

India

FOR THE

No. 68. NEW SERIES.
No. 162. OLD SERIES.

WEEK ENDING FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1899.

[REGISTERED AS A (PRICE..... 2D
NEWSPAPER. [BY POST, 24d.]

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NOTES AND NEWS.

THE purveyors of quasi-official telegrams to the British Press are modifying their transports. It is not many days since Reuter's correspondent at Calcutta permitted himself to telegraph that "the entire Press in India, Native and English, without a dissentient voice, approves the action of the Government regarding the Sugar Bill." The date of that sweeping assertion was March 28. But the telegram which Reuter's correspondent sent from Simla on Saturday last is content to claim that "all the important journals continue to give unanimous support to the Viceroy's action." The epithet "important" should deceive nobody—an unimportant journal being of course merely one with which one does not agree. The Indian journals which reached London by the last mail show how hasty and misleading the telegram of March 28 was. The *Bombay Champion*, whose articles Mr. Maclean, in a letter printed in the *Times* of Wednesday last, rightly describes as "elaborate and extremely well-informed," wrote in its issue of March 28, "was there ever such a deliberate misrepresentation of facts to deceive and hoodwink the ignorant public of India and England?" The *Advocate of India* (March 20) said: "When the Sugar Bill was introduced so abruptly in Calcutta on the Friday before last our two contemporaries here were ready as well as loud in their praise of the measure. To listen to them you would have thought that this was a case of a great and growing evil, long patent to the eye of all men, and of a remedy for that evil, of a character to which no reasonable man could take objection. The contrary of both these propositions is the truth. There is no evil either in existence or in prospect." "The most objectionable feature of the proposed duty," wrote *Power and Guardian*—described as "the largest circulated weekly in India"—on March 26, "is its permanent character. It is not to be belied for a time only. It is to be a permanent tax, the incidence of which will fall on the consuming public." That a good many journals in India express approval of the new Act is not to be denied. But the talk about "unanimity" had better be dropped.

The *Champion* has distinguished itself by an exhaustive investigation of the facts relative to the Sugar Duty Act. It has proved conclusively, as it seems to us, that the new legislation was wholly unequalled for in the interests of the people of India. It argues indeed "that there is not a tittle of evidence to show that the Indian refined sugar has been injured by the exceptional imports," which have themselves fallen very markedly during the current official year. "Where is the injury?" asks the *Champion* :—

Instead of any injury, it would seem that India has not only been able to absorb, since 1882, a larger quantity of foreign refined sugar, but, at the same time, been able to increase its exports of both refined and unrefined sugar to a very satisfactory extent. Was that a reason for laying an embargo on a cheap foreign product? Let the authors of the fiscal measure honestly answer the question.

The fact is the authors of the measure have got their Bill through, and will not trouble themselves any more about it. Next time they will feel encouraged to apply Protectionist principles to other things more nearly touching the masses, and then the Indians will begin to waken up to the fact that they have put in the hands of the Government a scourge for their own backs—as if they had not enough already.

No. 16. VOL. XI.

In another column we reprint at length Mr. Harold Cox's able leaflet on "Protection in India," dealing specifically with the Sugar Duty Act. Apart from his official position as secretary to the Cobden Club, Mr. Cox has won for himself the right to a respectful hearing on economic subjects. For one thing, he draws special attention to the use of foreign sugars in the sweetmeat industry, "an enormous native industry, exceeding in value, perhaps a hundred-fold, the industry of sugar-refining." "To tax the middle-class, or any other class, of the Indian people upon an article of daily consumption, not in order to raise revenue for the purposes of Government, but in order to put money into the pockets of a handful of private persons who own shares in sugar refineries"—this, he says plainly, "is an outrage upon equity." Mr. Cox, again, sees in the policy of the Act "a great danger to India's import trade." Germany takes from India more than twice as much goods as she sends to India, half of the latter being sugar; and Germany may retaliate. Further, "it is not Germany but France who is the real sinner in the matter of bounties;" "yet this new Indian tax will seriously injure German and Austrian trade, while leaving France scatheless." Finally, the true policy of Government is "not to try and shut out German sugar by a protective tariff, but to try by positive means to develop the Indian sugar industries." "It would be far better for the Indian Government to spend part of its present surplus in teaching its subjects how to grow an improved stock of sugar-cane, and how to extract and manufacture the sugar by scientific methods." And that is the bottom truth.

In a discussion at the Royal Statistical Society on Tuesday last upon "The Statistical Aspect of the Sugar Question" Sir Robert Giffen made some useful remarks upon bounties and countervailing duties :—

In this complex world it appeared to him that the institution of countervailing duties might not have any of the effects which the people who were proposing them expected of them. They were far too confident of what the effect of such a measure in this country would be. In the United States they had had a system of countervailing duties for several years, but no one could say that the existence of those duties had had any effect whatever up to the present in procuring the abolition of the bounties. He was, therefore, quite unable to understand how it could be said that by means of making countervailing duties more general they would secure the abolition of bounties. If countervailing duties were imposed in this country it was quite possible that the price of sugar would be raised. The duty would fall upon the consumer in England. There was no doubt the West Indian planters would have an advantage, but as far as he could see they were in that way doing nothing to abolish the bounties. The man who produced sugar under bounty would be just as well off as before; the only difference was that the West Indian planter or somebody else would be better off. From the whole history of the matter, which now went back for 30 years, he confessed to the gravest doubt whether any of the confident statements made as to the effects of the countervailing duties were well founded. He was firmly convinced that such duties would in no way produce the effects so confidently anticipated from them. They would only produce new mischief and disturbance, and a great deal had yet to be done in order to show the public what would be their real effects.

Wise words, which may be commended to the careful notice of the admirers of the new Sugar Duty Act.

We have already referred more than once to the great meeting which was lately held in the Calcutta Town Hall to protest against the Calcutta Municipal Bill, but it is worth while to quote the account given by the *Indian Nation* of its magnitude and representative character: "All Calcutta was there. The Sheriff opened the meeting. Maharaja Sir Narendra Krishna, President of the British Indian Association, was formally elected President. The speakers were representative not merely of that and other associations but of nearly every influential class and interest among the ratepayers and of the general body of the people. The landed interests, the moneyed classes, the bar, Native commerce, the Native Press, and indeed the whole of the educated Native community were repre-

sented on the platform. The audience was of course in point of numbers very much more representative of the same interests and classes." If Lord George Hamilton's formula about not interfering with the independence of local opinion has any real meaning, he cannot disregard the remarkable series of public demonstrations in which the attitude of Calcutta towards the Bill has been so unmistakably shown.

It is gratifying to learn through a Reuter's telegram from Bombay (dated Tuesday) that the plague is at last on the decrease, with the advent of hotter weather. The statistics are not precise, but the general decline is apparent. The people happily, as we have already noted, have ceased to regard the epidemic with alarm. The example of Lord Sandhurst is reported to have been admirable, and the natural effects have followed.

His lordship remained here throughout the epidemic, and constantly visited the plague hospitals, encouraging and stimulating all those engaged in the work of stemming the fell disease, especially the Native volunteers, and personally superintending all the precautionary and preventive measures. He refused to leave the city until it was seen that the epidemic had spent its strength; and the Natives are now saying that his departure shows there is nothing more to fear. The great thing is to get into such sympathy with the Native feeling. In like manner Reuter reports:—

The action of the Bombay Government has also helped to tranquillise the public mind. Realising that rigorous repressive measures could not be imposed on millions of people for an indefinite number of years, the Government wisely relaxed its more stringent precautions during the present epidemic, the result being that the City has remained perfectly quiet and patiently resigned, and disorder has been entirely absent.

It is a great deal to know that the Government of Bombay has so thoroughly well learned its lesson. The pity of it is that the lesson had to be learned in the school of experience at the expense of the hapless people.

If we may rely on the *Pioneer* of March 24, it was then persistently rumoured in Calcutta "that the Secretary of State for India has conveyed a strong recommendation to the Viceroy to enforce segregation and inspection in Calcutta; and that the Viceroy is in favour of the measure." There is also said to have been the further rumour that "the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal is so strongly opposed to the idea as to have threatened to send in his resignation if any attempt be made to enforce it." Surely the experience of Bombay is not, after all, to be lost on Calcutta. One can hardly imagine anything more mischievous than such interference by Lord George Hamilton, who, if he knows anything about the circumstances at all, ought to know all that has come and gone at Bombay. Let us recall from the Plague Blue-Book of 1897 what Lord Sandhurst wrote on February 12 in reply to similar drastic counsels sent to him by the Government of India:—

Great difficulty (wrote Lord Sandhurst) has attended all attempts at the segregation of healthy inmates of infected houses hitherto made, and very limited success has been achieved. From the beginning of the outbreak of this disease, it has been found that the Native inhabitants of the city are very reluctant to leave their houses, or to allow any member of their family afflicted with the disease to be taken away. Indeed, their dread of the disease appears to be hardly so profound as their horror of being removed from their houses. They are far more easily moved by fear of the municipal and police authorities than by any realisation of the benefits that will accrue from a sensible course of action. It is estimated that not less than 300,000 persons have already fled from Bombay, moved so to do, not only by fear of the plague, but quite as much, if not more, by an unfounded and unreasonable fear of what might happen to them at the hands of the police and municipal authorities were they to remain. This statement stands good to-day for Calcutta, as well as for Bombay; and all experience, as well as the best Native Press opinion, urgently demands that the Government should refrain from drastic measures foredoomed to failure and win the co-operation of the public in measures not too repugnant to them.

Last month Lord Sandhurst distributed *sandaks* to a number of citizen workers in the fight against the plague in Bombay, and justly complimented them on their labours.

In addition to the Justices of the Peace, whose services we enlisted three years ago, a number of citizens have (he said) come forward, and their services have been of the greatest possible value. You gentlemen, who have been in receipt of these distinctions this afternoon, have performed an immense service, not only to the suffering city in which you dwell, but to other cities which may unhappily be similarly afflicted in the future, because you have shown a great example to such cities. Not only have you been about among your own people explaining the measures and intentions of Government, but your advice has been of inestimable value to the officers whom Government has employed.

