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NOTES AND NEWS.

OUR optimists in London are quite equal to the task of being cheerful about a famine Budget in India. "The financial history of the year," says the Viceroy in the telegram which we print elsewhere, "is overshadowed by the famine." The skill of the Finance Minister is, it is true, able to estimate on paper a "probable surplus" of £160,000. But against this we have to set fresh temporary debt of £500,000 and a rupee loan of three crores which is "estimated to be necessary in India for ways and means." The *Standard* speaks of "the evidence afforded of the marvellous recuperative power of the vast dependency," and the *Times* once more thinks the Indian revenue shows "a remarkable and most gratifying elasticity." Let us hope it may gratify the sufferers on relief works. This sort of formula is so invariably employed by English critics of Anglo-Indian finance that it might well be done with a rubber stamp. We discuss elsewhere some of the chief questions which the new Budget suggests.

Week by week the *Times of India* which, to say the least, can gain nothing by exaggerating the extent of the famine gives a more gloomy account of the situation. In its issue of March 3, it declares that "it is impossible to extract any satisfaction from the famine summary published in the *Gazette*." Everywhere there was an increase in the numbers on relief; in Bombay the rise in the numbers for the preceding week amounted to eighty-two thousand; and in Madras, which at one time it was hoped would escape, more relief works were "almost inevitable." And we are told that "the prospects of any relaxation of the strain, until the advent of the seasonal rains, are infinitesimal." Such was the position as seen by Anglo-Indian eyes more than a fortnight ago, and it has certainly not improved in the interval.

The *Civil and Military Gazette* believes that the authorities have a scheme on hand by which some at least of the cattle in Rajputana and Central India may be saved. Thousands of cattle have already starved to death or have been slaughtered for their hides to prevent a worse fate overtaking them. It is now proposed that the Government should buy the best of the surviving cattle, feed them till the monsoon breaks and then sell them to the cultivators under the provisions of the Agricultural Loans Act. Considering the permanent ruin that will fall on the agriculture of the country if the cattle are not saved, one may hope that some scheme of the kind will be adopted; but the difficulty lies in the provision of forage. In Rajputana there is none save very inferior grass imported by rail and costing Rs. 1·8 a maund.

While the local Governments are with one hand providing relief for the starving, they are on the other refusing suspensions and remissions of land revenue. In defiance of Famine Codes, of popular appeals, and even of the recommendations of some of their own collectors, they continue, according to the *Mahratta*, to demand the uttermost pie of rent. The last Famine Commission reported that under such circumstances as are now present, "the great majority of the land-owners will not have sufficient means both to pay the revenue and to provide for their own support," and they suggested immediate suspension of the recovery of rent pending enquiry. There is now an even worse famine than that on which the Commission reported; but it seems as if no suspension of rent is to be granted.

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The public breakfast at Cannon Street Hotel (March 20) evoked a cordially sympathetic interest in the Indian famine. Arranged as it was under the auspices of various missionary societies, the missionary element seemed at times to throw the speakers out of perspective, although it is to be carefully noted that there was no idea of proselytism. The Rev. D. Osborne from Poona gave a harrowing picture of scenes he had himself witnessed. The first resolution, moved by the Rev. G. B. Durrant, secretary to the Church Missionary Society, and seconded by the Rev. R. Wardlaw Thompson, secretary to the London Missionary Society, ran thus:—

That this meeting deeply deplores the calamitous famine now prevailing in India, which, according to the latest estimate, involves an area of 450,000 square miles and a population of 81½ millions, about five millions of whom are now in actual receipt of relief. This meeting recognises in this unprecedented emergency an urgent call upon the British people for generous help for the sufferers, such help being most urgently needed—as the Viceroy himself has convincingly shown in his powerful and touching appeal at Calcutta for contributions—not to relieve the Government of India of its due burden, but to relieve suffering beyond that which could be aided by the State.

Mr. Durrant read from a letter to his Society describing in lamentable terms the dire distress among the Bhils of Rajputana, a sample of the reports brought by every mail. Mr. Wardlaw Thompson intimated how seriously the rise of prices is being felt in regions hundreds of miles away from the recognised famine area; and he did good service by urging the need of remembering our responsibility, not merely at a period of famine, but at all times.

The emphatic opinion that famine is not only remediable but preventable was generally expressed, and special attention was concentrated upon one measure of prevention—canals for irrigation and navigation. The second resolution, proposed by Mr. Robert Scott (in place of General Haig, R.E., who distinguished himself under Sir Arthur Cotton on the great irrigation works in Madras Presidency), and seconded by Mr. T. A. Denny, the hon. sec. of a movement for the prevention of famines by irrigation and navigable waterways in 1897, was in the following terms:

That, in view of the liability of the people of India to the calamity of Famine, as shown by the eight famines which have afflicted portions of our Indian Empire during the reign of her Majesty the Queen, but more particularly by the famine of 1876-7, when, it is estimated five millions perished; by the famine of 1897, when 4,500,000 persons were in receipt of relief; and now by a famine still more appalling in its extent and severity, this meeting is of opinion that for the prevention of such awful disasters, it is of the utmost importance that not only should canals for irrigation and navigation be constructed in connexion with all the great rivers and their tributaries yet uncanalised, but at the same time due provision be made for the storage of water as a reserve for times of drought; experience having proved that where such works have been executed, not only have the people been saved from famine, but a condition of prosperity has been secured, which without irrigation would not have been possible.

Mr. Scott sounded the praises of Sir Arthur Cotton with refreshing energy. But everybody is agreed as to the value of canals when constructed and managed judiciously; the painful weakness of the case presented lay in this, that no attempt was made to explain how far canalisation could be made to affect the particular populations now in the grip of famine. Nor did a single speaker so much as mention the over-assessment of the rayat, or any other means of relieving him excepting by the vague general idea of more canals. Pity that so much good intention should not have been guided by fuller knowledge and clearer judgment.

The questions raised by the Madras Water Cess Bill are ably discussed by the Hon. G. Venkataraman in the current (February) number of the *Madras Review*. The irrigation works were undertaken primarily as measures of mitigation or immunity against famine, not for commercial profit; and the system of charging for canal water is, throughout India, one of voluntary sale. The main changes now proposed are:—

1. That Government be empowered, with effect from July 1, 1898,

to charge for irrigation by percolation or drainage, wherever it is, in the opinion of the Collector, beneficial to and sufficient for the requirements of the crop; and

That the Civil Courts be divested of jurisdiction to question any assessment made by the Collector under the Act.

That is to say, the Government wants to make the water rate, if not directly, at any rate indirectly, compulsory, and to enforce the judgment, wise or foolish, reasonable or oppressive, of the Collector, without the possibility of appeal to the ordinary courts. The whole project is thoroughly wrongheaded, and is certain, if carried out, to work injustice.

In Northern India a charge for percolation was maintained on rules framed under the Punjab Irrigation Act VII of 1845, and under the superseding Act XXX of 1871. But on the amendment Bill of 1873 Sir George Campbell, then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, made strenuous opposition, which proved successful; and neither the Northern India Canal and Drainage Act of 1873 nor the Bengal Irrigation Act of 1876 sanctions the levy of water-rates except for the use of water directly supplied and utilised. Mr. Venkataratnam says:—

Surely there is nothing peculiar in the circumstances of this Presidency which renders charge for percolation less objectionable. It is said that what is now proposed is merely to invest a uniform revenue custom with legal form. I am aware of no such custom. It has received no judicial recognition. It is opposed to the terms of the despatches of the Secretary of State of 1853, 1870, and 1873. It is opposed to the distinct understanding on which his Excellency the Governor-General accorded his assent to the enactment of the Water Cess Act of 1855. It is admittedly abandoned in 1889, and Government did not then think fit to ask for legislative sanction.

The simple fact is that the Government wants more revenue, and is not ashamed to squeeze the rayats through protective works. It imagines that its revenue is threatened by the decisions of the courts. On this point Mr. Venkataratnam says:—

The interpretation put upon the Act by the courts is entirely in accord not only with the intentions of the framers of the Act, but also with justice, equity, and good conscience. What is now proposed is not to remove any uncertainty of law caused by judicial interpretation, but practically to reverse the policy which underlies the beneficent legislation of 1865.

The sting of the Bill lies in this attempted exclusion of the courts. This very attempt ought to be enough to put a summary end to the whole of the insolent and oppressive project.

A short time back we quoted the remarks of Sir James Lyall's Commission on "a lower section of the community" including "the great class of day labourers and the least skilled of the artisans"—a "very large" section. The Commissioners said:—

The wages of these people have not risen in the last twenty years in due proportion to the rise in prices of their necessities of life. . . . Far from contracting, it seems to be gradually widening, particularly in the more congested districts. Its sensitiveness or liability to subside, instead of diminishing, is possibly becoming more accentuated, as larger and more powerful forces supervene and make their effects felt where formerly the result was determined by purely local conditions.

What are the Commissioners driving at in the last two sentences? The *Indian Spectator* (Feb. 25) gives a clue. It says:—

The destruction of the peasantry has been going on apace under British rule. Money-lenders and the professional classes have dispossessed the hereditary class of peasant holders of their land, and turned them into day labourers on the soil which was theirs. These men are generally absentee landlords, carrying on their profession or trade in towns, and paying Government revenue out of the profits of such trade or profession. . . . The dispossessed peasantry is on the verge of despair, and would, we believe, welcome any chance that came itself, to change their lot without much thought as to what the change might bring.

"Government," the *Indian Spectator* acknowledges, "have been legislating with the best of intentions, but," it adds deliberately and emphatically, "in the view of competent men, recent land-legislation has had more the effect of securing Government revenue than of ameliorating the lot of the rayats."

The special correspondent of the *Standard* at Simla, writing on February 28, indicates how the Viceroyal circular is operating.

Numbers of people not absolutely feeling the pinch of acute want—that is, people who have means, however slight, of their own—have, by order of the central Government, been turned off relief works.

The duty of the Government is to save people from dying of actual starvation—that and no more. . . .

It is obvious enough that the responsibility of turning away "a very considerable number of such people" is

tolerably serious, and that bad mistakes may be more easily made than remedied. In the Punjab, about Rajputana, lawlessness is spreading and causing anxiety.—

The *bunkias* and moneylending class generally are the authors in this campaign of outrage. Many such have been "held up," beaten or left for dead, while their books and bonds have been destroyed, and such valuables as were found on their premises made away with.

