India

FOR THE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

THE final Report of the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure was laid in "dummy" on the Table of the House of Commons last Monday, and the *Times* of the following day, alone among the newspapers, printed a summary of the document. At the time of writing, however, the Blue-book has not yet been published. We reserve our remarks until the full text is before us.

According to the Indian newspapers that have arrived by the last mail, the famine outlook seems to grow more and more gloomy. The numbers on relief were fast rising to five millions, and the long expected scarcity in Madras was becoming apparent. Some weeks ago it was only the Cuddapah weavers who needed relief. When the *Times of India* went to press, three new test works had been opened, and although the total employed were only 6,305 less than half of these were weavers. The Madras harvests have been "miserably poor" and a steady increase in the number of those needing aid is expected from week to week.

In its issue of March 14, the *Times of India* noted a diminution in the numbers on relief in the State of Baroda, and this it was inclined to attribute to a relaxation of the efforts made there to cope with the famine. It said:—"There has been no improvement in the agricultural situation to warrant this, for the outlook is about as bad as it could well be." But a letter in a subsequent issue of the paper gives reasons for the decrease without attributing it to the laxity or misconduct of the State officials. In one district where the numbers on relief had decreased by nearly 5,000, tagavi was advanced to landowners on condition that they did not receive aid at the works, and between 4,000 and 5,000 took advantage of this offer. Moreover the advances made to cultivators for sinking new wells, from which one section of the population had till recently been debarred, are now open to all. In another district small local works have been replaced by large central ones, and many of those previously on the small works have for the moment stayed at home, in the hope that the Government would reopen them. The decline, therefore, in the numbers can be explained without assuming a diminution of zeal on the part of the Gaekwar's administration.

The *Times* printed the other day (April 4) a very striking extract from a letter written by an officer serving with the Hyderabad contingent:—

> Some of the regiments who gave a day's pay to the War Fund gave as their reason for doing so the fact that the money subscribed at home had saved all their relations in the last famine, and they wanted to help the people who had saved them and were now suffering in their turn. I hope this will encourage people at home to subscribe to the Famine Fund, as they will want every farthing they can collect. . . . . They are dying round here like flies.

We reproduce this passage in the hope that it may operate as an encouragement to the charitable. In spite of the optimism of the *Times* leader-writer, on which we comment elsewhere, the people about Hyderabad are said to be "dying like flies."

The special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* draws a fearful picture of the plague in Bombay. The plague had almost been forgotten here in the more compelling interest of the famine—to say nothing of the wretched South African war. The correspondent writes (March 21):—

> The outlook is a very serious one. By the kindness of Colonel Weir, the medical officer, I have been provided with the mortality statistics for the first three months of the years 1897-1900, and the figures show that this year has been far worse than any other year of the plague, the record for eleven weeks showing 26,539 deaths from all causes, as compared with 20,110, 24,348, 23,310 for the thirteen weeks of the March quarter. By the time the two last weeks in March are added in, the death-roll will be more than 10,000 in excess of 1897. And this with a sanitary staff of 6,000 officials of one sort or another! How many deaths are actually due to plague the authorities no longer pretend to say, though of late they have been registering some 700 a week. Concessions have had to be made to the Native prejudice against the plague regulations, and the net effect of these relaxations would seem to be that plague patients who do not belong to the poorest class are permitted to suffer and die from a disease of some other name—phthisis, so I am told, is a popular complaint at the moment. . . . . Day and night the bodies are being taken to the ghat and built in with huge billets of dry wood, which burn, when the torch is put to them, with extraordinary fierceness.

The social effects must be of the most serious character. The vitiation of the unpalatable statistics is consistently Anglo-Indian.

Mr. Edward Dicey set forth the story of the vile treatment of British Indians in the Transvaal in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of March 28. On the face of the article it may be doubted whether his object was not to work an argument against the South African Republic and a former Liberal Government at home as much as to secure justice for the British Indians. We do not remember that Mr. Dicey has hitherto put in his oar to assist us during the years we have been urging the grievances of our Indian fellow-subjects in South Africa upon the attention of the Government. He says that "for many very obvious reasons these newcomers were not welcome in any part of South Africa; but it was only in the Transvaal that the hostility to the Indian traders assumed an acute form." It is a pity that Mr. Dicey did not specify the reasons he finds "very obvious"; for our own part we fail to perceive them, after all that has been said on the subject. On the contrary, the first of the newcomers were invited and welcomed, and by their diligent and faithful labour they saved the colony of Natal from practical collapse. Why, if they were to clear out of Natal even now, the riddance would shake the prosperity of the colony to peril, if not to ruin. Mr. Dicey appears to be totally ignorant of the shameless treatment of British Indians in Natal, otherwise it is incredible that he could have written that "it was only in the Transvaal that the hostility to the Indian traders assumed an acute form." Mr. Chamberlain could tell him another story. They were certainly harassed in Natal not less shockingly than they ever were in the Transvaal.