Precisely. Take the Native population the right way and they will go through fire and water—and plague—for you. We must make room for a word or two more of Lord Sandhurst's obviously heartfelt speech:—

Gentlemen, whilst you have been of great service in explaining to the people the dangers of plague, whilst you have taught them the benefits of the measures being taken for the amelioration of their condition, you have succeeded in placing Government in close contact with a population which I do not think it an exaggeration to style the most patient in the world. We have been through a time of unexampled trials in Bombay, and we are grateful to you and the innumerable officers of every description for the efforts that have been made. We have admired your unflinching courage, we have admired the splendid spirit with which you have accomplished what you undertook, and we have admired also the courage and the patience which has been so signally manifest among the inhabitants of this great city.

When Anglo-Indians propose to run down the Natives henceforth, we would ask them to read these words of Lord Sandhurst before they begin their tirade.

The cyclone that has been raging at Madras (in the *Madras Standard* and other journals) over the Law College there has at last whirled over to Westminster. On Tuesday Mr. Herbert Roberts put a series of questions to the Secretary of State. But Lord George Hamilton was in his usual state of blissful ignorance, which enabled him to postpone the evil day of answer—though not for evermore, because Mr. Roberts may be trusted to keep his eye on the point. Lord G. Hamilton will send out to the Madras Government a copy of Mr. Roberts's questions. But there is, all the same, no doubt as to the truth of the suggestions therein made. Mr. R. A. Nelson, the Principal of the Law College since its institution in 1891, has a salary of Rs. 1200 a month. He was appointed on the sound condition that he should not practice. But the condition was waived by Lord Wenlock's Government. The irregular attendance of the Principal and his assistants has become a public scandal, whether rightly or wrongly is not apparent, in the absence of a statistical account of the particular facts. At the same time, on general probabilities it does seem very unlikely that any noise would have arisen if the Principal and his lecturers had not habitually, or seriously, overstrained the limits of their permission to practice. There is no doubt an advantage in combining practice and teaching. But when the teaching goes to the wall, the advantage disappears. The trouble need never have arisen if the College had been looked after with any reasonable regard for the interests of the students and of the public. The time would seem to have passed when the authorities should have required the Professors to make choice of the one course or the other.

There appears to have arisen the more serious question as to whether the lectures of the Professors are adequate or not. This is rather surprising. We can hardly understand the complaint in the case of Mr. Nelson himself, who, whatever the amount of his private practice, must, if he be personally present during the specified hours of lecture, treat his subjects competently. How far the complaint may be justly urged against the other Professors we are not in a position to know. But there ought to be no delay in clearing up the case thoroughly, and in placing the teaching staff of the institution on a solid basis. The large and rising income from fees shows that there is plenty of money to endow the college and furnish it with teachers of the highest ability and competence. The percentage of students obtaining the Law degree at the College is certainly low. It is lower than in any other Province, except the North-West. But then Madras Law College is expected to do better than that. In 1896-97, at Madras, only 92 candidates out of 484 passed the First LL.B., and only 52 out of 203 the LL.B. At Bombay the figures were 148 out of 244, and 77 out of 175, at these two examinations respectively. In Bengal, 204 out of 400 passed the LL.B.; in the North-West, 41 out of 191. There is plenty of room for other explanations, but it is clear that the whole matter must now be threshed out. Things cannot go on as they are.

Mr. C. M. Thacker writes:—

Lord Russell of Killowen, Lord Chief Justice of England, delivered an address at the annual meeting of the Gray's Inn "Moot" Society, on Legal education for the Bar, on the 13th inst. and in the course of his address made important suggestions to the Council of Legal Education, and gave law students valuable advice drawn from his experience.

My object is to put before the public such of his weighty utterances as referred to the study of Indian law, and as are unfortunately for Indian law students omitted from the reports which I have seen hitherto published in the London Press. I have not relied upon my memory alone or on the memories of others who heard them, but I have tried to verify them with the help of notes made by a friend at the time of delivery. It must be understood, however, that the following expressions are not necessarily his lordship's but the substance of what he said. The passage to which I wish to draw attention was to the effect that he saw many before him who were not of the British race, and he asked the Council of Legal Education what they had been doing to give instruction in the different laws that prevailed in their countries. What was the state of the teaching of Indian law? What had they been doing for students that were coming here in such large numbers from that great dependency? (A voice from amongst the audience: "Nothing.") He then proceeded in eloquent and impressive terms to point out that at Cambridge and Oxford eminent men like Sir R. West and Sir W. Markby were lecturing on certain branches of Indian Law, whilst the Inns of Court, after appointing a Reader on Indian Law for a short time, had abandoned the practice. He pointed out that experiments like that could not be expected to succeed in a short time, but that they must be tried for a sufficiently long time. I need hardly add that Lord Russell was loudly cheered as he proceeded with these remarks, for in Gray's Inn alone there are not less than a hundred Indian students.

The *Madras Standard* does good service in showing up the "shabby investigation" that has been made into certain serious allegations against Lieutenants Hogg and Francis, in reference to their conduct at Chintalapudi in the Godavery district, on a shooting expedition. The officers are said to have "created a disturbance in the house of the Deputy Tahsildar about ten o'clock at night, in company with a number of armed servants, and threatened to stab and shoot at the police when they arrived on the scene," and to have done various other violent acts, "all because the village officers had apparently failed to meet instantly the demands of the men to be supplied with some men and cots." The District Forest Officer also had "ordered the prosecution of the men for having set fire to the reserve forest;" and the Deputy Tahsildar himself "made an application to the District Magistrate of Godavery for permission to prosecute the men at the expense of the State, which the District Magistrate either refused or took no notice of." The Hon. Mr. N. Subha Row put a series of questions in the Legislative Council in December upon these reported misdemeanours. The Government said they had no information, but would call for a report.

A report was accordingly called for from the Revenue Board, and information was also requested, "if there was no objection," from the military authorities. But the replies of these authorities have been carefully kept from the knowledge of the public. The Government content themselves with saying

that there is no reason to believe that Lieutenants Hogg and Francis set fire to any reserved forest, and that it is not true that the District Forest Officer ordered their prosecution for such offence. . . . It would appear that some misunderstanding arose in the matter of the furnishing of supplies, owing mainly to the incompetence and culpable carelessness of the Deputy Tahsildar; but there was no trespass into that officer's house, and the connected allegations are a tissue of gross exaggeration.

Well, it would be a simple matter to publish the reports and allow the public to judge for themselves. The discrepancy between the charge and the Government statement is too glaring to be glossed over. Why should the Deputy Tahsildar have proved so strangely "incompetent and culpably careless"? What is the evidence of the Hospital Assistant, the Sub-Registrar, the Forest Ranger, and the Inspector of Police? If the District Forest Officer did not order a prosecution for setting fire to the forest, what was the offence he did order a prosecution for? Was there any local investigation of the case? As the matter stands it is wholly unsatisfactory; and one finds it difficult to conceive why the authorities should smother the investigation at the expense of their own self-respect and sense of public justice.

Our Bombay correspondent telegraphed on April 14: "The Bengal and Bombay Committees of the Indian National Congress have unreservedly condemned the action of the *Poona Kal*." "The *Poona Kal*," says the *Champion*, "is a vernacular paper published in that city, and its editor is a graduate of our local university, a Master of Arts, an officer of the Poona Sarvajani Sabha, and a

member of the Poona Congress Committee." The *Poona Kal* on March 17 published an article on the Chapekars and Ranade, in which the writer invited his readers to look at the deeds of these men, not from the point of view of the laws made by Councils, but from the point of view of the law of God and the injunctions of religion. They were, in a word, not murderers, but martyrs. The *Champion* makes a strong appeal to Mr. Tilak (without directly naming him) "to raise his voice against the teachings of the *Poona Kal* and to proclaim his disavowance from and his denunciation of those who have any hand or share in propagating principles of which the infamy and disgrace will not be confined to their open advocates alone, but will reach those who ought to speak and yet remain silent." The appeal is right and proper. We agree also fully with the *Champion* when it points out that the cause of the Congress "is imperilled if men like the editor of the *Poona Kal* are allowed to associate themselves with it." We are glad to receive the decision of the Bengal and Bombay Committees as above stated. There is no room in the Congress for men of such foolish and dangerous views—views the Congress not merely disapproves but regards with indignation and abhorrence.

A Correspondent writes: "The new 'Indian' play 'Carnac Sahib' which has just been produced at Her Majesty's theatre cannot be pronounced a success from whatever point of view it is regarded. It is supposed to represent life in India, and the presentation is most forbidding. Judged merely from the literary point of view, the story does not fulfil the necessary conditions for a good play and it is badly told. The first scene is laid at Dilghaut where, in the absence of General Scrivenor, Colonel Carnac is in command. The country is in a disturbed state, and when the play opens Carnac is expecting an attack on Dilghaut by the Maharája of Motiala. Before this occurs a messenger arrives to ask Carnac's help for Mr. Ford, the English Commissioner at the neighbouring station of Fyzapore, who has been attacked by insurgents, led by the Nawab, and who is in a desperate condition. Carnac is obliged to go, and gives up his command therefore to Colonel Syrett. Carnac and Syrett, once close friends, are now rivals for the affection of Olive Arnison, a lady who may be described as enjoying a short leave of absence from her husband. No sooner has Carnac gone than Syrett determines to attack the Maharája at once, and he returns the next morning with the captured Maharája and his suite. Carnac, also successful, comes back with Ellice Ford, the Commissioner's daughter—whom he has rescued, leaving her father still at Fyzapore. His occupation meanwhile has gone, the Maharája is taken, and Mrs. Arnison is demonstrating in a very obvious way that only the brave deserve the fair. Ten days later a slight wound received by Carnac in a skirmish turns Mrs. Arnison's attention to him again, and Syrett plots with his bearer, Mahomet Ali, for his assassination. Miss Ford interferes to save Colonel Carnac, and when he is obliged to hasten to Fyzapore, where Ford is again in great danger, she exacts a promise that he will allow her to come too.

"The last scene shows a small party of English officers and Native soldiers in the last straits at Fyzapore. Miss Ford's heroism has completely won Carnac's heart and they help each other to support the little company. But the Nawab has surrounded their place of refuge and the Native garrison beg that Carnac will surrender in order to save their lives. They are induced however to hold out, and the play ends happily to the tune of 'Auld Lang Syne' as General Scrivenor's detachment march in to the relief. It will be seen that the story is extremely complicated. It is throughout highly melodramatic. Of the four deaths which occur the Maharája's is perhaps the most graceful. He takes poison to save the trouble of a court-martial. Major Kynaston's death is no doubt intended to be the most improving, but it is unconscionably long. It is almost as difficult to imagine why Mr. Tree has produced the play as why Mr. Jones wrote it. But there are uniforms. Let us hope that, with all its faults, English society in India is a little better than this. The Indian characters in the play are not attractive. But on the whole they compare favourably with the Anglo-Indians."