In the Deccan riots the same feature was prominent, and enquiry showed that the main purpose of the rioters was to destroy the evidence of their indebtedness. The money-lenders are aware of the Punjab Land Alienation Bill, too, and are refusing to lend money as of yore. In Rajputana, the mortality of cattle is so great that "it is feared none will be left." We hear nothing of the mortality of men as in previous famines.

But already sufficiently terrible accounts are forthcoming. Famine-stricken people are selling and deserting their children, who are found wandering about in an almost dying condition—living skeletons. One mother buried her year-old child alive, as she had no food to give it, and could not see it starve. Similar stories come from various parts of India.

The Government organisation, though improved, is "very far from being perfect." "One Englishman has to look after an enormous district with a population of hundreds of thousands."

Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji has duly forwarded to Lord Salisbury "Prime Minister to Her Imperial Majesty the Empress of India," the resolutions relative to the famine and the pecuniary drain of Indian resources, which were passed at the recent Conference of Indians at the Westminster Town Hall (March 1.) His covering letter we print in another column. Mr. Dadabhai, it will be seen, summarises cogently the main points of the substantive resolution. He at the same time grounds upon Lord Salisbury's "clear and thorough insight" into the causes of all India's "terrible amount of misery," his previous official action, and his "keen sense of justice and humanity," a strong personal appeal for such a course of policy as shall realise "the wishes of our gracious Sovereign"; "in their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward." No doubt Lord Salisbury has his hands pretty full at the present moment, but that is no reason why he should not speak a word in season to his Lieutenant at the India Office. It would save a vast deal of avoidable friction at a time, and in circumstances, when friction is the worst of policy. More than that: it would have a high positive value.

Professor Murison, who will to-night deliver an address on India to the members of the Fabian Society, had an admirable article in the *Morning Herald* of Wednesday last upon "The Prevention of Famine." "Surely," as he says, "it is more than time that the question of famine in India should be grappled with on fundamental principles." The conclusion of his article was as follows:—

It has got to be realised in Britain that it is on the backs of the hungry and debt-oppressed rayats that the British Indian Empire rests. Are we, then, satisfied with the stability of the foundation? The Government of India draws from the rayats in land revenue much the largest element of its annual income. Under what grievous conditions the land of Mr. Romesh Dutt to the Indian National Congress, and in more detail with respect to the Central Provinces and Madras in his two letters addressed to Lord Curzon. The only possible solution of the problem is to deal with the rayat in a more considerate spirit, so as to leave him enough margin to accumulate these stores of grain that he used to accumulate, and is so anxious to secure, in order to tide him over a scarcity or a famine. It is the eternal financial difficulty. But the rayat is now at the end of his resources, and the Government must restrict its expenditure and relax the oppressive land revenue. Otherwise more famines, and—what of the British Indian rule?

This is, we believe, the fifth article upon India which Dr. Murison has written in the *Morning Herald*. We should be glad to see an Indian article, from so sound an authority, become a regular feature in this enterprising journal.

Lord Curzon sees hope for India in an ever increasing importation of British capital. Mr. R. H. Elliot in the *Madras Mail* goes a step further and proposes, in order to insure the position of British capitalists in India, that there shall be a bounty on exports, so that the Indian planters may compete with their rivals in other silver-using countries. To relieve the pressure of the Home Charges, rendered insupportable by the fall of exchange, a gold standard is set up; this puts the planters at a disadvantage compared with the producers of other countries; and the remedy is to be found in a bounty on exportation, in other words in taxation which is bound to fall for the

most part on the impoverished rayats of India. In return for this the Indians will receive more employment as coolies working under European taskmasters. Such indeed, as the *Hindu* points out, must be the final result of the importation of capital from Europe, the exploitation of the Indians who will become less and less fitted for the conduct and management of industrial enterprises. Shut out from the higher positions both in government and commerce, the Indians will sink more and more into a nation of coolies.

There appears in the *Madras Mail* an amusing article signed "J. F. G." on an enquiry as to whether the Indians preferred Native or British rule. This was in 1874, and the Mahārājā Scindia answered in the form of a parable, which goes to the root of the matter:—

A father had several sons whom he did not treat at all well, as he was passionate, extravagant, and self-indulgent, and, to please himself often took from them their just due, and once, giving way to his anger, he even struck one of them, who however took the blow quietly. The same son happened to have property under the English Government, and going to the Magistrate on some matter the Magistrate happened to give him a slight push. The man resented it, and was loud in his indignation. Some one observing this, asked:—"Why do you make so much fuss about a trifling push while you bore the blow from your father in silence?" "Ah," replied the man, "this is from a stranger; the other was my father." "J. F. G." himself, as a Magistrate, was ordered to gain information on the question. Speaking to a village patel about a famous dacoity of the old times, he said:—"At all events, under the English rule, there are no dacoities such as this one." "Ah, Sahib," replied the man, "the dacoits came by night and robbed us, perhaps once in ten or fifteen years. Now, the Sircar's man comes very often, in broad day, and attaches all he can lay hands on of some poor rayat's property. I am not certain that the old days were not the best, as these attachments are too often for debts that we know are long paid off, though we are too stupid to prove it." This was, perhaps, not the answer the Magistrate expected.

A very appreciative farewell address was presented to Mr. Romesh Dutt by "the residents of Calcutta in public meeting assembled" on February 23, commemorating in handsome terms his political and literary services to his countrymen. In his reply Mr. Dutt reviewed the work of "the pioneers of Indian contemporary literature." "I know," he said, "of no truer patriot and no truer servant of his country than these gifted men who taught us to regard our country's religion and history and literature with a legitimate and manly admiration." Going on to the administrative work of educated Indians, he said:—

I may say the value of the admission of Indians in the Civil Service consists in the fact that they represent the views of the countrymen, which do not often coincide with official views. The weakness of the Civil Service lies in the fact that, with all its ability and honest work, it is not in touch with the people, and does not know the people. And I lie forward to the admission of more Indians into the Service to counteract this defect, and to make the administration of the country more sympathetic, more efficient, more in touch with the people.

Mr. Dutt further reviewed the land administration of the past forty years, and paid a well-deserved compliment to the beneficent activity of the present Commissioner of Assam (Mr. H. J. S. Cotton). We observe with some interest that he had to rectify a misconception of Lord George Hamilton's as to a not unimportant point in his Presidential Address at Lucknow. Lord George represented him as admitting that the British administration was conducted for the people, but as wishing it to be conducted by the people. Of course, all that Mr. Dutt claimed was that his countrymen "should have a voice, a humble share, in the control of the administration of their own concerns"—the due fulfilment of solemn promises.

A deputation, headed by the Rev. Dr. Miller and the Rev. F. W. Kellett, has put before the Governor of Madras the objections of the teachers of that Province to the new rules—especially as regards the prescription of text-books, the increasing insecurity of tenure, and the restrictions on participation in political movements. There was no want of plain speaking on the part of the deputation. The Governor made no reply, but there seems to be good hope that the new rules will be amended. The Anglo-Indian *Madras Mail* says:—

... We shall be very much surprised if the proposed new Grant-in-Aid rules are not materially altered in several respects before they are finally passed and issued. The Madras Teachers' Guild is, in fact, to be congratulated on the strong and sensible line that it has taken in

this matter. It has not indulged in violent vituperation, although the proposed alterations in the Rules are so repugnant to many of its members; but it has made out a very strong case for revision by cogent argument and stern logic.

It must be remembered that the exclusion of teachers from participation in "political" movements, though the most unpopular, is not the only objectionable feature in the new rules. Several others were enumerated by the deputation. As regards "confidential reports against teachers," the Rev. Mr. Kellett declared that "the secret way in which it was proposed to do an injury to a teacher who was not allowed to reply to the charge seemed altogether un-English." He also denounced the proposal to make Head Masters take cognisance of the conduct of pupils outside the school premises; nor did he approve of keeping a note of the conduct of pupils in the attendance register. As he well said, the object of education is to eradicate the failings of boys, not to note them down and make a permanent record of them.

It is very far from our intention to excuse violence and rebellion whether at home or abroad; nor do we wish that those guilty of such offences should escape due punishment. But in deciding what is the due punishment of rebels, common sense as well as charity demands that the question of provocation should not be overlooked. This question of the provocation received has been raised as regards the Munda rioters in the pages of the *Bengalee*. In the *Statesman*, too, a correspondent writes:—

On the information that reaches me, there is good reason to suppose that a long series of mistakes—to call them by no harder name—on the part of the local officials has goaded the people into rebellion. The Government is not anxious that its mismanagement and fatuity, culminating in a big agrarian rising, should be made public. While the trouble was going on no news seemed to come over the wires from Chota Nagpur. Now that it is over, there seems a disposition to try the unfortunate peasants who took part in the rising in some hole-and-corner manner so that they may be hurried into gaol without attracting attention to the misgovernment which provoked them into defiance of the law.

This last sentence seems to be rather stronger than the facts warrant; but if there be a disposition to hush the matter up, it can surely be defeated by supplying the rioters with counsel. It is, however, very desirable that we should have an unofficial version of the causes of the rebellion.

The air of Abbotabad seems peculiarly dangerous to the temper of Europeans. The infection appears now to have spread from the military to the civilians and even to have invaded the Courts of Justice. On February 14 Nehal Chand the defendant in a civil case interrupted the pleader for the plaintiff. On this Mr. Dixon, who was presiding in the Court, left the bench, rushed at the defendant, and gave him three cuts with a stick. The *Tribune*, from which we take the above, says that the whole town and district has been dumb-founded by the exhibition of a judge belabouring one of the parties in a case before him.

The Indian Army has lost a strong head by the premature death of General Sir William Lockhart. He was a "Lockhart of the Lee," a son of the Scottish Manse, and a nephew of John Gibson Lockhart of the *Quarterly*, son-in-law and biographer of Sir Walter Scott. He entered the army at the age of seventeen in 1853; he was promoted captain in 1868, major in 1877, and colonel in 1883. He distinguished himself in the Bhutan expedition, in the Abyssinian expedition, in the Black Mountain expedition; in the Afghan war, he was Road Commandant in the Khaibar, and he took part in the operations around Kabul. The Chitral Commission gave scope to his abundant tact and firmness. The Burma campaign raised him to K.C.B. He held independent command in the Miranzai expeditions, 1891; in the Isazai expedition, 1892; in the Waziristan expedition, 1894-5; and finally in the Tirah expedition, 1897. After Waziristan, he was made K.C.S.I.; after Tirah, G.C.B.; and Commander-in-Chief in succession to Sir George White. "Where Sir William Lockhart showed exceptional skill," says the *Times* (March 20), "was in handling a great Regular force in a difficult—almost an impracticable—country in guerrilla warfare against levies of sharpshooters who were always eluding him." "Many experts who knew him and his training," says the same writer, "have asserted that he was the man to command our troops in Natal. . . . Soldier to the core, and stern on points of discipline, his nature was essentially genial and sympathetic. . . . Next to Lord Roberts, perhaps, no leader was followed more lovingly."

