to go south of Khartum. (Ministerial cheers.) It is no secret that there are some who would go as far as Uganda. (Ministerial cheers and cries of "To Cape Town." Yes, that is excellent! I notice the Chancellor of the Exchequer does not cheer and barely smiles. If you suffer a good deal from a forward party in India, do you suppose that you are not going to have a forward party in Africa? You have it now. (Cheers.) I should like to remind those gentlemen who are looking forward with such enthusiasm to going to Uganda, and to carrying the Queen's dominions there, that we shall be responsible for the administration of Uganda. They say "If we have done well in India why should we not do equally well in Africa?" (Ministerial cheers.) Those cheers show how necessary it is for even responsible politicians to discriminate. I would like to point out three distinct differences between India and this new empire that you propose to set up at the Equator. You have not a strong natural frontier as India has. I do not quite know whether we shall be told what the Government reckon their frontier to be, but I will undertake to say it is not a strong natural frontier such as India possesses. You have not, in the second place, a comparatively civilised and settled population, but you have vast hordes of savages, and, thirdly, your dominion would be coterminous at point after point with Powers who may or may not be your friends. You will have the most difficult of tasks in keeping the peace on your boundaries and frontiers, and everybody who gives the slightest consideration to it will perceive that the conditions under which the Government of India subsists and carries on its beneficent work are not one of them realised in the case of the new India you are going to set up at the Equator. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. BRODERICK in the course of his reply said: The right hon. gentleman spoke rather strongly about the establishment under the British Government of despotic rule. He delivered one of those sentences with regard to free institutions which come very glibly from lips so eloquent as his. But I was wondering why, a few moments before, he had made a comparison between the Soudan and India. For, if there ever was an instance of a country which has gained enormously during the time that we have occupied it by despotic rule, that country is India. (Cheers.) And why should we assume that the rule which has been so good for India and which has given to her a prosperity such as no other Asiatic territory has enjoyed, is to be so subversive of all our free institutions and best hopes in Africa? (Cheers.) What is good for the one is good for the other; and having regained this country, I do not think we ought, because the inhabitants are not fit for free institutions, to be too squeamish about putting them under despotic rule. (Cheers.)

Mr. MORLEY: I never pretended that you ought to set up free institutions forthwith. But I argued that the effect of extending despotic rule was not good for the rulers. (Cheers.)

Mr. BRODERICK: Are we at this hour of the 19th century—we, who for 150 years have been bearing the burden of despotic rule over 250 millions in India—(cheers)—are we to shrink from governing four or five millions of Arabs because it would be by despotic rule? (Cheers.) I submit to the Committee that we have nothing to apologise for—(cheers)—and that we have nothing to explain away. (Renewed cheers.)

Mr. COURTNEY said in the course of his speech: To go on to the question of what is the interest of England, it is said that we are going to establish a vast India in Africa. As my right hon. friend observed, the fascination of this picture of another India is considerable. You have not in India, as my right hon. friend the Under-Secretary said in a burst of rhetoric, been for 150 years ruling 250 millions; but still there is a great fascination in the Government of India. What, however, are the three things which, as my right hon. friend opposite said, distinguish the position of India? In the first place, it is surrounded by natural boundaries; in the next place, you have got a large settled, industrious, organised, and civilised population; and in that country also you have no foreign difficulties. Are any of those three conditions satisfied in the Sudan? The people have not the same civilisation, they have not risen to the same height, there is a very deficient agricultural population, and you would get but the smallest possible return in what are called Sudanese goods, which have no real commercial value. . . . You talk of making another India, and of making it without the conditions which prevail in India. In India itself you have an army which is not a small one; you are bound to maintain there about one-third of your English army. You cannot rest secure if you are going to maintain such a position in the Sudan without having there about the same proportion of your army, and in cases of difficulty you may have to have a larger proportion. You would, therefore, compel yourself to lock up your army when you may want all your energy, all your power, all your resources to maintain what is absolutely necessary to you elsewhere. (Hear, hear.) That is not to the interest of this country. I, for my part, am impenitent in my opinion as to the impolicy of this expedition.

Monday, February 27.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE CARABINEERS.

Major RASCH asked the Under-Secretary of State for War, whether it was proposed to send the Carabineers to India in the trooping season of 1899:

And, if he could explain why this regiment, which only returned from India in 1888, should be detailed for Foreign service before the 15th, 14th, 13th, 10th Regiments of Hussars, and 12th Lancers, which corps all returned from India previous to 1888.

Mr. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The Carabineers will go to India in the trooping season of 1900. Their position on the foreign service roster was advanced four years in order to obtain as soon as possible a due proportion of the number of dragoon regiments abroad to that at home. The regiment when it goes abroad will have been twelve years at home.