THE BUDGET DEBATE IN CALCUTTA.

WE can hardly congratulate the unofficial members of the Legislative Council on the discussion which took place on the occasion of Sir James Westland's last financial statement. The report of the debate, as contained in the *Friend of India* (Calcutta), is now before us, and though it is clearly not a full report we have no doubt that all important criticisms adduced by honourable members are duly recorded. Those criticisms, though sometimes individually acute, show on the whole a singular want of grip of the financial situation and a consequent inability to take large views of economic policy. At least if those views exist they failed to find adequate expression. Can it be that the abounding "prosperity" of the Indian Treasury has blunted the edge of criticism and lulled the Opposition—for that is the constitutional function of the unofficial members—into a state of false security? For false we believe it to be. How false and dangerous we will proceed to show.

First, as to the precise position in which the Indian Chancellor of the Exchequer finds himself to-day. That position is one of annual surplus, amounting to four millions a year, based in the first place (as to the year which is passed) upon the revised estimate which is invariably (except where famine has intervened) improved upon in the accounts, and (2) upon an estimate of the future so cautious that in some respects it is frankly admitted to be an under-estimate. We may therefore confidently accept this annual surplus of four millions as more than assured in the present circumstances. That is the present cardinal fact. But what has produced that surplus? The Government talk of recuperative power of trade, of harvests and of general prosperity. These may all be contributing factors, but beside the real cause they pale into insignificance. The real, simple and sufficient cause of the present surplus is the recovery of the rate of Exchange and not the recuperative powers of Indian Finance, for these are two very different and unrelated phenomena. The plain truth is that the existing basis of taxation is the basis of taxation deemed necessary at a time of unprecedentedly low Exchange.

Some of the present taxes were imposed solely to meet the exigencies of Exchange. We never admitted that Exchange was really a sufficient cause at the time; indeed we always contended—and we think we proved—that lavish expenditure on the civil and military services (especially the latter) was far more responsible than low Exchange for the increase of taxation. But our views at that time, which we still hold, do not affect the official explanation given when the additional taxes were imposed. All India remembers how Sir James Westland made his lament at successive Councils, and how he repeated to the point of weariness, and with tautologous emphasis his plea that the "sole cause" for the additional taxation imposed a few years ago was "Exchange, and Exchange alone." Since that time there has been no remission of taxation, but in the meantime Exchange is better for the Government of India by at least four or five crores a year—by just about the amount of the present annual surplus. Consequently we claim to establish our second point, which is that the present basis of taxation is one adjusted to a low Exchange, and that the present surplus is the product of the taxes imposed to meet a fall in Exchange which has ceased to exist. In other words, the new taxation imposed a few years ago, on the Government's express and repeated declaration, for the sole purpose of meeting a specific crisis has done its work and remains without any justification for its continuance.

That is the root of the matter, and it cannot be exposed too often. It is not well that the Indian Government should thus play fast and loose with their own convictions. Money obtained on any pretext is retained on no pretext worth the naming. Money earmarked for a crisis—on the Government's own declaration of policy—is to be retained for an experiment, and "to strengthen our financial position." In an individual such conduct would be called dishonest. In a Government it is self-stultification and an injustice to the taxpayers. The Government of course have given an answer—not so much to this express accusation against them, for the chosen representatives of the people do not seem to have urged it upon the Government in this form—but to their own innate feeling of the unsoundness of their position. They have had experience in this sort of thing.

Once before, and if possible more specifically, they imposed new taxes for a special purpose—the Famine Insurance Fund—only to appropriate part of the produce of those taxes to the general purposes of government. Once before they have stood up before the people and gone back upon their solemn protestations of "sole justification" for special imposts. They were not without excuses then. So now they allege two pretexts: (1) To make good the deficits of the famine years; and (2) To keep money in hand for currency reform.

With regard to the first, by their fruits shall they be judged. Have they repaid the debt raised to meet the famine deficits? Are they contemplating such a course? Are they even—for we will leave them no loophole of escape—reducing *pro tanto* their borrowings for reproductive works, taking the immediate capital needed for these undertakings from their swollen balances and permanently reducing them to that extent? They are not. Indeed, their second excuse takes care of that. It practically negatives the sincerity of the first, as it involves the hoarding of these surpluses against the day of currency tinkering. They have not even replenished the Provincial balances depleted by the famine. Something, it is true, they have given, but not enough; and while they keep their four crores Bombay complains bitterly that the Province must begin the financial year with no working balance at all. Bengal is not satisfied, and generally the Provincial balances are below the legal minimum. The first reason, which might have some validity, will not square with the facts, and the second, which is probably in strict accordance with the intentions of the Government, is out of court. For it deals with a state of things not contemplated when the taxes which have produced the surplus were imposed. It has no relation to the "sole and only cause" of that increase of taxation. In fact the possibility of currency experiments involves the direct negative of the low Exchange which was the real cause. For no currency experiment on the present Government lines would be thinkable if Exchange had not regained a relatively high and stable standard. So we may dismiss the Government's contentions as either inaccurate or irrelevant, leaving their policy in all its flagrant disregard of their own protestations without a redeeming feature.

We have suggested that to allow the Government's action in this respect to pass unchallenged might be due to a false sense of security, but was in any case dangerous. We mean dangerous from the point of view of the Indian taxpayer. As surely as water finds its level, money in the hands of a Government gets spent. The legitimate outlet for an established surplus is remission of taxation. But once that conduit pipe is closed, the money will leak away by other channels of the illegitimate kind; and even if at last continued abundance should shame the Government into some regard for the taxpayers' interests the money they will pay pending that time and the years that will be consumed in the waiting can never be made good. We cast no special slur in this respect upon the Government's wishes in the matter; but we say that surpluses which are not immediately utilised for the remission of taxation do not remain surpluses any the longer for that. They tend to dissipation. They become frittered away upon all kinds of laudable and desirable objects. A striking warning of the probable fate in store for the present surpluses—if we put aside the absorbent powers of currency reform—was suggested by the course of the debate at Calcutta. Member after member rose in his place to suggest new outlets for expenditure. In their new character of stern and watchful economists—a familiar rôle in Governments when it is a question of weakening their financial position—they may resist this natural pressure for a time. But sooner or later, always provided that they do not forestall these demands by some pet proposals of their own, they must yield. Where will the surplus be then? And what chance will the taxpayers have of any substantial lightening of their burdens? Of course the Government will not dare incur any great additions to expenditure without doing something for the taxpayers. But now that the "psychological moment" is passed the taxpayers may rest assured that they no longer have the first claim upon the surplus at the disposal of Government, but will be offered some poor remnant of the money when the Services have had their will of it.

For the rest, having apparently ignored the salient point of the situation and having acquiesced in this piece

of grand larceny by the Government, honourable members contributed little of first-rate importance to the discussion. In place of the able indictment of the Government's financial policy which he formulated last year, Mr. P. M. Mehta seems to have confined himself to a strong, but strictly local, demand for more generous treatment of Bombay at the hands of the Imperial Government. Sir John Woodburn, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, made a more valuable contribution to the debate on the subject of the Provincial balances—showing that the Imperial Government's scurvy treatment of the local governments, transgressing even the understanding of 1881, did not make for economy. In fact the wiser Provincial Governments have long known that it was more profitable to spend than to accumulate these balances, and have before now acted upon the Lieutenant-Governor's discreet hint. Not even the Imperial Government can make any calls upon a balance which does not exist. Finally, Sir James Westland in his reply delivered himself of some more of the financial heresies we have learnt to expect from him on these occasions. One was that you must take an average of years before remitting taxation. This is a splendid idea; because if a Government steadily spends any surplus it may have, the amount ultimately available when spread over a number of years is not likely to lead to any reduction of taxation at all. Another was that the "Provincial Governments do not require a working balance." To comment on this cynical betrayal of the whole system of Provincial contracts with the Imperial Government is unnecessary. We can safely leave Sir J. Westland on this point to the various Provincial Governments. The Viceroy's speech, considered as a contribution to financial discussion, had no value whatever. The chief interest in it is the mystery of the twelve important questions he is going to think over at Simla. We wonder if the separation of judicial and executive functions, the holding of simultaneous examinations for the Civil Service in India and England, the repeal of the recent Press-muzzling Act, the true principles of land revenue assessment, the proper administration of Abkari, the reform of the police, or any other question of real importance to the people of India finds a place upon his list. Let us hope for the best.

ASSAULTS UPON INDIANS BY EUROPEANS.

NOT many months ago an Indian paper called *Kala* (or "The Times") had the audacity to comment upon the frequent assaults committed upon Indians by European sojourners in their land. "It is bad," said the *Kala*, "that the Natives should not possess strength or endurance enough to bear a few strokes or kicks given by Europeans." The adventurous editor, whose reflection can hardly be described as contumacious, was required under the Sedition Laws to express regret for what he had said. He did express regret, and the incident terminated. But the fact remains. And a very serious fact it is. The question was raised, so far as outrages on Indians by European soldiers are concerned, by Lord Stanley of Alderley in the House of Lords on Feb. 14 last. But of course Lord Stanley was overruled by Lord Onslow, who airily assured their lordships that "cases such as the noble lord referred to were not very numerous, only two having occurred in recent years, and one which happened eight or ten years ago." In the gross cases to which Lord Stanley of Alderley had referred, the Barrackpur and Poonamallee cases, Lord Onslow had the triumphant answer that sentences of seven years' rigorous imprisonment had been passed—although in the Poonamallee case that must be a misreport or a blunder, for the sentence was only nine months. What more could you want? The ordinary law had been proved to be adequate. The Government of India had been consulted and had expressed the opinion "that there was no ground for taking any special measures as regards British troops in India." Lord Stanley of Alderley could only remark "that he considered the answer of the noble lord to be very unsatisfactory." So it was. It was so carefully framed as to be grossly inaccurate in fact, while strictly accurate in form; it was calculated to confirm rather than to repress the tone of feeling whence such outrages arise; and it completely misled English people at home. But the question ought to have been followed up, and probed to the bottom. It ought also to have been extended to

all cases of European aggressors. Why, for a year past there has seldom been a week when we have not been compelled to notice some disgraceful assault by a European upon a native of India.