INDIAN FINANCE AND ENGLISH JUSTICE.

THE Calcutta correspondent of the *Times* sent under date of March 18 a forecast of the Indian Budget. It is curious and instructive reading. Of course the famine is the central fact. An increase in the opium revenue and "a handsome gain" on exchange will obviously fail to compensate for the great loss on land revenue in the famine-stricken districts and the outlay on famine relief. But though the famine is the central fact, there is one other of very great importance. The correspondent puts the two in close juxtaposition:—

Regarding the expenditure on the famine, the cost is between three and four crores already. On the other hand, the saving on military expenditure, owing to the absence of 8,000 troops in South Africa, will exceed a quarter of a million. A very large surplus would have been shown but for the famine.

The revenue of India is raised by very heavy taxation—enormously heavy if we consider the poverty of the country; but the expenditure on the army has up to now been a load which even this great taxation was scarcely able to support. The famine has necessitated the suspension of almost all public works which could not be made a means of relieving the starving. Motives of policy and finance have combined to check the forward movement beyond the North-West frontier, even during the reign of a Viceroy who had once been in favour of that movement. Finally the great European army which India has had to support has been depleted. And as a result the famine expenditure in spite of the drop in the yield of the land tax may possibly be obtained without adding greatly to the Debt. This does not seem very much, considering the circumstances, but to those who have followed the course of Indian finance it will seem a great deal.

If the matter be probed a little further, the advantage will seem less. The gain on exchange has been purchased at a price. Exporters have found themselves by the establishment of a gold standard placed at a disadvantage compared with those of silver-using countries. Already we hear the planters calling for a bounty on exports—a bounty which would have to be raised from the already-

over-burdened taxpayers. The so-called "gain" on exchange is, in reality a gain; it is only the wiping out of the heavy loss which resulted from having to pay large sums in sterling money. The Home Charges have still to be paid, only a smaller number of rupees go to make up the pound sterling. It is to the fall of exchange that official persons have been wont to attribute the financial embarrassment of India. Now that exchange has risen, the famine has come to take its place as the prime cause of embarrassment. Nor must it be thought that this famine can be looked at from the financial point of view as an occasional calamity. There are obvious signs that the country has not recovered from the famine of three years ago; that it has not been able to meet the new calamity with the resources it then had. It will take much more than three years to recover from the present visitation. Especially will the loss of cattle shackle agriculture and intensify the poverty of the country. The land revenue has fallen off in consequence of the famine and is not expected to reach its normal yield till September, but if it is meant that after September the full land-tax is to be extracted from those who have been impoverished by the famine, then it must mean that their poverty will continue to grow, and that they will be even less prepared to meet the next failure of the rains than they were to meet the present. A few more turns of the screw and famine will become chronic in India.

Yet, as we have said, in spite of famine relief and losses on the land revenue, the Budget does not show a deficit. The last famine was not so bad as this one, but it synchronised with that great triumph of the forward policy, the six campaigns beyond the North-West frontier, while now the frontiers of India are at peace. This alone would be a great advantage to the finances of the country. But this is not all. The Angel of Death has passed to other lands, imposing a great load of sulphur and sorrow on other peoples, but relieving India of a burden almost too heavy to be borne. The troops withdrawn for the defence of Natal have of necessity ceased to be charged on the Indian exchequer, and the finances of the country have already felt the benefit thereof. It is a striking example of the close connexion between the nations scattered over the surface of the planet that the unexpected aptitude for

war shown by the Boer farmers of South Africa should have brought relief in such an unexpected way to the impoverished taxpayers of India, or at least have saved them from immersion in a worse slough of despond than they have yet entered.

Eight thousand European troops in round numbers have been taken from the garrison of India. They have been supported and kept in efficiency out of the revenue of that country. Their excellence has been shown on more than one stricken field and in many months of wearing anxiety, of hardship and of privation. But it is not for India that they have fought and suffered save as India is a part of the Empire. Yet India and India alone has borne till the beginning of the war the cost of their maintenance. When three years ago, in the midst of the famine of 1897, India was left to bear the whole expense of the wars beyond the North-Western frontier, the excuse made was that this constituted her contribution to Imperial defence—that though these wars were fought outside her territory and were opposed by the public opinion of the country, yet they might properly be paid for out of India's purse because she was at no other expense for the maintenance of the Empire. The garrison of India was required for her own purposes, to safeguard her from internal disturbance or foreign aggression. It was needed for her safety and her peace. But this argument can hardly be maintained in the face of what has taken place during the last six months. We have seen a war raging in South Africa which for its first four months was almost always disastrous to the British arms. Then, if ever, was the time for our foes to strike; but no foreign enemy attacked our frontiers; no rebellion against British authority arose. Thus it was seen that in the hour of danger, in the crisis of disaster, India could spare with perfect safety the 8,000 men needed so urgently to protect the Colony of Natal. The money spent on those 8,000 had not been spent for the separate advantage of India, but for the general good of the Empire; and the contribution to Imperial defence made by defraying the whole cost of the wars beyond the frontier was additional to that incurred by keeping up a large body of troops for use whenever and wherever the British Government might want them.

Thus India has had to pay in two ways to the cost of maintaining that Empire of which she is the poorest part. Australia is a part of that same Empire, immensely richer than India. New South Wales suffers from no famine, nor do millions of her people live in chronic destitution. By comparison she is lightly taxed. No tax of 500 per cent. on imported salt presses on her people. They have not to pay 4,000 times its cost for salt made in the Colony. It would seem then that the burdens imposed for Imperial defence on the colonies of Australia should be heavier and not lighter than those imposed on India. But what is the actual fact? Australia maintains no British troops. Of her own troops she gives just as many as she chooses. She has had to pay the cost of no wars, whether waged with or without her approval. While poor India has to make a double contribution, rich Australia gives nothing save as a free-will offering.

But if the claim of India to some help in defraying the expenses of the war beyond the frontier was repudiated on the ground that that was her contribution to Imperial defence, on what grounds of justice or equity can she be allowed to bear the whole expense of 8,000 troops, unnecessary for her particular purposes, but invaluable for the Empire? The very grounds on which a grant was refused three years ago make it imperative that one should be given now. The people of this country will have to face a heavier taxation than they are accustomed to, but it is light compared with that of India; and plague and famine are unknown on our shores. Can we, after leaving India to bear the whole cost of the wars beyond her frontier, make her bear the cost also of keeping up troops for our service? To recognise how great a service those troops which for years have been no expense to us were, it only requires us to think how little could have been done without them for the defence of Northern Natal. Though no Indian troops took part in the war, yet it was by troops maintained by India that the Colony was defended and the enemy's flag prevented from waving over its capital. And all the years during which this reserve of power was being supported by India for the benefit of the Empire, we were leaving India to pay for wars on the

ground that she was doing nothing else for the Imperial advantage; while her finances were becoming more and more involved, and her famine-stricken people were sinking deeper and deeper into poverty. Surely, justice requires that we should now come forward and bear some part of the burden from which we have gained so great an advantage. Surely, it would be the height of injustice to leave it to be borne by the poorest of our brethren.

THE TELEGRAPHIC PRESS MESSAGES BILL.

THE Calcutta correspondent of the *Times*, telegraphing on March 16, announced that the Telegraphic Press Messages Bill was on that day withdrawn in the Viceroy's Legislative Council. The Bill was beset with difficulties. The agenda paper was crowded with notices—of a swarm of amendments in the names of Native members of the Council, notices for the postponement of the Bill till the introduction of a general Copyright Bill, notices suggesting various periods of protection ranging from 18 to 24 hours. The friends of the Bill appear to have been unable to agree among themselves on the minimum that would content them. The Government had communicated with the Local Governments and with "other parties," and had been answered by "dissentient voices of no small weight," and that too "even in the earlier stage"; while the efforts made in the Select Committee by the member in charge of the Bill to remove difficulties by judicious modifications admittedly failed of their purpose. The crucial point seems to have been the time limit of protection; and the persistent grasping at too much appears to be what has lost all. The Native Press, as Lord Curzon stated, "have maintained an attitude of uncompromising and not unintelligible hostility from the start." And not only the Native Press, but at least five prominent Anglo-Indian journals—the *Capital*, the *Indian Daily News*, the *Statesman*, the *Advocate of India*, and the *Champion*. The Bill was introduced on July 14 last year, and on September 1 we informed our readers that the Council of the Bombay Presidency Association had already sent adverse extracts from thirty-two journals (including the Anglo-Indian five) to the Viceroy in Council at Simla. To crown all, there was no urgency about a case "which has been continuously discussed and invariably postponed during a period of thirty years." Lord Curzon, accordingly, came to the sensible conclusion that there was not such a consensus of authority and approval as would justify the Council in pushing the Bill through by sheer arbitrary vote. The Bill is thus postponed to a more convenient season, which Lord Curzon reasonably anticipates will arrive. We congratulate the Viceroy in Council on having got well rid of a Bill of the most dangerous tendency. And we congratulate our Indian and Anglo-Indian confederates on their firm and successful resistance, on grave public grounds, to an innovation designed, not to protect the interests, but to gratify the prejudices, of a very few individuals.

The object of the Bill was declared to be "the importance to the Indian public of a first-class service of telegraphic news." Everybody is agreed that the object is an exceedingly desirable one. But the difficulty has been that this Bill was in no sense adapted to secure such a public boon. Mr. Rivaz indeed in his statement of objects and reasons said: "It is undoubted that enterprise in that direction is being checked, because the existing law recognises no right of property in published telegrams, and the systematic piracy of expensive foreign press messages has been the result." We at once called for the evidence on which that statement is based, but we have never yet set eyes on it. There is an obvious enough theoretical objection to the appropriation of other journals' telegrams; but, in the circumstances of Indian circulation, it is difficult to see where the injury arises to the plundered journal, and it is very easy to see where the advantage to "the Indian public"—and to their British rulers—comes in with decided effect. In this country, it has been left to the recent genius of the *Times* to discover that the system was in any way objectionable. Lord Curzon, we are interested to observe, has taken the same view.