In the Transvaal, indeed, the British Indian traders were exceedingly ill used. We are quite well aware of the multifarious allegations made against them by the Transvaal authorities, but these have all been swept away by competent independent testimony, and one sole point remains. As in Natal, so in the Transvaal, the essential ground of persecution was trade competition; and as this miserable reason could not be openly alleged, other less reputable reasons had to be invented. The plain fact is, as we have over and over again pointed out, that the rights of British Indians under the Convention of 1884 were thoughtlessly given away by successive Colonial Ministers—that is to say, successive British Governments. Mr. Dicey has no right to mention Lord Rosebery's administration and Lord Kimberley without at the same time specifying Conservative administrations and Conservative Colonial secretaries as well (say Lord Derby and Mr. Stanhope). The one set was just as bad as the other; neither of them did anything for the aggrieved British Indians, and both of them let guaranteed rights slip away, till Mr. Chamberlain was left in a hopeless tangle. Indeed,

Mr. Chamberlain, in dealing with President Kruger, had no greater difficulty than the fact that Natal was at least as bad an offender as the Transvaal.

Mr. Dicey, in his last sentence, enforces the moral of his article. He says:—

> This episode in our relations with the Transvaal is not one on which any Englishman can look back with pride; but it is worth recalling in order to impress upon Englishmen the hard fact that no agreement with the Boers is of any practical value so long as it is only supported by belief in Boer good faith and Boer respect for justice.

Now this is a deliverance only typical of the predominant Imperialism. It is thoroughly unfair, partly because it is based upon ignorance. It is true enough that no Englishman can regard the episode without shame. But for the rest, it is plain that the Boers were entitled to press their own interpretation of the Convention, and that the fault lies, not with them, but with our own statesmen, who did not take seriously the Imperial view that the British Indians were as much our fellow-subjects as the Uitlanders. But if Mr. Dicey has such hard words for the Boers, we invite him to express with equal freedom his opinion of the Natalians, and indeed of all our Colonies in Southern seas. He will find a basis for his studies in Sir Lepel Griffin's article in the *Saturday Review* (reprinted in INDIA, vol. ix., p. 74. Feb. 4, 1898), and in articles in these columns—say INDIA, vol. x., pp. 304, 316-17 (Dec. 9 and 16, 1898), with vol. x., p. 281 (Nov. 25, 1898) by way of supplement. If blows are to be struck, let them go impartially round. Is not fair play still a British institution?

The *Madras Mail* returns to the question of the refugees from Johannesburg now subsisting on the grudging charity of the Madras Government. These people are the descendants—the children and grandchildren—of immigrants to Natal. They looked upon that colony as their native land, and they had never known India. Attracted by the high wages to be obtained there, they had gone to Johannesburg, and, delaying their departure too long, they had with other British subjects been sent out of the country by way of Laurenco Marques on the declaration of war. From the Boers they received humane treatment, but once across the borders they were at the mercy of the Portuguese soldiery. Arrived at the coast a still worse trouble befell them, for, having paid their fares to Durban, they were hustled on a ship which took them to Bombay, where they were divided according to languages, and each was sent to the Province in which his language was spoken. All this is an old story to our readers, and our only apology for recurring to it is that the wrong remains unredressed. The *Madras Mail* pertinently asks whether the deportation of these poor people to a strange land—for they are now strangers in India, their maintenance being put on the Indian Government—was done under instructions from Natal.

Commenting on the Indian Budget, the *Pioneer* has some remarks on the saving due to the war in South Africa and the consequent redistribution of troops. After enumerating the various sums saved, it goes on:—

> But in any case it is plain from the above figures that in the current year and the year to come the South African war has relieved Indian finance to the extent of some £680,000. This it need hardly be said is a pure fluke. The army of India is not greater than the internal and external requirements of India demand, otherwise we should be forced to the conclusion that the Empire has in past years been supporting superfluous troops.