It is scarcely a year yet since the venerated Dr. Sircar, a Municipal Commissioner and an honorary magistrate and past mayor of Barrackpur, was battered till he died by "soldiers three" within fifty yards of a police outpost and close to the railway station. As Lord Onslow said, the assailants got seven years' rigorous imprisonment. But what for? For "causing grievous bodily hurt." Well might the Chief Justice tell the jury—all of them Englishmen—that they had "taken a merciful view of the case"; he himself, with strict regard to law and justice, "summed up for a conviction on the higher offence of manslaughter." Obviously on the facts a verdict of "manslaughter" was the very best the miscreants could hope for. But then the jury "consisted exclusively of Englishmen." Put it the other way now. Suppose the victim had been an equally distinguished professional Englishman and the assailants three Native soldiers, would not every one of them have been hanged, and that too by a jury of their own countrymen? If they had not, what an outcry would there have been throughout Anglo-India. Even this outrageous case, so complacently disposed of by Lord Onslow, is tainted by discrimination by Europeans in favour of Europeans in criminal law under the very eyes of the Chief Justice of Bengal, the first magistrate in the country. In the Poonamallee case the jury—an English jury—convicted Private Knight of "causing death by a rash and negligent act," and the sentence was nine months' rigorous imprisonment. "We are not blood-thirsty," wrote the *Hindu Patriot*, "but justice is justice, and in the present case there appears to have been a lamentable failure of justice." We need not recall the facts, nor yet the heartless abandonment of the boy victim on the road when he tumbled out of the jukta. But we point to the Indian opinion voiced by the *Hindu Patriot*, and we suggest to the reader this question: Would not Knight, if he had been a "darker," have been hanged by the neck till he was dead?

Lord Onslow minimised the mischief in a way that does not quite admit of plain characterisation. He might learn something from the *Englishman*. "There is little doubt," we quoted from the *Englishman* on September 23 last, and for Lord Onslow's benefit we quote again, "that the appearances of British soldiers in courts of justice in answer to criminal charges are out of all proportion to their numbers in this country; and we may confidently say that at least ninety per cent. of these charges are for acts of violence committed towards Natives, varying in all degrees from simple assaults to murder." The *Englishman* was so much impressed with the mischief that it appealed to Government to "take every possible step to remedy it." In the same number (*INDIA*, vol. x, p. 170) we printed an order issued by Lieutenant-General Sir Baker Russell, commander of the Bengal army, desiring all grades of officers "to take such steps as will forcibly impress on their men . . . the cowardliness of striking or otherwise ill-using natives of India," as well as the serious consequences evidenced by the fate of the delinquents in the Sircar case. We can only hope that this order is strictly observed. The worst of it is that there seems to be a fatal facility about European guns, with Europeans at the end of them, when Indians are about. Such an affinity does there appear to be between the shot and the Indian that the guns explode of themselves. We remember a Poona case where a soldier's pop-gun shot a tailor in his shop and a sweeper and a woman in the street with unimpeachable impartiality. The lively soldier got off by paying a composition. The Fatehpur defendant, a few weeks before, was acquitted. Would there have been either acquittal or composition if the accused had been a "darker"? In these two cases the soldiers had no pass. But does it really matter? Lord George Hamilton assured the House a twelvemonth ago that "passes to go out shooting are only given out to men of good character and under very stringent regulations." That may be. Our difficulty is that the Poona defendant was a man "of good character"—that being one of the express reasons for permitting the composition. "These shooting misadventures," wrote the *Pioneer*, "have most mischievous effects; they are not only a direct cause of irritation and resentment but they give malcontents and agitators an

opportunity which they never fail to turn to evil account." True; and they also carry grief and distress into some poor man's family.

The military example goes down into civil practice. On February 18, 1898, we reported a case where an Assam coolie girl was carried off by a European planter and three coolies (to be the planter's mistress). The planter was fined Rs.50. One of the coolies went to gaol for three months. On April 4 (INDIA, vol. ix, pp. 291, 338), Parker, a European in the Customs at Bombay, threw a woman over the Bund Gardens wall at Poona. "I gave her a slight push," he said, "and she went over the wall." She was picked up with compound fracture of the leg; she had fallen only twenty feet; and Parker was acquitted (INDIA, vol. x, p. 83). On May 15 (INDIA, vol. ix, p. 370; vol. x, pp. 226, 241, 314), at Kumerkela, a man, Ambler, in a fit of temper knocked down a coolie and walked away, leaving the man, who incontinently died. A European jury convicted him of "grievous hurt," and he was fined Rs.10 and kept in Court (by way of imprisonment) till the Court rose. The case has since been ordered to be re-tried. On July 1 (INDIA, vol. ix, p. 403) we reported a case at Tirhoot, where an engineer, annoyed at the music of a wedding party, fired his revolver among them, wounding several people; and a Simla case, where two European soldiers threw a whisky-cart, bullocks and driver, down a precipice because they could get no whisky. Why recall more cases? Are they not to be found in the "Index" to our last two half-yearly volumes?

Lord Onslow has not heard of these things. Officialdom dreads that they should be heard of in England. We recall with painful distinctness the silence of Reuter and the *Times* when Dr. Sircar was done to death, to say nothing of minor cases. But if Englishmen shut their eyes and ears to those things other people do not. Witness the London correspondent of the *Hamburgischer Correspondent* of June 14 last:—

It does not, indeed, follow from a case of this sort (Dr. Sircar's) that such behaviour is habitual in the English army. But it is remarkable that not a word is said about this occurrence in the Press here. In India alone are all the particulars set forth in their repulsiveness. The predominance of England, which is ever more and more threatened by internal and external dangers in Southern Asia, takes damage alike from incidents of this character and from the conspiracy of silence in the London Press.

It undoubtedly amounts to a tacit "conspiracy of silence"; and a singularly ostrich-like proceeding it is. For "murder will out." Still we must acknowledge that things are looking better within the last twelvemonth; the English press is gradually awakening to the sufferings of India. With that awakening it will become more and more difficult for officials like Lord Onslow to dare to make such answers to questions in Parliament. The public opinion of England will be brought to bear upon these cowardly assaults on Indians, and upon the cognate practice of contemptuous treatment in word and in manner. So little new is this offensive attitude that examples might be adduced from any year of the century. We are content to recall to Lord Onslow one of forty years' standing—an anticipation of the recent case of Rowcroft and Sohoni. On December 23 last (INDIA, vol. x, p. 332), we printed a letter written by the celebrated Professor Augustus de Morgan to the Dean of Ely. De Morgan had superintended the reprinting of a famous "Treatise on Problems of *Maxima* and *Minima*, solved by Algebra, by Ramchandra, late Teacher of Science, Delhi College," a volume expressly stated to be "reprinted by order of the Honourable Court of Directors of the East India Company for circulation in Europe and in India, in acknowledgment of the merit of the author, and in testimony of the sense entertained of the importance of independent speculation as an instrument of national progress in India." De Morgan wrote:—

Had I been publishing independently of Government, I should perhaps have added what Ramchandra meant me to add—as I judge by his mode of telling it—that he had been beaten in the public road by a man in a British uniform for not making a *saltam* as he passed. We talk a great deal about the ways and means of preserving India; but few know that this treatment of educated and civilised Natives is always going on. We are constantly sending out to India a parcel of brutes who have no idea of the people they have to govern, and who will, each of them, make a few hundred malcontents among educated men who are revered by the mass of the people.

We commend this case to all whom it may concern. And we seriously ask the British public to consider whether it is wise, honourable, just, or safe, that such egregious insolence should be permitted to prevail any longer.

OUR LONDON LETTER.

(FROM A PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

I SUPPOSE that anyone who has watched the House of Commons for a few years will agree with me when I say that the personal incidents are those which attract the most attention quite apart from their intrinsic importance. Thus on Thursday last it was Budget night in the House, and everyone ought to be duly impressed and even made solemn by the mere word "Budget." At the same time, as a matter of fact, every man in the House, though feeling a certain amount of curiosity about the provisions of the financial statement, was really more interested in waiting for the return of Sir William Harcourt. The right hon. gentleman had not been in his place this Session, and that means he had not "shown up" in the House since his resignation of the leadership of the Liberal party in that House. It had been ascertained through what are called the "usual channels" that the right hon. gentleman meant to return to the scenes of his triumphs in time to hear the Chancellor of the Exchequer's statement. So I, like many another, kept a keen and watchful outlook on Thursday last.

All Budget nights are very much alike. The House fills up, both as regards the members' benches and the Strangers' Gallery. There is an impatient hurry so far as questions are concerned; indeed everything is hustled to one side that members may hear what the Chancellor has to say. So questions were being rattled through just before four last Thursday. Mr. Brodrick, the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, was just snubbing Sir Ellis Ashmead Bartlett in almost as perfect a manner as that of Lord Curzon of Kedleston when the laughter caused by the discomfiture of Silomo suddenly changed into a roar of prolonged cheering from both sides of the House.

And so Sir William came slowly in from behind the Speaker's chair. The cheering which hailed the return of the old veteran "slogger" was by no means confined to one side of the House, for I noticed that the Tories shouted "hear, hear" almost as lustily as the Radicals. The fact is that Sir William is a great House of Commons man. When he rises he generally shows it sport and that is what the House has always appreciated and what it always will appreciate. Sir William made his way slowly to the end of the Front Opposition Bench and took his seat by Mr. John Morley. I noticed with some interest that no one cheered the old veteran more loudly than Mr. Chamberlain, and when he saw a chance the Colonial Secretary crossed the floor and shook hands with his redoubtable antagonist. Indeed Joseph sat himself down on the steps of the Radical gangway and chatted gaily with Mr. John Morley and Sir William Harcourt. The three were evidently on very good terms with themselves and each other, for they rolled about and shook with laughter. Some of the strangers in the gallery appeared to be as much alarmed by this manifestation of friendship between those who are supposed by the public to be enemies as was poor Pickwick by the hob-nobbing between the hostile counsel in the immortal trial for breach of promise.

I am not going to try to explain the Budget. All Budget nights resemble each other in certain particulars. The Chancellor always keeps back his really interesting secrets to the end of his speech, well knowing that if he did not, and if he made the critical revelation at the beginning, no one would stop to hear the rest. Again the good private member makes a desperate effort at first to keep up with the Finance Minister as millions and deficits and surpluses are expounded. Indeed there is something pathetic in the spectacle of the good member, armed with a stump of a pencil, trying to take down all the figures connected with excise, stamps, and all the other details always trotted out on Budget night. He soon tires of this futile game, and I am certain that no one really understands the Budget until the next day, and there is no doubt whatever that but few are enlightened even then.