I am a little sceptical (he said) as to the extent which newspapers in India are at present retarded from extending their foreign telegraphic correspondence because telegrams are liable to be pilched as soon as they arrive. The same drawback in England does not appear to crush enterprise or frighten off competition.

He now expresses the sound opinion that it is the paper that goes ahead enterprisingly that finds in the long run the best market. But it is useless to deal with the matter on grounds of plain reason, because there lay behind the professed motives the real grounds of the movement, and these are not of a character to attract discussion now that the whole project has gone by the board.

It is more profitable to turn to the reasons for postponement of the Bill as set forth by Lord Curzon. Two reasons are stated. In the first place, the Government has been restrained from pushing on the Bill by "the desire to have the benefit of English experience and guidance in the matter." There were before the Government, we understand, precedents from New Zealand, Australia, the Cape of Good Hope, Hong Kong, and Ceylon; and the Government specifically followed the framework of the Ceylon Act. We know, however, from bitter experience, that it is not every Colony of Great Britain that appreciates the blessings of equal freedom and the philosophy of public right with the same instinctive justice as characterises the people of the Old Country. It is the fashion of the moment to idolize the Colonies, and of course the Colonies must get their due; but, for all that, the truth must be said, whether the Colonies like it or no, Lord Curzon had no British statute to guide him, and we think he exercised a wise discretion in deciding that he had better wait and see what the British Parliament would do with the like legislation now projected at Westminster. There is certainly, as we have already pointed out, in the views laid before the Select Committee of the House of Lords by Mr. Whorlow and the Newspaper Society, matter that may well give him pause. The promoters of the Bill saw their own point clearly enough; but it is for the legislator to look all around and see a great deal more, and give it weight too.

The second reason advanced by Lord Curzon had greater weight with him than the first. The Viceroy openly expresses his agreement with those that hold that "a more certain encouragement is likely to be found in a substantial diminution of the rates for telegraphic transmission from Europe than in any protection of the already existing enterprise out here." He had already, in the Budget debate, indicated a strong opinion in favour of such a reduction; he spoke of it as not merely reasonable but even necessary; and he says a despatch sent home in May last argued in the like sense. We know, of course, that the question has been engaging the favourable attention of Lord George Hamilton; and no doubt Lord Curzon has good reason for his anticipation that a satisfactory conclusion of the negotiations with the telegraph companies will by and by ensue. "Such reduction" then, as he says, "will throw into an entirely different perspective the question of Press telegrams and foreign intelligence in this country." His final declaration, according to the Calcutta correspondent of the *Times*, was this:—

I would sooner wait to give legislative protection until the great mass of opinion is united in my favour than I would proceed with public opinion divided as at present, some for, some against, those who are for and those who are against arguing on different and mutually destructive grounds. I would sooner pause to see what consequences a reduced telegraphic tariff will produce than legislate under conditions which are doomed to no distant date to disappear. These sentences sum up his whole argument for postponement. And the postponement is for good and all.

Whether the reasons set forth by Lord Curzon be the strongest reasons that actually weighed with him or not, they are at any rate conclusive against the promoters of the Bill. For our own part, we have always laid main stress upon the political consequences that would inevitably have attended the passing of the Bill into an Act. By a happy combination of circumstances, Lord Curzon has been saved from the perpetration of a very grave political blunder. It is well worth while to repeat an illustration which we quoted (March 2) from the *Advocate of India* (Feb. 6):

What, we ask, would have been the state of affairs had the contemplated Act been in operation on the day that General Buller met his reverse at Colenso? If sixty hours, or six, had intervened between a bazaar rumour getting a start and the actual facts becoming known, the consequence would have not been straightened by any small good half-a-dozen newspaper proprietors would have received. There is a political significance about this aspect of the proposed legislation which Government cannot ignore; for, if this Bill becomes law, it will become an absolute necessity for the Government itself to take steps to supply the people who cannot afford to subscribe to expensive publications with reliable information.

Nor is it only war news that contains elements of peril. As we pointed out before, the political news from England

requires the promptest opportunity of circulation and of comment.

Another point. It will be remembered that on March 1 Sir William Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India this question:—

Whether his attention had been drawn to the minutes of dissent recorded by the Maharaja of Darbhanga and the Hon. Mr. Mehta on the Telegraphic Press Messages Bill, to the effect that, on account of the high telegraphic rates, the Bill would not, as desired, produce a first-rate telegraphic service for India, but would create a monopoly in favour of a few daily newspapers.

And that Lord George Hamilton replied:—

I have read the minutes referred to, but their contention seemed to me to be far-fetched.

Lord George will no doubt read Lord Curzon's remarks also. Will they, too, seem to him to be "far-fetched"?

OUR LONDON LETTER.

WESTMINSTER, Thursday.

OBSEEVERS with an abnormal gift of seeing through a brick wall have detected signs of an approaching dissolution of Parliament in the sudden enthusiasm of Ministerialists for a union of hearts with Ireland. The life of the present Parliament may be cut short this year or it may be prolonged for twelve or eighteen months more; but whatever happens the action of the Government will certainly not be influenced by the attitude of Nationalist members. Everything depends on the duration of the war. Should Lord Roberts be in Pretoria, as Lord Wolseley is said to have predicted, before the end of May it is quite conceivable that we may have a general election either before or immediately after the harvest. But that again must depend to some extent on the attitude of the Opposition. If the terms of settlement imposed at the close of the war meet with the approval of Liberals the Government will have no alternative but to remain in office until at least they have set the wheels of the new South African machine in motion. On the other hand, a sharp and hostile challenge from the Liberals would probably lead to an immediate appeal to the country. Mr. Chamberlain, who is a shrewd electioneering hand, is confident that such an appeal would bring him and his party back to power with an augmented majority. His view is shared by many of the more aggressive spirits on the back Ministerial benches. Some Unionists are probably restrained from the fray by the thought that Lord Salisbury may cease to be Prime Minister with the termination of the existing Parliament; but to others that very reflection seems to offer an additional incentive to action. After all there is nothing like a general election, accompanied by a shuffling of the cards, for converting merely potential statesmen into salaried politicians.

Ministerial politeness to the Irish members may be traced to the example set by the Queen. It is rather a reflection on British manners that the display of civility by Ministers of the Crown to members from Ireland should have been discussed with a degree of wonder due to some portent of Nature. One theory to which the phenomenon has given rise is that the Government are hoping to stimulate a flow of recruits to the Irish barracks. "You will want at least 50,000 more soldiers," says an Irish politician, "if you continue to keep Mr. Chamberlain in office. You may think you have had enough of war, but there are some men high in the councils of the nation who think otherwise. Before this Government goes out you will see the Sudan and Egypt formally annexed to the British Crown. France will protest, will threaten, will fulminate. Probably she will mobilise her fleet. If she does war will become 'inevitable,' and your Jingo statesmen will seize an opportunity, for which they have long waited, to crush, if they can, a naval power second only to your own." This dark vaticination suggests the horrors of a nightmare. War always breeds such visions. The worst feature of this one is that it appears to be haunting the dreams not only of British politicians but of French publicists as well.

In the debate on the Finance Bill in the House of Commons the other night, Sir William Harcourt enjoyed the unspeakable satisfaction of welcoming a new and powerful recruit to the banner of the true economic doctrine. Wonderful to relate, this champion of an unfashionable cause was a Conservative, and, more startling still, he proved to be a brother of the arch-Protectionist, Sir Howard Vincent. The emotion of the

ex-leader of the Opposition as he listened to the manly eloquence of Sir Edgar Vincent was almost amusing. Happily the speech was a maiden effort—a circumstance which afforded Sir William a pretext for afterwards crossing the floor of the House and publicly shaking the new member for Exeter by the hand. Sir Michael Hicks Beach was equally gratified. He devoted several sentences of his reply on the general debate to a glowing eulogy of the newcomer's vindication of sound finance. For the rest, the discussion was chiefly remarkable for a brief war of wits between the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer and the valiant defender of the rights of property, Mr. T. Gibson Bowles. Two of Mr. Bowles's witticisms would almost bear repetition in *Vanity Fair*. "You seem to think the Death Duties Act has canonised you," he told Sir William Harcourt. "The receipts have canonised the Act," the latter blandly replied. "Then let it be known in the calendar," retorted the irrepressible critic "by the name of the Impenitent Thief." A little later, the member for King's Lynn raised a fresh laugh by gravely suggesting that the Chancellor of the Exchequer might increase his trade in millionaires by employing a Borgia to accelerate the removal of those unfortunate if profitable personages.

Repatee is supposed to be a highly developed feature of Parliamentary debate. Mr. Bowles is an adept in the art, and so is Sir William Harcourt. Mr. Healy too is sometimes singularly successful in compressing a volume of meaning into a single terse sentence, instantaneously conceived and interjected with the swiftness of thought. Frequently, however, the House of Commons bestows its most generous largesse of merriment on the smallest of pleasantries. Much depends on the identity of the jester. Let Mr. Balfour rise and say that Ireland has enjoyed the exclusive privilege of supplying the British troops in South Africa with "the beverage called stout" and members are willing to hold their sides in a convulsion of laughter. An Irish member gets up a moment later and with equal nimbleness of wit asks whether it is a fact that Scotland has enjoyed the privilege of supplying the army with Scotch whisky. What is his reception? Blank, stony silence, or a murmur of resentment. Members, like schoolboys, find their keenest delight in jests with a personal application. Mr. Weir asks if the Scottish Office is doing anything to encourage bee-culture in Scotland. "If the hon. member," replies the Lord Advocate with meaning emphasis, "will let me know of any gentleman of his acquaintance who wants to keep a bee—in his bonnet or otherwise—I shall be happy to send him a hive." The retort evokes a roar of enraptured mirth.