THE EMPLOYMENT OF LASCARS.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON asked the President of the Board of Trade, if he was now in a position to state the number of Lascars employed

as sailors, firemen, and coal trimmers on board the P. and O. steamship "Australia," which was due to sail on the 23rd instant:

Whether he could state how many cubic feet of space was provided for each Lascar in the forecastle of that vessel:

Whether the said vessel was a British ship registered in the United Kingdom:

Whether the crew of this vessel had allotted to them the cubic accommodation as provided by The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894:

And, whether he could state if the forecastle of this vessel had been inspected by Board of Trade officials during the time she had been in dock.

Mr. RITCHIE: I am informed that the number of Lascar sailors, firemen, and coal trimmers carried by the P. and O. steamer "Australia" this voyage is 148, with possibly the addition of a boy or two. The Lascars are berthed in the poop aft. On the starboard side the space available per man is sixty-six cubic feet, and on the port side sixty-four cubic feet. The "Australia" is a British ship registered at Greenock, and the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, requires that "every place occupied by seamen shall have for each seaman a space of not less than seventy-two cubic feet and not less than twelve superficial feet." The vessel has been inspected by the Board of Trade officials during the time she has been in dock, with the result I have stated, but I wish to add that the P. and O. Company contend that the "Australia" comes, not under the Imperial, but under the Indian Merchant Shipping Act. This point will be carefully enquired into, but I think it right to add that were the "Australia" carrying a European crew—in accordance with the complement usual to vessels of her size and character—the crew space allotted throughout the vessel would be in excess of the statutory requirements.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON asked whether section 210 of the Merchant Shipping Act did not provide that each seaman should have seventy-two cubic feet of space; that where the law was not complied with a penalty of £20 for each offence was enjoined; and whether the President of the Board of Trade intended to enforce the law against this wealthy company?

Mr. RITCHIE: No doubt the hon. gentleman has quoted the law correctly, but I am advised by my advisers that no obligation rests upon the Board of Trade to prosecute in the particular cases referred to by the hon. gentleman. However, the matter is now the subject of negotiations between the Board of Trade and the P. and O. Company. Of course, it may be held that the law applies to Lascars as well as Europeans; but so far as the merits of the case are concerned every hon. member must know that Lascars are in a very different position to Europeans—(Opposition cries of "Oh")—and though sixty-four feet may not be within the level of the law sixty-four feet for a Lascar is certainly not less than seventy-two feet for a European. (Laughter.)

Mr. MACNEILL: Is the right hon. gentleman aware that one of the members of the present Administration is a director of the P. and O. Company—Lord Selborne? (Hear, hear.)

The SPEAKER: Order, order. That does not arise out of the question. The question on the paper has been fully answered.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON: I wish to ask the right hon. gentleman whether he thinks the Lascars should not have——

The SPEAKER: Order, order. The hon. member is now arguing on matters of opinion.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON: I will put this question down again to-morrow. (Laughter.)

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I think this question does arise, sir. I wish to ask the right hon. gentleman whether he has received, or whether any complaints have been made by the Lascars in reference to these matters?

Mr. RITCHIE: I have not only not received any complaints, but I have no reason whatever to think that they are dissatisfied.

Tuesday, February 28.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

REPORTED DEATH OF THE AMIR.

Sir ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Secretary of State for India, whether there was any foundation for the reports now current regarding the death of the Amir of Afghanistan.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I have heard from the Viceroy that there is absolutely no confirmation of the reports referred to in the hon. member's question.

Thursday, March 2.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PETITION.

East India (Contagious Diseases),—Petition from Plumstead, against State regulation; to lie upon the Table.

THE NEW BISHOP OF MADRAS.

Mr. SAMUEL SMITH asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he was responsible for advising her Majesty to appoint the Rev. Henry Whitehead to the Bishopric of Madras, which had been previously filled by an Evangelical:

Whether he was aware that the Rev. Henry Whitehead was not only a member of the English Church Union, but was the Superior of the Oxford Mission at Calcutta, whose official anniversary sermon was preached by the Bishop of Lincoln at St. Mary Magdalene's on Epiphany Tide at a service announced in the parish magazine as High Mass, and at which banners, crucifixes, sacrificial vestments, multiplied lights, incense, sacring bells, and elevation were included, and above all there were no communicants:

Whether he was aware that, at the college chapel presided over by Mr. Whitehead, according to the "Tourists' Church Guide" published by the English Church Union, vestments, altar lights, incense, and other illegalities were practised:

And, whether this appointment might be taken as an indication of the ecclesiastical policy of her Majesty's Government.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I am responsible for advising as to the appointment recently made to the Bishopric of Madras.