But dull as a man may be he is no doubt able to comprehend the fact that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has seized on two millions from the Sinking Fund! Sir William Harcourt and others pointed out that this was a sort of Swiveller-cum-Micawber business. "The Chancellor's whole speech," said Sir William, in a rattling and roaring speech of about ten minutes, could have been

expressed in the words "they've seized on the Sinking Fund." And to repudiate repayment, even for a time, is "bad business." Only a gigantic war and the necessary sudden outlay could justify anything of the sort. Our financial credit has hitherto stood high and steady. But I am afraid that the Budget of 1899 may shake that comfortable assurance. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, confronted by a deficit of more than two millions did not hesitate, for the sake of trying to conceal the result of extravagance, to capture about two millions by ceasing to pay our debts. This is an easy method of making both ends meet. If you never pay anyone you can always have plenty in your pocket.

But I need not enlarge on the ethics of finance to readers in India. We treat India in quite an original fashion in this respect. I notice, for instance, that money is required for something called the "tropical school of medicine." It may or may not be a good thing, and I do not mind acknowledging that I do not know what it is. But I notice that the India Office has very "generously" given £1,000 for the good of this particular cause, while other Government departments have shown no very great readiness to contribute. This may appear remarkable to those who do not know the facts, but when I explain that the £1,000 which the India Office hands over comes from the starving and overtaxed people of India, and when I add that the India Office is practically responsible to no one the reader will be able to understand that sort of generosity which costs the giver nothing.

I have enlarged perhaps too much about the Budget, and so I must condense my other remarks. After capturing two millions from the Sinking Fund, the Chancellor of the Exchequer still wanted about £900,000 in order to make up his deficit and give him a reasonable margin for contingencies. He therefore got £450,000 out of wine and £420,000 out of stamps—two sources of revenue which I think could well be taxed even more heavily without hurting anyone other than the rich. This minor part of the Budget was not objectionable, but the tampering with the Sinking Fund was a sort of Dick Swiveller or Wilkins Micawber style of finance of which Sir Michael Hicks-Beach must have been secretly ashamed. He was soon criticised from the Front Opposition Bench, and the fact that Sir Henry Fowler led the attack suggests that he will be the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Liberals next gain office. Sir Henry will probably do better in such a post than at the India Office. And speaking about the India Office in connexion with the Budget reminds me that Lord George Hamilton, a week or two before the Chancellor made his statement, made a speech which could only be understood as meaning that the Sinking Fund was not going to be tampered with. His lordship now explains that he was mis-understood, or mis-reported, or something of the sort. Some men are always being misunderstood, and Lord George is one of them. The real explanation of the business seems to be that the Secretary for India, though in the Cabinet, is not one of the men entrusted with secrets of any importance. So at least Mr. Gibson Bowles suggested.

On Tuesday an attempt to raise a discussion on the Sugar Bounty policy of the Government resulted in a "count out," while discussions on Wei-hai-wei, London water, and the "acquisition of small houses," have inspired no real interest. We may perhaps have a real debate when the proposed grant to the Sirdar comes on, for I am pleased to know that Mr. John Morley will oppose the grant point blank and tooth and nail, and will thus once more justify his claim to the title "honest John."

CHRONICLE OF THE WEEK.

THURSDAY, April 13.—In the House of Commons the Chancellor of the Exchequer made his annual Budget statement. The estimated receipts for the year on the basis of existing taxation were £110,287,000 while the estimated expenditure was £112,927,000. In order to meet the estimated deficit of £2,640,000 the Chancellor of the Exchequer made three proposals: (1) reduction of debt charge by £2,000,000; (2) new and increased stamp duties estimated to yield £450,000; and (3) an increased wine duty estimated to yield £420,000. As these sums amounted to £2,870,000, there was an estimated final surplus of £230,000. The proposal to reduce the debt charge provoked very severe criticism from Sir William Harcourt, Sir Henry Fowler, Mr. Courtney, and others.

Lord Peel authorised the contradiction of the report that he had resigned the chairmanship of the Licensing Commission.

Foeling in Germany with reference to the Samoan troubles was said to be growing more excited and bitter. Denunciations of the attitude of Great Britain and America were freely indulged in by many of the journals.

The *Figaro* published the conclusion of General Gonsse's deposition before the Criminal Chamber in the Dreyfus case, and also the depositions of four other witnesses.

FRIDAY, April 14.—In the House of Commons the consideration of the Navy Estimates was resumed in Committee of Supply, and a discussion took place regarding Wei-hai-wei.

Lord Peel issued a circular letter to the members of the Liquor Commission, stating that he had invited those members who were in general agreement with his views to meet separately for the purpose of deciding on the ultimate form of their report and recommendations. In the meantime he had directed the secretary to give every assistance to those commissioners who were preparing a report on different lines.

The Samoa question was the subject of an important statement in the German Reichstag by the Foreign Minister. Herr von Bulow emphasised Germany's adherence to the Samoan Act, the rearrangement of which he declared to be desirable. Germany insisted upon unanimous action by the three Powers, and would not regard as legally binding any changes to which she had not given assent. This view had been accepted both at London and Washington. He dwelt upon the neutral attitude assumed by Germany in Samoa, and declared that "a final settlement cannot be prejudiced by local events" in the island. The Special Commission would take over the provisional government of the islands and exercise the highest powers. It would also consider what provisions would be necessary for the future government of the country and report to the Governments represented. The settlement would not take place on the spot, but "can only be the result of an agreement among the three Cabinets." While the whole question was not of the first importance, it must not be forgotten that it was their duty to protect the trade, business and property of their countrymen in Samoa, and that they possessed treaty rights the maintenance of which was regarded by the German nation as a point of honour.

The Paris *Figaro* published the depositions of General Bois-deffre and some other witnesses before the Criminal Chamber on the Dreyfus case.

SATURDAY, April 15.—The Duke of Devonshire, at Presteigne, recalling the fact that he became connected with the district thirty years ago, when, as the Marquis of Hartington, he was elected for the Radnor boroughs, said the retrospect could not but remind him that he had already had a much longer political life than fell to the share of most men, and that the time must be very nearly approaching, if it had not already arrived, when it would be necessary for him to think of making room for younger and more active men.

It was reported that a police party under Captain May were attacked on Friday in the Kau-lung extension territory, and the mat-shed accommodation for the troops was again burned. To-day the torpedo-boat destroyer "Fame" with 100 men of the Hong-kong regiment proceeded to the new territory and found over 1,000 uniformed Chinese soldiers posted on the hills. The Chinese opened fire with guns and rifles, but did no damage. After the "Fame" had shelled the assailants the troops fired a volley and charged, whereupon the Chinese bolted. General Gascoigne left Hong-kong for Tolo harbour with a detachment of the Welsh Fusiliers.—The British Government had acceded to the Chinese request for six months' delay to make the necessary arrangements for the removal of the Maritime Customs stations beyond the Kau-lung territory.

MONDAY, April 17.—In the House of Commons the Small Houses (Acquisition of Ownership) Bill was read a second time, and referred to the Standing Committee on Law. The Army Annual Bill was read a third time. The "strongest Government of modern times" made another pitiable surrender by withdrawing from the Education Code, at the dictation of the Church party, a modest proposal that pupil teachers should not be recognised in schools where there were not at least two adult teachers employed. Sir John Gorst was, as usual, "thrown overboard."

Sir T. Esmonde sent a long communication to the Nationalist papers announcing his resignation of the position of Whip to the Irish Parliamentary party, and explaining the circumstances which compelled him to take that course.

The Premier of Victoria instructed the Agent-General in London to protest against the increased wine duties proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which experts declared would seriously cripple the Australian export trade. The Premier of South Australia was negotiating with the other colonies for the presentation of a joint protest against the wine and stamp duties.

Sir C. Tupper referred in the Dominion House of Commons to the proposed increase of the stamp duty on foreign and colonial bonds, stocks, and shares negotiated in Great Britain, and urged that measures should be taken to secure exemption for the colonies. Sir W. Laurier said that no doubt Lord

Strathcona would look after Canadian interests without delay.

News reached New York that General Lawton had been recalled to Manila from the operations against the insurgents in the south, as his troops would be needed for the northward advance. He had declared that with the forces at his disposal he could go through the island. But if a Government was to be established, it would be necessary to garrison all the towns, and it would take 100,000 men to pacify the islands. A New York correspondent said that this intelligence was regarded in Washington as very serious, and that even more grave, from the political point of view, was the fact that the Government of Minnesota and a Republican Senator for South Dakota had urged that the volunteer regiments from their States serving in the Philippines should be recalled, as their continued retention in service was illegal, and the men themselves were anxious to return.

TUESDAY, April 18.—In the House of Commons the Metropolitan Water Companies (Government) Bill was read a third time. Mr. Buchanan called attention to the subject of national expenditure, and moved a resolution declaring that it was excessive and capable of reduction without compromising the safety or legitimate influence of the country abroad, or the efficiency of its internal administration. The motion was rejected by 133 votes to 69.

At a meeting of the Royal Statistical Society held at the Royal United Service Institution, a paper by Mr. G. Martineau was read on "The Statistical Aspect of the Sugar Question," in which he cited statistics to show the extent to which the bounty system had artificially developed the production of beet-root sugar. In a discussion which followed the reading of the paper, Sir R. Giffen disputed the theory that bounties alone had been the cause of the increased production of sugar during the last twenty years, and he also argued that the imposition of countervailing duties would not necessarily result in the abolition of the bounties.

Mr. R. Bell, general secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, delivered an address at a meeting of railway men in the Holborn Town Hall, describing his experiences in America relative to automatic couplings, in favour of which he spoke strongly.

A Parliamentary paper was issued containing statistics of the proceedings in English and Welsh County Courts under the Workmen's Compensation Act during the first six months of its operation.

WEDNESDAY, April 19.—In the House of Commons Mr. Dillon moved the Second Reading of a Bill for the repeal of the Crimes Act. The motion was negatived by 220 votes to 141.

"PROTECTION IN INDIA."

CODDEN CLUB'S LEAFLET ON THE SUGAR DUTY ACT.