Mr. Balfour made a great point in the debate on the stop-the-war riots of the suspicious accuracy with which Sir Robert Reid had been able to forecast the attitude of the Government. Strange to say, the sneer was generally approved as a clever debating stroke. Quite apart from the fact that such a mere Parliamentary child as Mr. Balfour himself could have foretold what side the present Government would take in a choice between prejudice and principle, nothing could be more absurd than the implication that a premeditated motion for the adjournment is necessarily a sham motion. A member comes down to the House resolved that should a certain contingency arise he will take a certain course. Naturally he prepares himself for the event, and it is no answer to say to him as Mr. Balfour, in effect, said to Sir Robert Reid, "Oh, I see you had your speech ready, and it is useless your telling us that you had been provoked into this attack by anything we have said or done. You would have made your onslaught whatever had happened." The taunt was all the more ludicrous following as it did on a speech in which the leader of the House had virtually given his sanction to the rule of the mob. Bret Harte has a ballad in which he describes the effect of a chunk of old red sandstone in silencing a controversialist. The Conservative leader made it clear that he would not in all cases adopt so crude a method of retort. He would reserve it for an opponent in a hopeless minority. "Those views may be right," he remarked, commenting on the contents of an anti-war leaflet, "but all I have to say is that they are not agreeable to the majority." And, again, "Let the people who call those meetings beware lest they ask more of human nature than human nature can be expected to give." The immediate effect of the new gospel of *force majeure* was witnessed an hour or two later when the Ministerialists by sheer lung power succeeded in silencing the unpalatable criticisms of Mr. C. P. Scott.

Although Englishmen do not keep St. George's Day they readily donned the shamrock last Saturday in honour of the festival of St. Patrick. The compliment of course was meant as a tribute not to Ireland's patron saint but to her heroic soldiers, and above all to that wonderful Irishman Lord Roberts. As the debates in Parliament to-day and to-morrow may be expected to prove, the wearing of the symbol had no political significance. Otherwise we should see Mr. Arthur Balfour rising in his place to announce that the Government had agreed to a readjustment of the fiscal relations of Ireland and England, to repeal the Coercion Act, and to permit Irishmen in Ireland to bear arms as volunteers. Some extreme politicians are said to have been so chagrined by the Saxon's wholesale appropriation of the Celtic emblem that they themselves declined to wear it this year. An amusing anecdote which is told by a prominent Liberal illustrates the topsyturvy nature of the change in popular sentiment in relation to the shamrock. This gentleman, although an Englishman, has worn a sprig of green in his buttonhole on every St. Patrick's Day for the last thirty years. "Until two or three years ago," he says, "my friends used to stop me in the street when I was wearing my shamrock, and say: 'What, have you turned Fenian?' This year the bit of green in my buttonhole has astonished them as much as ever, but now their exclamation is: 'What, have you turned Jingo?'"

NOTES FROM BOMBAY. SOME BILLS AND THE BUDGET.

[FROM AN INDIAN CORRESPONDENT.]

BOMBAY, March 3.

Recent proceedings in the Imperial Legislative Council have not stimulated public confidence. The perfunctory way in which Bills are put on the legislative anvil causes bad workmanship to be immediately detected. Whatever else the Distinguished Service may lay claim to, it is certainly not entitled to credit for its legislative work. It has not yet produced one legislator of half the capacity of a Maine or a Fitz James Stephen, or a Macaulay. Its attempts at framing enactments, in the Imperial or in the Provincial Councils, are more or less slipshod, displaying little wisdom and less political intuition. As a rule it happens that every few years these measures have to be tinkered. In some cases legislation has to be begun *de novo*. There is the example of the Assam Emigration Act which during the last twenty years has been thrice tinkered. The reason is that it legislates in one direction—in favour of a certain pampered interest, the planters' class, who are influential enough to secure class legislation. While on the one hand the planters assert that there is no necessity for raising the wages of coolies—or indeed for any emigration law regulating labour in Assam—the representatives of the oppressed coolies (the victims of *mucadams* or garden inspectors armed with authority to recruit labour) deprecate any attempt to put the coolies upon bare subsistence wages and to deprive them of the little freedom they enjoy under hard and fast contracts imposing legal obligations which they do not understand. The new Bill is being postponed from time to time. What its ultimate fate may be it is not easy to tell.

Another Bill which is undergoing severe criticism at the hands of non-official Englishmen is the Mining Bill. Here too the labour sections are strongly resented by interested classes. That the development of coal-mining is essential to the material prosperity of the country need not be denied. All enterprise, whether by indigenous or foreign capital, is much to be welcomed, the former especially. But care is needed on the part of the State that where labour is dear or has to be imported the interests of the toiling masses shall be protected. The labourers should not be treated as so many helots. The capitalist landlords should not be encouraged in the conceit that India is their happy hunting ground and that Providence has created the Indian coolie to be the eternal slave of the free British. This Bill too is now hanging fire. In fact it is announced that owing to the influential opposition of the capitalist class it is shelved for another twelve months. Meanwhile the conflict between labour and capital will, it is to be presumed, be carried on in the organs of the interested classes; so that by the time the Bill comes up again for discussion opposition will probably have been reconciled by some means or other. The coolie

interests are certain to suffer unless there are popular representatives in the Imperial Council strong enough to wage their uphill battle against the influence of the capitalists.

Lastly, there is the Press Messages Bill. Many indeed have been its vicissitudes since the Indian Government first attempted its introduction in 1885. It seems to be fated to go through more vicissitudes still before its present authors can hope to see it passed. The united opposition of the Anglo-Indian and the Indian press, with two or three exceptions, has only been able to modify one most objectionable section of the original draft. But even the Bill as modified by the Select Committee has found little approval, while the two Indian representatives in the Council have entered their cogent minutes of dissent. The Hon. Mr. Mehta has observed that it is dangerous to create monopolies as everywhere in the world monopolists have a tendency to stick to their monopolies like leeches; and the Indian Government has by this precious measure sought to create a monopoly. This danger should be avoided at all hazards. To this argument H. H. the Maharaja of Darbhanga has added another. He has observed that the *raison d'être* of the Bill will entirely disappear with the State endeavouring to cheapen the rates of foreign messages which are universally condemned as exorbitant. They too are monopoly rates. Sir Edward Sassoon has clearly shown how a telegram from London to Teheran costs only a few pence while the cost from the last city to India, with four times shorter distance, is four times more! Reduce to a reasonable extent the rate of press and private foreign messages and there is not the least doubt that the Indian press will be in a position to get information which will make it independent of that now supplied by two or three enterprising proprietors. Why should the Eastern Telegraph Company or the Indo-European Company be allowed to charge rates which are exorbitant?

But while the Bill is in a perilous condition, and though last time it narrowly escaped an ignominious death, it seems that there has been a new development. That is due to the interference of the Hon. Mr. Ananda Charlu. With excellent tactics, he asked the Government in the Legislative Council whether it subsidised Reuter, and, if so, whether there was any objection to placing Reuter's telegrams at the disposal of the entire Press. Mr. Charlu was successful in getting a reply to his first query. The Government was obliged to let the cat out of the bag and confirm the statement that Reuter is subsidised. But it stated that the messages are only for the information of Government and the subordinate Administrations. To the second question there was no answer. It was evaded. Why should Mr. Ibbetson have said that as the first answer was given the second question need not be answered? What official logic is this? Whose monies are those which Reuter gets in his subsidy from Government? Do they not come from the taxpayers? Evidently Mr. Charlu by his adroit interpellations has driven the Government into a corner. No wonder that Mr. Ibbetson tried to save the situation by asking leave to have the tinkered Press Messages Bill postponed for another fortnight. Let us see what the official witches will do in their secret cell—how they will boil their measure afresh and what fresh prodigy of legislative wisdom will be the result.

Meanwhile speculation is rife as to what will be the deficit in the next Budget. The land revenue is falling off considerably, though railway receipts are prosperous. Irrigation receipts, too, will, as usual, be high. Exchange will also yield a windfall. But when all these items have gone to swell the credit side of the Budget, there will still remain the famine expenditure up to March 31. What will it come to? It was loosely estimated two months ago at Rs. 3,000,000. But the numbers on relief are swelling enormously. It is not improbable, therefore, that this estimate will be greatly exceeded. But perhaps other public works have been suspended. The grants have been allowed to lapse to a certain extent. In that case the Imperial bookkeeper will no doubt be able to announce only a small deficit. Or it may be that he will, by the usual arithmetical legerdemain, square income with expenditure. But how about ways and means? How many millions of fresh loan will be raised? Will it be all sterling or rupee? or partly rupee and partly sterling? The commercial public is intent on learning the particulars. Meanwhile, as usual, the bulls and bears of the presidential bourses are busy speculating. It should be remembered that this time the gold standard is an established fact, which was not the case when the last famine was upon us. This will further complicate matters, especially

as Mr. Dawkins seems intent on signalling his brief tenure of office by his currency miracles. The financial situation is becoming a nice puzzle, which will be bewildering as Budget day approaches a fortnight hence.

In local matters, I am glad to say, Lord and Lady Northcote have begun well. They have subscribed Rs. 3,500 to the Famine Fund, and they have been busy going the round of the plague and other hospitals. Lord Northcote contemplates a short visit to Gujerat, which is suffering most.

The Mansion House Fund, we see, is daily increasing, a fact which causes intense satisfaction to the people here. The people are grateful for all that philanthropic England is doing to mitigate the affliction of the famine-stricken, and especially of the widow and the orphan. Gratitude is set deep in the heart of the Indian people. They never forget. Acts of charity like that of the Mansion House Fund draw tears from their eyes, fully conscious as they are that the English people feel for their fellow-creatures in this unhappy land of chronic famines. The magnificent donation lately sent by Lord Stanley of Alderley, in relief mostly of *purdanashin* women, will be acknowledged all over India with feelings of the warmest gratitude. His lordship has by this act of charity nobly confirmed his deep and abiding sympathy with the people. All honour to him and to other noblemen of compassion. Both his and Lord Northbrook's donation are much appreciated.

The Russian movements in the Persian Gulf and on the frontiers of Herat have put the Government of India on the alert. It is now announced that Lord Curzon is about to have a peep beyond Quetta and into Beluchistan. Let us hope that the peep will not lead to anything else to embarrass Indian finances at this juncture. Anyhow it is to be trusted that it will not result in another foolish scare like that which the advent of a few Cossacks on the borders of Penjdeh caused in 1885. Heaven forbid that there should be any repetition of that incident. Lord Curzon is an ambitious man; but we all hope that more than a year's government has also made him a wiser man.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

NEARLY FIVE MILLIONS ON RELIEF.

The Secretary of State for India has received (March 19) the following telegram from the Viceroy on the subject of the famine:—

Numbers on relief works continue to increase, and reports from all quarters show that the extent and severity of the distress is increasing. Prices are rising in Bombay, where they are on same level as in 1897. In Central Provinces prices are as yet below scarcity rates of 1897, and in the Punjab still materially lower. Losses of agricultural stock are great. Fodder is very scarce in the Punjab and Western India.