I am aware that Mr. Whitehead has of late held the official position of Chaplain to the Bishop of Calcutta and Principal of the Bishop's College, Calcutta; and he has also voluntarily undertaken the work of Superior of the Oxford Mission in that city. As to the details of services held in this country in connexion with the Oxford Mission I have no information, nor can I understand why the Bishop Designate who has been working continuously for the last 15 years in India should be held responsible for them. The ritual practised in the chapel of the Bishop's College at Calcutta has been and is such as is approved by the Bishop for the time being. The honourable member must be aware that the interpretation of the law on this subject is a matter of much difficulty, but I am in a position to state that the Bishop Designate regards it as a duty not to go beyond the limits laid down in the Prayer Book, and that he is prepared to tender all due reverence and obedience to the Metropolitan.

I may add that men of all phases of religious opinion speak in the highest terms of Mr. Whitehead's ministrations in India, and agree that by his intellectual attainments, daily life and devotion to duty, he has, wherever he has laboured, made Christianity a living and speaking reality. The honourable gentleman asks me if from this one appointment a general indication may be obtained of the ecclesiastical policy of the Government.

The honourable gentleman must know that any generalisation from a solitary appointment must be invidious and misleading; but if he is disposed to indulge in such conjectures I think it would be more appropriate for him to take as his illustration the appointment of Dr. Welldon to the Bishopric of Calcutta, in which capacity, as Metropolitan of India, he is, and will continue to be, Mr. Whitehead's ecclesiastical superior.

RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION.

Mr. PRICE asked the Secretary of State for India, whether there was available any list or statement showing the Indian railway extensions already sanctioned, with the localities, aggregate mileage, and estimated cost of such extensions:

Whether a statement could be made at an early date of such further railway projects as were likely to be included in the forecasts for the financial year, with an estimate of the capital outlay thereon:

And, whether lists and estimates could also be given of the chief projects in hand and under consideration for water storage and irrigation in the different presidencies.

Lord G. HAMILTON: At page 88 *et seq.* of the Administration Report for 1897-8, which has been laid before Parliament, will be found a statement of the capital expenditure on the various railways to December 31, 1897, and at page 98 *et seq.* of the Financial Statement for 1898-9 the proposed grants for extension in subsequent years.

It is probable that the Financial Statement which will be made on March 20, and which will be subsequently laid before Parliament, will include the programme of further railway projects and irrigation works on which money will be spent in the coming year.

With regard to irrigation works, I may also refer the hon. member to page 12 of the appendix to the Explanatory Memorandum presented by me last year. There is in addition a short and compact statement showing on one sheet the length, estimated cost, expenditure for the year, and liability outstanding at end of year of each railway under construction or proposed. I will show this to the hon. gentleman, and if he wishes it, I will make it an annual Parliamentary return.

THE FORTHCOMING BUDGET.

WHAT IS TO BE DONE WITH THE "SURPLUS"?

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN asked the Secretary of State for India, whether, seeing that a large surplus was anticipated in the forthcoming Indian Budget, the provincial governments would have returned to them the balances they had to surrender to the supreme Government under financial pressure in former years:

Would the Salt Tax be reduced to the rate current in 1884-5:

And could some reduction in Import Duties imposed under the plea of financial pressure be granted.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The Indian Financial Statement will be made on the 20th of this month. The hon. member must, I think, be aware that I cannot anticipate it, as I should do if I were to answer his questions.

INDIANS AND COMMISSIONS IN THE ARMY.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN asked the Secretary of State for India, whether proposals were before Government regarding the permanent increase in the number of commissioned officers with Native regiments of the Indian army; and, if so, whether due consideration would be given to the claim of Indians to a share of those commissions.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The question of the advisability of increasing the number of British commissioned officers with Native regiments was considered some little time ago, but it was not thought necessary to take any action. No suggestion, however, was made that the regimental establishment of Native commissioned officers required strengthening.

PUBLIC MEETINGS ON INDIAN QUESTIONS.

THE WORK OF THE BRITISH COMMITTEE.

Tuesday, March 14, has been fixed as the date of Sir W. Wedderburn's address to the "Liberal Forwards" on "India in Parliament."

A lecturer on behalf of the British Committee is addressing two meetings in the Elland division this week (March 2 and 3), where a bye-election is in progress.

A lecturer on behalf of the British Committee will be present at the annual meetings of the National Liberal Federation at Hull. Arrangements have been made for the distribution of "literature" on Indian questions, including Mr. Ghose's pamphlet on the Calcutta Municipal Bill.

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