By the courtesy of Mr. Harold Cox, Secretary of the Codden Club, we are enabled to reproduce the following article, written by him, and circulated in leaflet form by the Codden Club:—

The proposal of the Indian Government to impose countervailing import duties on bounty-fed sugar has evidently taken the public at home by surprise. The absolute free trade tariff maintained by India—an open door for all the world—has so long been one of our favourite boasts that it is startling to find the Indian Government, with the approval of the Secretary of State, suddenly proposing a differential tariff. The word "suddenly" here used applies not merely to the announcement of the decision, but to the decision itself. As late as October 31 of last year, the Indian Government was evidently altogether sceptical as to the necessity for any such step as that now announced. In a circular sent round to the provincial Governments asking for information as to the alleged injury done to Indian agriculturists by the importation of foreign sugar, the Secretary to the Revenue and Agricultural Department writes:—

"The Government of India have no clear evidence before them that the increasing sugar imports have had, or are tending to, such serious consequences. The area under sugar-cane in the different provinces has not declined of late years, nor in recent revenue or settlement reports have any observations regarding the unprofitableness of the industry been noticed. The extent to which the refined sugars from abroad compete in the Indian markets with the coarse sugars ordinarily manufactured by native processes, and tends to supplant the latter, is uncertain. There is probably an increasing demand for sugar in India for domestic consumption and for spirit distilling and sweetmeat making, and as the sugar-cane area has not expanded of late years, it may be that the increasing imports have not been in excess of the necessary demand.

If these were the views of the Indian Government on October 31, 1898, it is not easy to understand what can have occurred in the interval to produce such a startling change of policy.

INDIAN PRODUCTION OF SUGAR.

In the same circular the Government of India goes on to point out that the area under sugar-cane in India is estimated at about 2,500,000 acres, and the output of "coarse, unrefined" sugar at about the same number of tons, one ton being the estimated output per acre. Taking the value of this coarse, unrefined sugar at 100 rupees a ton, the total value of the Indian production of sugar is estimated by the Indian Government at Rs. 25,000,000. The total value of the imports of sugar of all kinds into India in the year 1897-98 was returned at Rs. 4,700,000. On these figures the comment of the Government of India is that "the imports bear a considerable proportion, as regards value, to the production of the country." The proportion, it will be observed, is only a trifle over 1 to 6. The comparison, however, is between commodities of very different intrinsic value. The Indian "coarse, unrefined" sugar, to use the phrase of the Government of India, is stuff that looks more like mud than sugar. It is squeezed from the sugar-cane by the rudest of presses, and is prepared by methods whose only claim to respect lies in their hoary antiquity. A large part of the imported sugar on the other hand is the purest sugar that German chemical science can prepare. Not unnaturally the market prices of the two commodities somewhat differ. According to a trade paper German granulated sugar fetches at least double the price of native Indian sugar. Therefore to get a true picture of the relation of foreign imports to Indian production we must compare quantities as well as values. This comparison shows that as against an estimated Indian production of 2,500,000 tons of sugar, the import, in the last recorded year, of all foreign sugar, beet and cane combined, was only 250,000 tons. In other words the importation was less than one-tenth of the Indian production. A Government that can take alarm at such a proportion as this must be timorous indeed.

INAPPRECIABLE EFFECT OF BOUNTIES.

But it may be said the proportion may be growing at such a rapid rate as to justify a cautious Government in taking steps betimes. It is true that the imports of beet sugar into India are growing rapidly, but there is no evidence that this growth is out-running the "increasing demand for sugar in India for domestic consumption, and for spirit distilling and sweetmeat making." Still less is there any evidence that the bounties are the cause of the increased import of German and Austrian sugar. If bounties had all the effect attributed to them, French sugar should sweep the market, for French bounties are more than double those paid by Germany. Yet hardly any French sugar at all finds its way into India. The reason is simple. The German refiners make a class of sugar that the Indian consumer wants and the French refiners do not. Moreover, the Germans and Austrians have not the Indian market to themselves. A large quantity of sugar, unaided by bounties, has always gone from Mauritius to India, and continues to go and even to increase in quantity. Here are the figures for the last five years:—

IMPORTS OF SUGAR INTO INDIA IN MILLIONS OF CWTs.

Year ending March 31.	1894.	1895.	1896.	1897.	1898.
Beet	·2	·3	·7	·9	2·1
Cane	1·9	2·2	2·0	2·0	2·5
Total	2·1	2·5	2·7	2·9	4·6

This table shows conclusively that although the imports of beet sugar are rapidly growing, the imports of cane sugar are growing also, therefore clearly it cannot be the bounties alone that are the cause of the increased import.

THE FAMINE YEAR.

Is, then, the increased import due to a decline in Indian production? This question is apparently answered in the negative by the Government of India in the passage above quoted; but it is worth while to look at the figures more closely. The agricultural statistics for India—taking them for what they are worth—show that there was an appreciable falling off in the acreage under sugar in the year 1896-7 as compared with the previous year, and it is therefore not unreasonable to infer that the increased import of foreign sugar in 1897-98 was called for in order to make good the deficiency of the Indian sugar crop still in the ground in 1896-97. "But why," the protectionist triumphantly asks, "why was there less acreage devoted to sugar in 1896-97? Was it not because the Indian cultivator knew that German bounties would deprive him of all profit?" The answer to this ingenious question is very simple. The year 1896-97 was a year of famine. That is all. But it is fully sufficient to explain the whole falling off in the acreage under sugar. The following figures show that the terrible cause which reduced the sugar acreage reduced also, in as great or greater proportion, the acreage devoted to other crops.

EFFECT OF FAMINE YEAR ON INDIAN CROPS.

Crops.	Millions of Acres.		Reduction per cent.
	1895-96.	1896-97.	
Rice	69.2	66.2	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Wheat	18.5	16.2	12 $\frac{1}{2}$
Pulse, etc. ..	84.2	78.2	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
Oil Seeds ..	12.8	10.5	18
Sugar.. ..	3.1	2.8	10

Not only does the table show that in 1896-97 sugar only shared the fate of other crops, but it also incidentally shows what a small proportion the Indian sugar crop bears to the total crops of India. So small is the proportion that even if it could be proved that foreign competition were really injuring the Indian cultivators of sugar, it would be a monstrous act of injustice to tax the producers of all other crops in order that the sugar growers might get a higher price.

INDIA EXPORTS AS WELL AS IMPORTS SUGAR.

There is, however, no evidence of such injury. The conclusive proof that the Indian cultivator of the sugar-cane is not really injured either by Mauritius or by German imported sugar is this: that India still continues to export sugar herself. In normal years the Indian export of sugar averages in quantity almost exactly half of the sugar imported. Last year the proportion fell to an eighth. The cause of that fall has been already explained. The bad season of 1896-97 heavily reduced the acreage under sugar, and as a necessary consequence in 1897-98 there was less Indian sugar available for export and a greater demand for foreign sugar to satisfy the wants of the Indian consumer. That India should simultaneously import and export sugar is easily intelligible. The sugar which India exports is coarse, unrefined, and the great bulk of it—about three-quarters—is sent to this country, where it is largely used in the brewing trade, and also for feeding stock. What India imports is refined sugar, mainly from Germany, Austria, and Mauritius. It may be argued that it would be better for India to refine her own coarse sugar instead of selling it in an unrefined and therefore less valuable condition. Perhaps so. But by parity of reasoning it would be better if India worked up all her own raw cotton into yarn and calico instead of leaving Lancashire to do the work. We need not, however, ask what Lancashire would say to any proposal to alter the Indian tariff with a view to stimulating the Indian manufacture of cotton goods. Yet the step which Lord George Hamilton has now sanctioned is undertaken at the instigation of Indian sugar refiners, and will undoubtedly give an artificial stimulus to their industry.

INDIAN SUGAR REFINERS.

That industry is neither old nor important. There are a number of small factories in Bengal, many of them very small indeed, and there is one large factory. In the North-West Provinces there is a large factory at Shahjahanpur, and a smaller one at Cawnpore. In the Punjab there is one sugar refinery of moderate size, and in Madras there are three. No figures giving the total output of these few factories are published; nor is the capital invested accurately known. At a liberal guess the total capital may be put at three-quarters of a million sterling. Even the best of these factories have hitherto turned out only second-class sugar. Just as Indian cotton mills cannot touch Lancashire in higher grades of cotton goods, so Indian sugar refineries are unable to come near to the pure sugar that Germany and Austria produce. It may be that the Indian refiners argue, as do the Barbadian sugar growers, that it pays them better to produce a sugar of inferior quality for which there is a ready market than to strive for greater excellence. But if they use that argument they are obviously not entitled to demand that the people who prefer a better class of sugar shall be prevented by the Government from obtaining it. If, on the other hand, through defective machinery or from want of skill, they are incapable of producing as good sugar as the Germans sell, surely such incapacity gives them no claim to a protective tariff. The allegation that they are beaten because of German bounties is too ridiculous to be seriously considered by anyone who knows the facts. The bounty that Nature gives to the Indian refiner is far more valuable than the small sum that the German and Austrian Governments pay on sugar exports. The present German bounty is 1s. 3d. a cwt. on unrefined, and 1s. 9d. on refined sugar; sums which will certainly not cover the cost of ocean transit and landing, and railway charges. On the other hand, the Indian refiner has the best of raw materials, the sugar-cane, at his very door; he has coal at a moderate price; he has the cheapest and most docile labour in the world, and he stands in the very centre of his market. If, with these advantages he cannot beat the Germans, let him frankly confess his incompetence and take to another trade.

SWEETMEAT MAKERS AND SUGAR CONSUMERS.

It is, in fact, entirely beyond dispute that the large import

of German and Austrian sugar into India is determined not by the question of price, but by the question of quality. The figures of the Indian Customs prove it. If we compare quantities and values of the so-called bounty-fed sugar and of the other sugar, mostly Mauritius, imported into India in the year 1897-98, we obtain the startling result that the bounty-fed sugar was the dearer by nearly 13d. a cwt. Yet Mauritius sugar, especially of late years, has been of very fair quality, and certainly far better than the sugar produced in Indian refineries. If, then, Indian consumers are willing to buy German and Austrian sugar in such large quantities, and to pay for it a considerably higher price than they pay for any other sugar, the conclusion is irresistible that they buy it because, for the purposes for which this sugar is intended, quality is more important than price. It is mainly for the manufacture of sweetmeats that German sugar is required in India, just as the same pure sugar is required in England for the manufacture of high-class confectionery. The sweetmeat industry is one of the most extensive of all the indigenous manufactures of India. The consumption of sweetmeats by the natives of India is enormous, and is intimately bound up with the social and religious habits of the people. In the bazaars, in the railway stations, along the roads, outside the courts, everywhere is the sweetmeat seller to be seen, and always he seems to be doing a thriving trade. In private houses the confection of sweetmeats of a high quality is a matter of pride with the mistress of the household. Sugar is thus the raw material for an enormous native industry, exceeding in value, perhaps a hundred-fold, the industry of sugar refining. In addition, a large and growing number of natives of India demand high-class sugar for direct consumption. They are not, it is true, the poorest of the community. They belong, for the most part, to the well-to-do classes, and especially to the great middle-class, which has so rapidly grown in numbers and prosperity under British rule. To tax this class, or any other class, of the Indian people upon an article of daily consumption, not in order to raise revenue for the purposes of government, but in order to put money into the pockets of a handful of private persons who own shares in sugar refineries, is an outrage upon equity.