Number of persons in receipt of relief:—Bombay, 1,291,000; Punjab, 242,000; Central Provinces, 1,494,000; Berar, 329,000; Ajmere-Merwara, 110,000; Rajputana States, 447,000; Central India States, 119,000; Bombay Native States, 474,000; Baroda, 59,000; North-Western Provinces, 3,000; Punjab Native States, 7,000; Central Provinces Native States, 47,000; Hyderabad, 182,000; Madras, 6,000. Total, 4,810,000. Central India and Rajputana figures incomplete.

[THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.]

CALCUTTA, MARCH 19.

The Mahārājā of Jaipur has made a donation of 15 lakhs towards the Famine Fund on condition that it shall be invested through trustees and that the interest shall be available for the sufferers from the famine now and in the future.

The Viceroy has conveyed his warm thanks to the Mahārājā for his munificent gift.

THE MANSION HOUSE FUND.

Down to Wednesday evening the Indian Famine Fund at the Mansion House amounted to £142,600. The Lord Mayor sent a further remittance of £10,000 to the Viceroy, making a total placed at Lord Curzon's disposal for relief purposes of £153,600.

THE "INVESTORS' REVIEW" FUND.

We take the following from the current issue (March 17) of the *Investors' Review*:—

"Once more we have to thank thoughtful and sympathetic friends for the help they are according to our little fund—alas, that it is so small!—gathered to help some among the millions now dying of hunger in Central India, in Bombay, and even in Madras and the North-West Provinces. They at least will have the reward of knowing that to the extent of their ability they are helping to do good, and we hope their example will continue to be followed by many others in spite of the all-absorbing interest of South African affairs. We cannot avoid wondering what is to be the fate of this stupendous dominion of ours when at one and the same time there is going on within its vast compass a fratricidal war taxing our utmost military strength, and a disastrous famine threatening to sweep away a subject population not merely in thousands but in millions. We must not dwell on that, but as the numbers in receipt of famine relief increase—and the last report shows them to exceed 4,600,000—it becomes more and more imperative upon the English Cabinet to take the condition of India into consideration with a view to affording far more substantial relief than any private citizen can. India requires relief in two ways: one, as Mr. Ramesh Dutt and others have continually insisted for many years, must be substantial relief in taxation, a lightening of the burdens upon a terribly impoverished people; the other is an immediate grant of one or two millions from the British Treasury to prevent utter collapse among a population exceeding considerably that of the United Kingdom. It is very pretty to read Mr. George Wyndham's smooth sentences about army reform and army increase, and millions added here and millions added there, and to think of the grandeur and glitter of military trappings and furniture that all this represents; but the Empire is not maintained by that sort of thing; rather will it be destroyed unless we can open our minds to the great social problems such as we see before us in this overwhelming disaster. An aged lady who has written to us before and helped us to the extent of her means, the widow of a former Indian official, again addresses us in this sense pleading that we should try and induce some members of the House of Commons to reiterate a demand for money from the English Treasury to be sent without tedious delay towards helping famine-stricken India. We make the appeal with a sad feeling that it is useless. Our law spinners and spoilers, our war makers—great braves all—have no time to attend to that kind of thing until we have killed off the recalcitrant freemen of South Africa."

The following further subscriptions to the *Investors' Review* Fund are notified:—

G. W. G.	£0 10 0
Wm. Sharpe	1 1 0
Mrs. Herty	2 2 0
Mrs. C. Tremeneere (second donation)	2 0 0
E. C.	20 0 0
W. G.	0 10 0
John E. Champney	3 3 0
P. J. (collected)	5 5 0
R. S.	1 1 0
B. W. H.	1 1 0
A. Y.	1 1 0
W. D. Hall	1 0 0
E. I.	0 2 6
W. H. P.	0 1 0
Mrs. Soull	2 0 0
A. Wheatcroft	1 0 0
A. E. Shaw	10 0 0

The total amount received to date was £346 1s. 6d.

May we again repeat (says the *Investors' Review*) that it is a fund, every farthing of which will be put to good uses, especially in helping the starved cultivators to replace their lost cattle, and that the more help we can give in this direction the sooner will the distressed provinces and Native States—for they cannot be forgotten in the present misery—recover some of their ancient prosperity? Cheques and postal orders should be drawn to A. J. Wilson, crossed Union Bank of London, Famine Fund Account.

LORD CURZON ON THE FAMINE.

"A FAMINE OF UNPARALLELED MAGNITUDE."

Lord Curzon presided on February 16 at a public meeting of the inhabitants of Calcutta held at the Calcutta Town Hall for the purpose of opening the Indian Famine Fund. The following passages of his speech indicate the extent of the famine:—

You are all aware, ladies and gentlemen, that we are confronted in India by a famine of unparalleled magnitude. Of each famine as it comes these words are apt to be used; and I am conscious of the dangers of exaggeration. At the same time, from the figures and facts submitted to me, from the totals already on relief, and from the estimates of the probable duration and extent of the suffering that have been sent up, I entertain little doubt that, in the territories that are seriously affected, the description is literally true. I might emphasise the tragedy and the pathos of the situation by adding that in some parts of India plague co-exists with famine, and that, for

instance, in Bombay city more people are now dying in each week than plague has ever been the case before, at the same moment that in other parts of the Bombay Presidency more people are only being saved from death from famine by Government relief. On the present occasion, however, I prefer to say nothing further about plague. "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." The picture is already sombre enough without any darkening of the colours, and it is to the situation as created by famine alone that I invite your attention. This afternoon

I have during the past few days received accounts, specially sent to me at my request, from every affected province or part of India, which enable me to give you the most recent tidings. When I spoke in Council, exactly four weeks ago from to-day, the numbers throughout India in receipt of relief exceeded $\frac{1}{2}$ millions. To-day, in spite of the closer stringency of tests which has been applied, and which, I may say in passing, has been unanimously welcomed by the Local Governments and officers as both timely and necessary, the total exceeds 3 millions. No such number of persons has ever before been simultaneously relieved by any Government in the world. But I am constrained to admit that, in spite of every legitimate precaution that may be taken, these totals are not likely to prove the maximum, but that in the spring and summer months that lie before us they will be substantially increased.

I have no distress that is attacking classes and strata of society hitherto exempt. The Punjab says that the loss of crops in that province has been the greatest on record, and that whereas, in 1897, the numbers on relief steadily declined from the month of February onwards, in the present year they will as surely mount up. In the Central Provinces $\frac{1}{2}$ millions of persons are already on relief, and the Chief Commissioner contemplates that before June this total may have swollen to two millions. The Central Provinces were the dark spot of the famine of 1896-97. But the intensity and extent of the drought are greater now, and must leave a blight upon that unhappy province for many a long year to come. In Central India, even fertile Malwa, which has always been an asylum for famine-stricken wanderers from other parts, has itself been stripped bare, and hundreds of thousands of poor fugitives who crowded over the border in the early days of scarcity have drifted back again, to pick up a meagre subsistence wherever they can. Famine conditions of the worst type prevail in Western Rajputana, where food has been lost as much as 90 per cent. of its stock of cattle; other States little less; and they are spreading towards the eastern parts of that region.

All these circumstances will show you that there is no exaggeration in describing the present as an unprecedented emergency, and that it is with as forcible and overpowering a ground of appeal as any pleader for charity ever possessed that I appear before you this afternoon. I think I may say with truth that, except in some Native States, which I did not possess the requisite organisation or which began rather late in the day, mortality from famine has so far been almost completely, if not absolutely, repressed. Such deaths as have occurred here or there have been of a character normal in any period of distress, owing to the lowered physique. At such times some of the invalids and weaklings of the village inevitably die. But there has been a conspicuous absence on the present occasion of the poor emaciated wretches, the living skeletons, whose pitiful likenesses rarely broke our hearts when they appeared in the illustrated papers three years ago. When I remember that the great Duke of Wellington, who had to fight a big famine in the Deccan while in command there at the beginning of the present century, wrote in one of his despatches that at Ahmednagar alone fifty persons died of starvation each day, and when I contemplate the enormous numbers with which we are now dealing, I do feel some glow of honourable pride. To any who may think that the recent rains which have fallen in some parts of India, and the fringes of which have even reached us in Calcutta, may sensibly alleviate the position, I must regretfully point out that, while they have been of some assistance in parts of the Punjab, even there they have produced no check upon the upward rise of the relief figures, while elsewhere in the afflicted parts of Bombay, Rajputana, Central India and the Central Provinces there has been no rain at all. There the ground is like an oven, which, as the spring grows into summer, will become hotter and still more burning.

MR. N. B. WAGLE ON THE FAMINE.

A meeting in support of the Indian Famine Relief Fund was held at the Council Chamber, Salisbury, on March 14. The Mayor presided, and was supported by Sir John Jardine, K.C.I.E., and Mr. N. B. Wagle, who attended as a deputation from London. We take from the *Salisbury and Winchester Journal* the following report of Mr. Wagle's speech:—