This is a good sample of Anglo-Indian argument. No doubt we should be forced to this conclusion, but why is the premiss therefore impossible? It would seem on the contrary that if India can do without these troops in the hour of danger, in the hour when England is fully occupied elsewhere, it could do without them in quiet times. If foreign or internal foes wanted to strike at British supremacy now would be their time. If the present garrison of India is sufficient protection now, how much more will it be so when there is behind it the whole force of the Empire, ready and free?

"I cannot congratulate the Government," said Mr. A. M. Bose in his Presidential Address to the Madras meeting of the National Congress in 1898, "on this further carrying out of the policy of exclusion, of the policy of creating new barriers, of the shutting of the 'open door.'" Mr. Bose was referring to the exclusion of certain Natives from the Engineering College at Rurki. Commenting on the point, we remarked (January 20, 1899) that the grievance opened up a vast possibility of future wrong. But we little imagined that the Secretary of State would within a year and a month slam the door of Cooper's Hill College in the face of Natives of India, thus cutting them off from the chances of some twenty-five appointments a year, rising to a salary of about £2,000 a year. Up to February 27 last, the Royal Indian Engineering College was stated, in the prospectus of the institution, to be "primarily maintained in view of the education of candidates for the service of the Government" in certain Indian Departments of public work. By the new prospectus of February 27, 1900, the candidates in question are specifically limited to "candidates *from this country*." Three little words exclude our Indian fellow-subjects and nullify the gracious Proclamation of 1858 which expressed the royal will "that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified, by their education, ability, and integrity, duly to discharge."

Let us regard the new prospectus more closely. Formerly, when there were more qualified candidates than the College could receive, the preference was "given according to the dates of application for admission." Now, under the ukase of February 27, admission will be arranged by the President of the College in such manner "as may best secure the object for which the College is primarily maintained, namely, the training and recruitment *of the European element* in the departments mentioned." Further (para. 25), it is announced that, in offering appointments to the public service, "while the order of standing on the order of merit will generally be followed, the Secretary of State for India reserves to himself the right to disregard that order." Like the Order of the Garter, there is to be "no d——d nonsense of merit" about the appointments from Cooper's Hill, as there has hitherto been. There is just a single little chink left whereby a native of India may by a miracle squeeze into the service of the Public Works Department in his own country. The President may let one or two in, and then (para. 26) "for the Engineering Branch Natives of India who *may* have been admitted to the College *may* be appointed in number not exceeding two in each year." The double "may" is a striking commentary on the Queen's Proclamation. It is equivalent to an honest "shall not."

An Indian correspondent, reviewing this fresh outburst of repression, comments as follows:—

> Thus it is that distinction of caste, creed and religion is created. Thus it is that the policy of exclusion is persistently pursued. Thus it is that one more "open door" is practically shut—shut against a whole nation in the service of its own country. Thus it is that a monopoly of appointments for others than the children of the soil is to be maintained. How far is this policy to extend? From Rurki it has extended to Cooper's Hill. From Cooper's Hill will it extend to—the Indian Civil Service?

The vigorous letter which Mr. Henry Blackwell has addressed to the New York *Evening Post* denouncing the conquest and military occupation of the Philippines has attracted the attention of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. Our contemporary is struck by the way in which Mr. Blackwell's remarks on the evil effects of the Philippine climate on the American soldiers apply also to the British army in India. The American writer says:—

> Sixty-five thousand of these men have been shipped at vast expense to the opposite side of the globe, and are living there in a hot, malarious, unhealthy climate, amid an alien population degraded by centuries of subjection. . . .

The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* asks if this does not apply also to the Britishers whose hard lot it is in the prime of life to be "kept in semi-confinement in the uncongonial climate of this country far away from home and dear relations and associations."

The Ranchi case, in which an old man died after being assaulted by two Europeans, Mr. Sibold and Mr. Meares, whom he refused to salaam, has entered on a new phase. It will be remembered that, although the old man's skull was fractured, the defendants were only sentenced to pay a fine. Mr. Leith has now moved the High Court for an enhancement of sentence. This has been refused in the case of Mr. Meares, but as regards Mr. Sibold their lordships held that the trying Magistrate had not adequately

appreciated the gravity of the offence in the sentence passed. Mr. Sibold was directed to show cause why the sentence should not be enhanced.