THE DANGER TO INDIA'S EXPORTS.

It is important also to realise that this policy involves a great danger to India's export trade. The exports of India to Germany in the year 1897-98 were Rs. 7,100,000, whereas the imports from Germany were only Rs. 2,400,000. More than half of the German imports into India consisted of sugar, and it is therefore quite possible that Germany may retaliate upon India for this attack upon her trade. Already, indeed, the Berlin papers have threatened such retaliation. If these two great countries are to be insane enough to try and injure one another by hostile tariffs, it is obvious that India has most to lose at such a game. Nor does the question end with India. At the present moment Great Britain is engaged in negotiating a commercial treaty with Germany. It is wise at such a moment to provoke German ill-will by excluding German sugars from our greatest dependency? Is it likely that the Germans will believe that such a step is due to the spontaneous wish of the people of India? To them it will appear as a flagrant violation of the "open door" policy so persistently advocated by our Government. It creates, as Sir James Westland frankly avowed in his speech before the Viceroy's Council, a preferential tariff in favour of Mauritius, solely on the ground that Mauritius is largely inhabited by Indian settlers. Similar arguments are used by the French for closing the door against our trade in Tunis and Madagascar. Moreover, even from the point of view of the abolition of bounties, this action of the Indian Government is ill-timed. It is not Germany but France who is the real sinner in the matter of bounties. Germany and Austria are both willing to abolish bounties if France would agree. Yet this new Indian tax will seriously injure German and Austrian trade, while leaving France scatheless.

HOW TO DEVELOP INDIA'S SUGAR INDUSTRIES.

The true policy of the Indian Government in this matter is not to try and shut out German sugar by a protective tariff, but to try by positive means to develop the Indian sugar industries. A customs tariff creates nothing; it only destroys. The people of India will be the poorer for the new duty, because it will deprive them of the power to buy the particular quality of sugar they want. The Indian producers may be able to charge a little more for their inferior product, but the duty will not help them to improve their antiquated methods of manufacture. It would be far better for the Indian Government to spend part of its present surplus in teaching its subjects how to grow an improved stock of sugar-cane, and how to extract and manufacture the sugar by scientific methods. It is by means of scientific cultivation and scientific manufacture that the magnificent tea industry of India has been built up, and by the same means India could quickly create a sugar industry that no other country could rival. Instead of helping in the development of such an industry, Lord George Hamilton proposes to throw India back upon methods of sugar production that were already ancient when the Honourable East India Company first received its charter from Queen Elizabeth.

MR. MACLEAN AND DR. SARAT MULLICK
ON THE NEW ACT.

The following letters appeared in the *Times* of April 19:—
TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES."

SIR,—I am quite ashamed to trouble you again; but as the Government of India, after having burked discussion in India and tried to stifle it in this country also on the subject of its new fiscal policy, continues to fire long shots at me from the safe security of Simla, I am bound to protect myself against such misrepresentations as are contained in the remarkable telegram published in the *Times* of to-day. I need not waste time or your space in commenting on such statements as that, "The *Dombay Gazette* regrets Mr. Maclean's advocacy of an exploded heresy"—that is to say, I presume, of free trade. But I must protest against the repeated assertion that the whole Press of India is unanimous in approving the Sugar Duties Act. I have already shown in your columns that this assertion is inaccurate; but what do they know or care at Simla about public opinion in India? Since the Press of India discovered the fact, which was studiously concealed from their knowledge till the English papers reached India a fortnight after the Bill had been passed into law, that I had, as representing a great body of public opinion in this country, strongly denounced the recent legislation, many Indian papers have warmly supported me in the line I have thought it my duty to take. The *Champion*, for instance, in a series of elaborate and extremely well-informed articles, has proved that absolutely no case existed for imposing the new duties, that there has been no falling off in the immense area of land under sugar-cane cultivation, that the whole quantity of refined sugar consumed in India is a mere drop in the bucket, amounting only to about $\frac{1}{16}$ per cent of the population out of a probable total consumption of at least 81 lb. a head, and that if any refineries have been closed in India their failure is due to bad methods of working and not to competition. The same paper alleges that, "It was decreed that the Bill should be passed by hook or by crook, and it was therefore ordered that the Bill should pass post-haste without even a reference to a Select Committee. That ceremony might have unmasked the organised hypocrisy of the whole game. Thus is fiscal legislation rushed through the Imperial Council, and thus our laws are made, which the ignorant and ill-informed official *claqueurs* in the Press afterwards extol to the skies, and the interested official correspondents flash telegrams to mislead an ignorant British public on the other side. We still demand that the author of the Act will produce his statistics and prove that there is a real danger to the Indian native industry." This is a specimen of what India really thinks of the Act. Do not doubt they will say at Simla, in their high and mighty fashion, "Oh! we don't read the *Champion*."—I am, Sir, your obedient servant.

April 17.

J. M. MACLEAN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES."

SIR,—The Indian Sugar Bounties Bill, which received the sanction of the Viceregal Council last month, has aroused in this country a great deal of controversy which in many instances has been as acrimonious as it has been irrelevant. This Bill further amends the Tariff Act of 1894, and has been hailed by one universal chorus of praise by the Indian people. To them it is the dawn of a better and a brighter day when the Imperial Government had at last realised that struggling infant industries in India cannot compete with other countries without a certain degree of discriminative legislative aid. In the present case it has been urged that there is no necessity for such legislation. A few authentic facts will, I trust, carry conviction to all but the incurably obstinate. It is estimated that the total area of sugar cultivation is three million acres. The latest returns show that that area has contracted to 2,600,000 acres. That is thirteen per cent. less. But this does not show the situation accurately. My countrymen are very conservative in many ways, and especially as regards their daily occupation. They would much rather go on for a long time plying their trade at a loss, hoping for a turn in the tide, than take to a new occupation. Further, those who know anything of the sugar cultivation know that it is carried on under a system of advances, by which the cultivators are bound to cultivate a certain specified amount of sugar-cane. For these two reasons the returns are not conclusive, and the amount of loss and the area of contraction is less apparent than it is real. The bounty-fed sugar has already led to the closure of many refineries. The Director of the North-West Provinces, where 1,300,000 acres of sugar-cane are cultivated, says that already 180 refineries have been closed and 60 more in the district of Aizmirgh alone. Then, again, turning from British territory to the independent States, we find the Resident of Hyderabad lamenting the fact that only 11,638 maunds of refined sugar were received from the North-West Provinces in 1897-98 in place of 27,702 maunds in 1893-94. Thus in five years there was a falling-off of more than a half. On the other hand, the bounty-fed sugar has increased from 50,158 maunds in 1893-94 to 127,625 maunds in 1897-98, or more than double. At the same time the former imports. The bounty-fed sugar has not yet begun to compete with "gur," the native Indian unrefined product, but within the last five years the bounty-fed sugar has reduced the price of refined sugar by twelve per cent., and says the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, "the importation of the bounty-fed sugar in increasing quantities will lead to the further underselling of the native refineries." As regards Calcutta, the Chamber of Commerce there states in its annual report that this bounty-fed sugar "would probably result in the closing of the remaining sugar refineries in the district of Jessore, a large number of which had already ceased to work." Lastly, there is the Punjab, from where the Lieutenant-Governor telegraphs to headquarters, "imported sugar almost entirely superseding Indian refined sugar."

There is one other point which has been unnecessarily laboured, and that is that a countervailing duty on a bounty is Protection. One of your correspondents has already made short work of that cry of ignorance. If it is Protection, it is Protection not against Free

Trade, but against unfair trade, inasmuch as the Indian produce has to compete against European sugar, which but for the artificial aid given would not have been existent.

My countrymen are deeply grateful for the new policy of the Government, which like the proverbial "stitch in time" has "saved nine." It is far better to anticipate events and take protective measures beforehand. It is far easier to revive and encourage an existing industry than to restore one which has been extinguished. The alternative is too appalling to contemplate. "It would produce," says the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, "serious discontent in the sugar-growing regions. . . . Stability of the Government would be affected, because the reduction of the profits of a valuable crop would impair the rent-paying capacity of the tenants, and thus cripple the resources of the landlords."

Finally, there is one other point left in this controversy—that is the conflict between the interests of the producer and the consumer. That is a point over which political economists will ever quarrel. The practical solution seems to be best summed up in the West India Sugar Commission report, which states that "the benefit which the British empire as a whole derives from any lowering of the price of sugar due to the operation of the bounty system is too dearly purchased by the injury which that system imposes on our Majesty's West Indian and other subjects dependent on the sugar industry." In India the hardship is much more so because the refined sugar is consumed by the wealthy, who can afford to pay the extra duty.—Yours faithfully,

SARAT K. MULLICK, M.B., O.M.
62, Margaret Street, Cavendish Square, April 7.

Imperial Parliament.

Thursday, April 13.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

ALLEGED OVERCROWDING OF A TROOPSHIP.

Sir JOHN LING asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, whether he was aware that the chartered troopship "Simla" recently brought from India 1,022 men, 47 women, and 99 children:

And, whether consideration would be given to the serious risk incurred in the event of a collision or shipwreck by crowding 1,168 persons, in addition to the crew, on board one vessel.

Mr. GOSCHEN, who was received with cheers, said: It is not admitted that the "Simla" was overcrowded on her recent voyage from India. It is held that there is no more risk in the event of collision or shipwreck in the case of large ships than there is in the case of small ships. Indeed experience shows that the risk is less.

Friday, April 14.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE SUGAR DUTY ACT.

Captain SINCLAIR asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he was aware that the Governments of Trinidad and British Guiana bear part of the costs of supplying cheap labour to the sugar planters in these Colonies:

And, whether this virtual bounty on the production of sugar would bring Trinidad and Demerara within the scope of the new Indian countervailing duties.

Lord G. HAMILTON. The part cost of repatriation borne by West Indian Colonies is not a bounty, and does not cheapen the cost of labour below its natural level.