Mr. WAGLE said his position there that afternoon was a peculiar one. Sir John Jardine was a Britisher who had lived in India and studied the native races; and in speaking of his own countrymen he could, metaphorically speaking, shake them until their pockets gave way (laughter)—but his (Mr. Wagle's) position was quite different. He was merely a beggar man, who could not demand any gifts from them, but could only gratefully accept whatever they felt disposed to give him. His distressed countrymen had the most important duty which he had to perform was to express on behalf of his countrymen the deep gratitude which they felt for the generous help which England had already given to India in her distress. Only a few months ago the Viceroy told them that they could not expect help from Great Britain, because she herself was in trouble, and a great gloom came over them, because in all their previous famines it was Britain that had saved India. It was natural for people to get fed up with the sorrows of others when they were themselves confronted with trouble, but England had reversed the natural order of things, and had forgotten her own trouble in the trouble of others. (Applause.) This was a very noble thing to do, and he could not tell them how deeply indebted he felt for the help that his countrymen were getting from England. He could assure his hearers that his own sentiments in this respect were echoed by all his countrymen, who thoroughly

appreciated the benefits of British rule in India. (Applause.) In proof of this he might point out to them how eager his countrymen were to join the army now engaged in South Africa. (Applause.) He himself signed a memorial which was sent to the Government by the people of India, asking that if their aid could not be accepted as combatants, they might be allowed to do some work, however mean, to help their Sovereign. (Applause.) That memorial had been favourably received. What had led his people to offer their services in that way? It was not only loyalty, but a sense of duty and gratitude for the blessings they received from British rule, and a desire to unite and weave their destinies with the destinies of the English nation. (Applause.) The judgment of India on this particular point was worth notice, because she had had a good many rulers, and their people were resolved to uphold for ever the British rule, in recognition of the help they obtained at critical times, and in appreciation of the treatment they received at the hands of the British race. (Applause.) A dark cloud was now passing over his country, for every week increased the number of starving people by hundreds of thousands. On March 4 the number of people fed by the Government was 4,300,000, and every week increased that number. The relief which they were asked to send out would not go to feed the bulk of the people, because the Government were able to feed them in return for work. But Indian society consisted of three different strata: the upper classes, even down to work, and there were others, especially women and children, who could not work, and were too proud to beg. To relieve these private charity was needed. The area affected by this famine was not a vast one, but coming so quickly after the previous famine of 1896 and 1897, and the recent visitation of the plague, it was felt more keenly than it otherwise would have been. The people had hardly recovered from the last famine, and, moreover, this time the fertile provinces of Gujarat and Malwa, which might call the granaries of the southern portion of India, had been laid bare. Having briefly sketched a picture of the terrible distress caused by the famine and lack of water, Mr. Wagle went on to say that the experience of the last few years indicated that the famine was trying to become a triennial fixture, and something should be done either to prevent its recurrence or to mitigate its evils when it did afflict the land. With regard to the present famine, they were only trying to mitigate the distress which it caused. The possible prevention of famine was an important matter which should be pressed upon the attention of the authorities. The people of England were very generous, but they could not do otherwise than look upon these constant appeals to their pockets as a tax, and they therefore had to try to demand that enquiry should be made into this question. (Hear, hear.) The frequent appearance of famine in the land must lead people to ask themselves whether India was becoming more and more impoverished under British rule. Now western civilisation was a commercial civilisation, and as it was introduced into India it tended to improve the condition of the commercial unit, while the agricultural unit, which included the great bulk of the Native races, sank every day down into the depths of poverty. A very slight scarcity of food thus brought about very quickly a dire and dreadful state of things. Western civilisation had quickly added wealth to the Indian Empire, which was therefore not impoverished under British rule, but the wealth was in the hands of one thriving class. In conclusion, Mr. Wagle said he wished to thank the people of England for what they had already done on behalf of his countrymen and to remind them that thousands of people in India were starving at the present moment. Every hour the distress grew deeper, and every penny they could spare would go to the relief of those stricken and unfortunate people so far away. All the relief would be dispensed by the present Viceroy—India was very fortunate in having that one fed by Lord Curzon.—(applause)—and his officers, and would be given in a proper manner. He made that appeal to them as members of a great and powerful nation, as members of an universal brotherhood and as true Christians. He could not do better than leave with them these words of a familiar hymn:—

"The East and West together join in love's unbroken chain,
Give each one hope, one heart, one mind, one glory, and one gain."

(Applause.)

A subscription list was opened and the Mayor announced that he had received promises of subscriptions amounting to 475.

THE LONDON INDIAN SOCIETY'S CONFERENCE.

MEMORIAL TO LORD SALISBURY.

We have received for publication a copy of the following Memorial:—

To the Most Honourable the MARQUESS OF SALISBURY, K.G., Prime Minister to Her Imperial Majesty the Empress of India,
Downing Street, S.W.

MY LORD MARQUESS.—On 1st March instant, at a Conference of Indians resident in the United Kingdom called by the London Indian Society and held at the Westminster Town Hall, the following resolution was passed:—

"That the President and Secretaries of the London Indian Society be requested to present a Memorial to the Prime Minister embodying the Resolution just adopted and praying for his kind and favourable consideration and action."

The resolution referred to above is as follows:—

"That this Conference is of opinion that Famines of India are preventable; that the main cause is the evil of the drain from the resources of India caused by an unnatural economic system of Government, and that until this cause is fully faced and dealt with there is no chance for an effective remedy or for the general welfare of the people of India; that for the immediate remedy for the present calamity this Conference, while very thankful for the Mansion House Fund and other similar efforts, prays for substantial financial assistance by a direct grant from the British Exchequer."

My Lord, there is a peculiar fitness and good fortune for us to

have this occasion of presenting this Memorial to your Lordship for your kind and favourable consideration and action.

Taking, first, our prayer for immediate remedy for the calamity of the present famine, viz., that a direct grant be made for its cost or at least a substantial portion of it from the British Exchequer,—you are here of the very few statesmen of power and position who have a clear and thorough insight into the causes of all India's "terrible amount of misery." You had the courage and statesmanship to declare these causes openly, the chief of which is that India has to part with a large portion of its produce every year without any material return. Besides the cost to India of the building up of and maintaining the British Empire in India, and the hundreds of millions more drawn here before, this annual drain of the wealth of India under the present system of Government, without any material return, now amounts to about Rs. 30,000,000 or so. This transfer to such an enormous extent of India's wealth takes place to the United Kingdom. What, therefore, can be more fitting and natural to us than to turn to you, my Lord, to plead our humble cause as much for justice and duty as for humanity and generosity, before our august Sovereign to grant in our dire distress, from the British Exchequer, the cost or at least a substantial portion of it, of the present wide and woeful famine.

Taking, secondly, our prayer for future amelioration and prevention of all our calamities, it is again still more fitting and fortunate that our appeal should be to you.

Knowing as you thoroughly do the real causes of our miseries, it is to an extraordinary degree fortunate for us, that you also know on the other hand the true remedy, and that not merely as a matter of opinion, but that you, with Lord Idlesleigh (two names that will never be forgotten in India), have actually in the most practical and successful manner applied and carried out in every detail the true remedy, in the case of a depressed and devastated province of India, and raised it to high prosperity and good government—a monument of an act of high British statesmanship—with the result, in the words of Lord Idlesleigh, "which should at once afford a guarantee for the good government of the people and the security of British rights and interests." This episode, my Lord, remains a brilliant chapter in the history of British India.

Can anything be more natural for us than to turn to your lordship to request you to apply the same remedy to all British India, with all the wisdom of our gracious Sovereign be realised: "In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward."

We leave, my Lord, with every confidence and hope this our humble memorial in your hands as the most competent to do all that can be done under your keen sense of justice and humanity. Then will the wishes of our gracious Sovereign be realised: "In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward."

We beg to enclose a copy of the proceedings of the Conference.

We have the honour to be, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient servants,

DADABHAI NAOROJI, *President.*

A. DAS, } *Hon. Secretaries.*
V. J. MONY }

LECTURE AT CROYDON.

A correspondent writes:—At the Free Christian Church, Croydon, on Sunday, March 18, a discourse on the cause of famines in India was given by Mr. R. K. Dass, student at law. Gratefully recognising the indebtedness of India to Great Britain, in some respects, Mr. Dass, nevertheless, very pointedly attributed the famines of India to the very serious drain upon its resources, for which the Government is responsible. He did not believe that this could go on without disaster. At the close of the service a sum of over £16 was collected in aid of the sufferers.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

The Secretary of State for India has received the following telegram from the Viceroy:—

The financial statement points out the significance of the figures for 1899-1900 and 1900-1901 in relation to the agricultural situation; India is suffering from famine of a very serious nature.

A change in the form of accounts is explained; the column for exchange and the symbol Rx. disappear from the public accounts; a stable rate of exchange having been obtained, the total figures are given in fifteens of rupees—that is, pounds sterling.

The accounts for 1898-1899, published, closed with a surplus of £2,641,000.

A surplus of £2,622,000 was estimated last March for 1899-1900. Receipts improved during the year by £607,000, in spite of loss of land revenue, owing to famine, £1,187,000. The gross receipts from railways increased by £824,000; post-office, telegraph, and mint receipts were better by £423,000; opium revenue, £401,000. The expenditure increased during the current financial year by £676,000, in spite of decrease under Army services, £738,000, chiefly owing to the despatch of troops to Africa, Ceylon, and Singapore, and to economies of £405,000 under buildings and roads. The increase due to famine is £2,055,000, which is devoted to direct famine relief. The surplus for the financial year therefore became £2,553,000.

The Budget estimate has been made at 1s. 4d. per rupee. An increase of £388,000 is taken under land revenue, as it is hoped that the famine will have disappeared by September. An

increase of £667,000 is anticipated from railways, and £156,000 from opium revenue owing to better prices in China. Direct famine relief is expected to cost £3,338,000, after allowing for the temporary increase due to high prices and recoveries. The military estimates show an increase of £746,000, of which nearly half will be devoted to re-arming the Native army. There is a probable surplus in 1900-1901 amounting to £160,000.

The Secretary of State for India is expected to have drawn by March 31, £10,000,000, at an average rate of a little over 1s. 4d. per rupee; but, owing to the famine charge, £1,500,000 of the drawings were met out of the currency reserve, the gold being held in England.

During the next year the Secretary of State for India expects to draw £16,440,000, and to incur temporary debt of £500,000. The Secretary of State for India does not expect to raise fresh sterling permanent debt; but a rupee loan of three crores is estimated to be necessary in India for ways and means. Railway capital expenditure will amount to £4,872,000, and the irrigation grant is raised to a full crore.

The financial statement then deals with the financial events of the year. With regard to countervailing duties on beet sugar, it shows that in the last nine months imports were very nearly 45 per cent. less than in the corresponding period of the previous year; but the trade was conducted under such abnormal conditions, and the fluctuating character of this importation is so remarkable, that no conclusion can be drawn.

The suitability of the rate of 1s. 4d. per rupee for the volume of Indian trade is discussed. It is shown that the total trade for all India for the first ten months is, in spite of serious obstacles, greater than in 1898-1899, which was held to be an abnormal year. Up to April 1 last Government had received £2,030,000 in gold; by March 7 this amount, including gold held in London, had reached £8,570,000. Government has added to silver currency, in exchange for gold, over ten crores, including the new coinage, during this year, of one-and-a-half crore, while another crore is to be coined during next year. Government will not add more rupees to silver currency than is necessary, nor hamper trade by refusing to give rupees for gold. The relation of the rupee currency to the work it has to perform is examined, but the drain of silver to famine districts renders this year abnormal. Government have decided, for the present, to keep a minimum balance of £5,000,000 in gold, and are paying out gold above that limit to anyone who desires it. In the seven weeks up to March 10, the public has taken over £130,000, and shows a disposition now to take gold at a faster rate.