The Indian Government impose for humanitarian purposes a liability upon the Colonies to provide at the close of the contract means for the return of the coolie to India if he wishes to go back to his native land; and the Colonial Government bear a portion of this artificial enhancement of the cost of providing labour.

Sir WILFRED LAWSON asked the Secretary of State for India, what were the amounts of the export bounties on sugar paid by Germany and France respectively:

And what were the amounts respectively of German and French sugar imported into India.

Lord G. HAMILTON. In France the direct bounties on exported sugar amount to about 24-2 francs per ton of ordinary raw sugar, 27-7 francs per ton of superior raw sugar or inferior refined sugar; and 31-1 francs per ton of superior refined sugar.

In Germany there are bounties of about 25 marks per ton of raw sugar, 35-5 marks per ton of candy or loaf sugar, and 30 marks per ton of other refined sugars.

Besides these there are in France indirect bounties, the amount of which I am not at present in a position to give with absolute accuracy. The imports of sugar into India during the year 1897-8 were from France 1,200 tons, and from Germany 60,150 tons, respectively.

Mr. EVELYN asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he was aware that a large part of the sugar refined in Great Britain came from Germany, and enjoyed the advantage of the German bounty of 1s. 3d. a hundredweight:

And whether the new Indian countervailing duty would apply to such British refined sugar, if it was exported from this country to India.

Lord G. HAMILTON. I am aware that a certain proportion of the sugar refined in this country is bounty-fed sugar. The total amount of sugar exported from the United Kingdom to India during the past four years does not on the average exceed 900 tons a year, and I am not at present aware if any portion of this small export consists of refined sugar which prevails to that process came from bounty-fed countries. There is a general clause in the new Act which imposes countervailing duties on any bounty-fed article, but I could not say offhand if it would apply to such sugar.

Sir EDWARD GOURLEY asked the Secretary of State for India what

were the latest figures in his possession showing the exports of Indian goods to Germany and the imports of German goods into India.

LORD G. HAMILTON: The trade between Germany and India, according to the returns for the year ending March, 1898, was valued thus:—

Indian exports to Germany	Rx. 7,195,286
Indian imports from Germany	2,434,519

Monday, April 17.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

HEALTH OF BRITISH TROOPS.

Major RASCH asked the Secretary of State for India, what was the number of British soldiers invalided home from India on account of venereal disease in 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, and 1898 respectively:

And what was the number of men now at Netley and Herbert who had been sent there from India on account of venereal disease.

LORD G. HAMILTON: (1) The number of British soldiers sent home from India as invalids on account of venereal disease during the years 1894-5-6-7 respectively was as follows: 1894, 301; 1895, 553; 1896, 479; 1897, 662. We have not yet complete returns for 1898.

(2) The number now in the Netley and Herbert Hospitals who have been sent there from India is 199—Netley 189, Woolwich 10.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SUCCESSION DUTIES.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked the Secretary of State for India, whether his attention had been called to the grievance by which Succession Duties imposed on Europeans and Eurasians had by an alleged technical interpretation of the Act, been also levied on Native Christians in India, whilst Hindus and Mahometans were exempt:

And, whether he would make representations to the Government of India for the removal of this inequality, which pressed hardly on more than a million of the Native inhabitants of Madras Presidency.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I am aware that the matter to which the hon. member's question refers was recently discussed in the Legislative Council of the Governor General, and that Sir James Westland, whilst stating that the subject was surrounded with difficulties, admitted that there was a certain amount of inequality in the administration of the Succession Duties. I will communicate with the Government of India on the subject, and have no doubt they will give it their careful attention: though of course I cannot in any way anticipate their decision.

THE SUGAR DUTY ACT.

Mr. SEALE-HAYNE asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he was aware that the Queensland Government guaranteed the interest on sugar factories established in the Colony, and thus enabled the sugar manufacturers to produce sugar at a lower cost than would otherwise be possible:

And, whether sugar thus assisted would be subject to the new India countervailing duties.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I understand that the Queensland Government in certain cases guarantees the principal and interest of five per cent. debentures on sugar estates upon which they take a mortgage. The sugar from such estates if exported to India would not be treated as bounty-fed sugar.

I may add that at present no sugar is exported from Queensland into India.

Mr. SEALE-HAYNE asked the Secretary of State for India, what were the latest figures in his possession showing the exports of Indian goods into Austria-Hungary, and the imports of Austro-Hungarian goods into India.

LORD G. HAMILTON: The latest complete figures are for the year 1897-98, and are as follows: Exports from India, Rx. 2,110,439; imports into India, Rx. 2,146,793.

THE BUFFS IN THE WAR BEYOND THE FRONTIER.

General LAURIE asked the Under-Secretary of State for War whether General Jeffreys' despatch had been received at the War Office, reporting that on the night of September 16-17, 1897, during the Indian Frontier Campaign, he with the guns became separated from the main body near the village of Bilot; that a section of twelve men of the Buffs under Lance-Corporal Smith was sent during the evening to Bilot, and they were reported as having behaved with great gallantry under Lieutenants Watson and Colvin, R.E., in entering the village several times in the dark in the face of a heavy fire directed upon them at close quarters, and were deserving of the highest recognition:

Whether he was aware that this detachment suffered the severe loss of two men killed, Privates Austen and Dodd, and five wounded, Lance-Corporal Smith, Privates Lever, Poile, Weller, and Nelthorpe:

Whether, seeing that the two officers named had been awarded the Victoria Cross the gallantry of the men of the Buffs had yet been recognised:

And, whether there was any intention to specially recognise the service rendered on that occasion.

Mr. POWELL WILLIAMS: A report has been received through the Commander-in-Chief in India, from Brigadier-General Jeffreys, endorsed by Major-General Sir Bindon Blood, relative to the gallant conduct of a lance-corporal and twelve men of the Buffs at the village of Bilot on the night of September 16 and 17, 1897, on which occasion one man was killed, one dangerously wounded (he died in camp next day), two severely and three slightly wounded. In recognition of this gallant conduct her Majesty the Queen has been pleased to approve of the grant of the medal for distinguished conduct in the field to Privates James Lever, H. Nelthorpe, C. Poile, and F. Finn, and the name of Corporal James Smith has been submitted to her Majesty for the distinction of the Victoria Cross. (Cheers)

Tuesday, April 18.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE MADRAS LAW COLLEGE.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS asked the Secretary of State for India whether his attention had been called to the unsatisfactory position of the Madras Law College:

Whether he was aware that the present principal of that institution was appointed at a salary of Rs. 1,200 per month, on the understanding that the whole of his time should be devoted to the work of the college, but that this condition had been waived by the Government, and that the principal had been granted permission to practise at the bar:

Whether he was aware that numerous complaints had been made to the Madras Government as to the failure of the principal and his assistants, owing to their private practice, to adequately perform their duties at the College:

Whether his attention had been directed to paragraph 75 (page 113), in the Third Quinquennial Review of Education in India, recently issued, in which it was stated that, during the period 1892-97, the profit to the Government, arising from the excess of fees, etc., over expenditure at the Madras Law College, amounted to nearly a lakh of rupees:

And, whether, in view of those facts and the low percentage of students obtaining their law degree at that college during the period in question, he would consider the desirability of recommending that the teaching staff should in future give their whole time to their duties, as was the case in the other arts, engineering, and agricultural colleges in the Presidency.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I have no information on the subject of the hon. member's question, a copy of which will be submitted to the Government of Madras for its consideration.

With reference, however, to the statement quoted from the Third Quinquennial Review of Education in India to the effect that during the period of five years from 1892 to 1897 the profit to the Government from the college amounted to nearly a lakh of rupees, the hon. member has doubtless observed that the same paragraph states that a separate building has recently been constructed for the use of the college at a cost of about four lakhs of rupees, which must have more than absorbed any surplus income.

THE SUGAR DUTY ACT.

Captain SINGHAR asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Governments of Trinidad and British Columbia bear part of the cost of importing coles into those Colonies:

And whether such artificial lowering of one of the elements in the cost of production of sugar constituted a bounty within the meaning of the new Indian Act.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: The answer to the first question is in the affirmative.

The contribution referred to has never been considered as a bounty on the production of sugar. It is rather in the nature of a part payment of the extra cost imposed on immigration by conditions insisted upon by the Government for humanitarian reasons and in the interest of the labourers.

Mr. MARKS asked the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether any communications had passed between her Majesty's Government and the Austro-Hungarian Government with reference to the imposition of countervailing duties upon Foreign bounty-fed sugar imported into India; and, if so, what had been the result of such communications.

Mr. BRODRICK: Communications on this subject are passing between the two Governments, but they are not as yet sufficiently advanced to enable me to make any statement with regard to them.

Mr. MACLEAN asked the Secretary of State for India, whether his attention had been called to the notification in the *Gazette of India*, announcing that new duties had been imposed from March 29 on all sugar from bounty-giving countries; whether the same was imported directly from the country of production or otherwise; and whether it was imported in the same condition as when exported from the country of production or had been changed in condition by manufacture or otherwise:

And, whether, under the terms of this notification, the Government of India proposed to levy the duties on all confectionery imported into India from the United Kingdom, in the manufacture or preparation of which bounty-fed beet sugar had been used.

LORD G. HAMILTON: My answer to the first part of this question is in the affirmative.

In reply to the second part, I can only say that, under the terms of the notification, the Government of India will no doubt have the power to tax bounty-fed sugar when forming a portion of the confectionery imported into India from this country; but, having regard to the difficulty of estimating the amount of sugar so used, I do not know whether they will think it worth while to exercise that power, especially as the amount of confectionery imported into India from Great Britain is very small. The whole amount of sugar exported from this country to India is only 900 tons, and in this confectionery is included.

PUBLIC MEETINGS ON INDIAN QUESTIONS. THE WORK OF THE BRITISH COMMITTEE.

Last night (April 20) Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji addressed a public meeting at the Gladstone Liberal Club, Dewsbury, on "India." The chair was taken by Mr. John Fell, President of the Club, and among others announced to be present were Mr. Mark Oldroyd, M.P., and Mr. A. E. Hutton, M.P.

On April 14 a lecturer on behalf of the British Committee addressed the members of the City Forum, Manchester. A discussion, which lasted more than two hours, followed.

Further meetings have been arranged as follows:—April 17, Bedlington: 18, Morpeth; 19, Brighouse; 20, Guidepost; 24, Norden; 25, Rochdale; 26, Heywood.

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