The action of the Secretary of State for India in raising the rate for telegraphic transfers is explained.

The discussion on the admittedly unsatisfactory banking position in India is believed to have cleared up several points; the subject is now under the consideration of the Secretary of State for India.

The financial history for the year is overshadowed by the famine; but India during the current financial year met all demands for famine and railway construction without borrowing, and passed to a gold standard, through ordinary trade operations, without adding to her indebtedness.

Imperial Parliament.

Thursday, March 15.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE INDO-EUROPEAN TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

Sir EDWARD SASSOON asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he had any information to the effect that the Telegraphic Convention with Russia had been renewed by the Indo-European Company on the basis of a return of 17½ per cent. to that Government from the gross earnings of the Company?

And, whether this arrangement had been concluded with the knowledge of and after consultation with the Indian Government, as one of the joint purse partners.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I have no information as to the renewal of the agreement between the Indo-European Telegraph Company and the Russian Government, nor has the Government of India, so far as I am aware, been consulted on the subject.

THE CASE OF KANTY CHANDRA MOOKERJEE.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he would lay upon the Table the Memorial of Kanty Chandra Mookerjee, addressed to him under date of December 22, 1897,—together with the papers therein referred to.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I have received no memorial from the person named in the honourable member's question bearing the date mentioned in the paper. A memorial dated December 22, 1897, has however been received, in which the memorialist appealed against orders passed in 1889 dismissing him from Government service and refusing him a pension. I saw no reason to interfere. The papers do not appear to be of sufficient importance to be presented to Parliament.

THE FAMINE RELIEF WORKS.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he would specify the various forms of employment provided at the famine relief works:

And, whether he could state approximately the number of persons employed on breaking metal for roads, on excavating tanks, and on constructing embankments for railways.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The honourable member has mentioned, in the latter part of his question, the principal forms of employment provided for those who need relief in the famine districts, namely, the construction of roads, of irrigation works, and of railways. Under each of these heads many different kinds of labour are comprised, and the object of the authorities is, as far as possible, to adapt the work to the habits and capacities of the workers; but I cannot give a complete statement either as to the nature of these various employments or as to the number of persons employed upon each of them.

Friday, March 16.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

BRITISH INDIAN PILGRIMS.

Mr. STEVENSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether he was now able to report the result of the representations made to the Sublime Porte by her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople respecting the claims of British Indian pilgrims who were robbed and wounded by Arab brigands on the highway between Jeddah and Mecca in the years 1895, 1896, 1897, and 1898.

Mr. BARNACK: The total claim of British Indian pilgrims for losses by robbery in the Hedjaz during the years 1892-1898 appears to have been about £2,500, but an arrangement was arrived at between the Vail and the claimants by which half this sum was to be accepted provided the matter was promptly settled. The settlement of the claims on this basis was approved by the Acting British Consul at Jeddah to her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on September 20 last.

Monday, March 19.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE SIRDARS OF THE CIS-SUTLEJ TERRITORY.

Mr. KIMBER asked the Secretary of State for India whether he could now state whether any important petitions had been presented to his Punjab authorities from loyal sirdars of the Cis-Sutlej territory of the Punjab, praying for relief from uncertainty and for recognition by Government of the rule of primogeniture in the succession to their respective estates, and whether there had been any delay or want of uniformity on the part of local officials in reporting on and dealing with such petitions.

And, whether he could now grant a Return giving copies of the petitions and correspondence in respect of which, on May 11 last, he was pleased to state that he would make a reference to the Government of India.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I made a reference to the Government of India on the subject referred to in my hon. friend's question, and learn from them that no petitions of the nature referred to in it have reached the Punjab Government.

The correspondence on the subject does not appear to be of such public importance as to be suitable for being laid before the House, and is moreover incomplete. I shall, however, be glad to communicate it to my hon. friend if he desires to see it.

Tuesday, March 20.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON INDIAN EXPENDITURE.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS asked the Secretary of State for India whether he was now in a position to state definitely when the Reports of the Royal Commission upon Indian Expenditure would be laid upon the Table.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I am informed that the Report of the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure is complete and has been signed by a majority of members. But other members have signified their intention of recording their opinions, and these are not yet ready. There is, however, every reason to expect that the Report, with the usual supplements and appendages, will be laid upon the Table shortly.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

The following Notices of Motion appear on the Order Paper of the House of Commons:—

Sir W. WEDDERBURN, —Distress in India, —To call attention to the Indian Famine; and to move, That, in view of the grievous sufferings which are again afflicting the people of India, and the extreme impoverishment of large masses of the population, a searching enquiry should be instituted in order to ascertain the causes which impair the cultivators' power to resist the attacks of famine and plague, and to suggest the best preventive measures against future famines. [Tuesday, April 3.]

Sir MANOHETREE BHOWMAGREE, Distress in India, —That the spread of famine and scarcity over extensive areas and affecting millions of inhabitants in India, although recurring at irregular intervals, may be regarded as a certain calamity to which that country is periodically exposed; that the disastrous consequences of

such visitation are rendered unconquerable by the fact that an unusually large proportion of its population is allowed to remain dependent for its livelihood upon agricultural labour exclusively, whereas nearly all other industrial pursuits for which the natural resources of the country offer wide scope are neglected; that one of the most effective methods by which the rigour of the famines could be modified, and the buying power of the people now succumbing to them increased, would be to enable large classes of the agricultural population to pursue other industries; and that, therefore, it is the opinion of this House that the Government of India should adopt measures for the elementary, industrial, and technical instruction of the poorer communities, so as to fit them for more profitable manual labour in other directions besides agriculture. (An early day.)

Mr. SAMUEL SMITH, —Excise Administration (India), —To call attention to the administration of Excise in India, by which many liquor shops are being opened in various parts of India, in direct violation of the expressed protests of the neighbourhood, and in contradiction of the declared policy of the Government of India, as formulated in their Despatch to the Secretary of State, No. 29, February 4, 1890; and to move a resolution. [An early day.]

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS.

Notice has been given of the following questions:—

Sir EDWARD SASSOON, —To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Transvaal Refugees' and other War Funds, to which our Indian fellow subjects have subscribed, will be available for the relief of the wives and families of the killed and wounded amongst the Indian camp followers, who have been and are serving with Her Majesty's troops in South Africa; and, if not, whether he would use his good offices to enable this purpose to be achieved. [Thursday, March 22.]

Mr. SAMUEL SMITH, —To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the sufferings caused by the famine in India, and to the fact that nearly five millions of people are now on relief works, which number must be largely increased before July, also to the fact that a number of cattle have died, and that the peasants will need more generous relief to start them after the next rains, the Government would consider the advisability of making a famine grant to India from Imperial sources. [Friday, March 23.]

Mr. MACLEAN, —To ask the Secretary of State for India, if he can now say what has been the result of a year's working of the Counter-vailing Duties Act passed in March 1899:

What amount of revenue the Act has yielded:
And, what effect it has had on the importation of cane and beet sugar respectively, as compared with the Returns for the years 1897-8 and 1898-9. [Monday, March 26.]

PUBLIC MEETINGS ON INDIAN QUESTIONS.

As has already been announced, Sir W. Wedderburn, M.P., will at the invitation of the Political Committee of the National Liberal Club open a discussion at the Club on Wednesday, April 4, on the causes of famine in India.

On the same date Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji will give an address on India, with special reference to famine, at 8 Balcombe Street, Dorset Square, London.

On Friday, March 23, Professor A. F. MURISON, LL.D., will deliver an address on India before the Fabian Society. The following syllabus of Dr. Murison's address has been issued:—

"In India we have got together a splendid system of government. . . . I do not think that history has ever known so fair, so just, so equitable, so peaceful, so successful a government as the government by Great Britain of the Empire of India."—Sir HENRY FOWLER.

"I believe we have not done our duty to the people of this land."—Lord MAYO.

"The poorest and most wretched country on the face of the earth."—Mr. DADABHAI NAOROJI.

SYLLABUS.—The Imperial Connection.—The Native States "in subordinate union"—British India, "The Brightest Gem"—The Benevolent "Trustee"—Spontaneous and solemn Imperial Promises.

External Relations.—The North-West Frontier—The Russian Menace—"The Grand Game," and other games—Is the Game Worth the Candle?—British India in British Colonies.

Internal Administration.—The *East Britannica*—The Official Hierarchy—The final responsibility.—The slow but, in the course of time, effective association with those to whom we come in the character of strangers and conquerors, in the task of working out for themselves a larger and a better political and social ideal" (Mr. Asquith)—Financial Affairs—Industry and Commerce—Public Works (Railways and Canals)—The Significance of Famines—Justice and Police (Union of Judicial and Executive Functions)—The Native—The Church and Bazaar Cases—Education—Press and Platform—Sedition and Loyalty.

Looking Forward.—Official Optimism—Front Bench Alliance—Native Aspirations—The Indian National Congress—"Consolidation or Disintegration?"—The Interest of the British Public—The Responsibility of the British Press—The Hope of the Future.

Miss Alison Garland, who was the delegate of the British Committee to the recent Indian National Congress, starts home from Colombo on March 26. She will be prepared to address meetings on the Indian Famine in the latter part of April, in May, and early in June.

NOW READY.

CONGRESS GREEN BOOK.—No. III.

The Proposed Separation OF Judicial and Executive Duties in India. MEMORIAL

FROM

RT. HON. LORD HOBHOUSE, K.C.S.I.

(late Legal Member of the Privy Council, Member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council).

RT. HON. SIR RICHARD CARTH, Q.C.

(late Chief Justice of Bengal).

RT. HON. SIR RICHARD COUCH

(late Chief Justice of Bengal, Member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council).

SIR CHARLES SARGENT

(late Chief Justice of Bombay).

SIR WILLIAM MARKBY, K.C.I.E.

(late Judge of the High Court, Calcutta).

SIR JOHN BUDD PHEAR

(late Judge of the High Court, Calcutta, and Chief Justice of Ceylon).

SIR JOHN SCOTT, K.C.M.G.

(late Judge of the High Court, Bombay).

SIR W. WEDDERBURN, BART, M.P.

(late Judge of the High Court, Bombay).

SIR ROLAND K. WILSON, BART.

(late Reader in Indian Law at the University of Cambridge).

MR. HERBERT J. REYNOLDS, C.S.I.

(late Member of the Bengal Legislative Council).

TOGETHER WITH TWO APPENDICES.

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