Lala Nehal Chand, the landowner, who was assaulted in open Court at Abbotabad by the Judge, has presented a Memorial to the Viceroy. He points out that the interruption which so enraged Mr. Dixon was only the expression of his desire that the pleader for the plaintiff should speak in Urdu as he does not understand English. He then recounts the assault, and concludes thus :—

That your petitioner could have sought his redress under the law in a Criminal Court, but being a loyal and faithful subject has refrained from taking such an action against a Judge. Your petitioner has not felt the assault so much as he has felt the disgrace of such a bad treatment accorded without any fault and provocation in the presence of your petitioner's countrymen. . . . This harsh treatment has lowered your petitioner's respect in the eyes of his countrymen.

The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* reports particulars of a mysterious shooting case in the neighbourhood of Lucknow. On December 24 last a woman took some food to her husband, who was ploughing his master's field at the village of Beni Banathra, and went to collect some fuel while the man was eating. She did not return, however, and when her husband went to look for her he found her lying dead under a bush. On examination it was seen that she had been shot dead. Two soldiers fell under suspicion and were put on trial, but they were acquitted for lack of evidence. "Here," says our Calcutta contemporary, "was a woman shot dead in broad daylight, and the perpetrator of the outrage has not yet been found out. This state of things is hardly creditable to the local administration." It certainly is far from creditable. But India is a curiously unlucky place for "accidents" of this kind.

According to the Indian papers four soldiers of the 16th Lancers went on a shooting expedition to the village of Sambhalka, near Umballa. They shot a peacock, a bird held sacred by the people, and thus became embroiled with the villagers, two of whom were killed. Two of the soldiers are said to have been bruised, and further proceedings are expected. The *Tribune* remarks on the number of lives sacrificed owing on the one hand to the sacred character of the birds in the eyes of Indian rustics, and on the other to the fondness of soldiers for shooting them. It suggests that if shooting passes are still to be issued a big preserve should be kept for the soldiers in every command.

The same problem has been exorcising the minds of the military authorities. In the Lucknow Station orders the following appears :—

With a view to preventing as far as possible the collisions which frequently occur between soldiers (who get shooting passes) and villagers, officers commanding corps can, if they so desire it, have a police constable or chowkidar told off to accompany soldiers' shooting parties. In the event of this assistance being required officers commanding corps should address the District Superintendent of Police four clear days before the shooting party leaves the station. Officers commanding corps are also requested to inform shooting parties that they should call at the police station nearest the place they intend shooting for the constable or chowkidar.

An Indian railway contractor, Babu Raghubaas Chowdhury, brought an action against Mr. Morrison, assistant engineer of the B.N.W. Railway, for abuse and assault. As to the rights and wrongs of the case, it is impossible to give an opinion; but according to the *Behar Herald* the following extraordinary judgment was passed :—

Complainant has had an opportunity of proving that he did not deserve the terms of reproach addressed to him by Mr. Morrison and has examined two witnesses. He now wants the station-master at Twiki and other railway servants summoned; but it is out of the question to upset railway arrangements for so trifling a matter; there was evidently some mistake in the orders and Mr. Morrison lost his temper. If cases were instituted for each instance of European abuse, to say nothing of the more extensive Native abuse, there would be no time for anything else. I would have at once dismissed this case but wished to give complainant time to think it over; as it is, he had better cease to contract for railway work.

The magistrate has certainly curious views as to where the onus of proof rests, and of the reasons which may induce the courts to refuse to summon a witness.

Were we to believe the ordinary Anglo-Indian, the supporters of the Congress pass their time in criticising and contemning British officials. But the reality is very different. The Indians prize very highly the countenance of high officials, and they are not at all inclined to make light of such favours as they have received. Mr. Cotton, to take one instance, has now been long away from Calcutta, governing the Province of Assam, but the kindly interest of his old friends has followed him, and all his good deeds are gratefully recorded. Thus it is mentioned in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* that on a recent visit to the Goalpara lock-up he enquired into the case of a poor woman, and on finding that the homicide of which she had been convicted was really accidental, he set her free. He also ordered a boy of fourteen to be released, and drew the attention of the officials to the provisions of the code for dealing with first offenders.

A letter from the Director of Public Instruction in Bengal has afforded an opportunity to Babu Akshay Kumar Maitra, B.L., the honorary secretary to the Rajshahi Diamond Jubilee Industrial School to put in a wise word for the local development of schools of research in connexion with Mr. Tata's munificent scheme. As to the past and present work, he says :—

The success of experiments tried last year (1) to grow the Assam silkworm (*Attacus Ricini*) in the plains of Bengal, (2) to produce more than one crop of cocoons from the annual (*uni voltine*) variety known as *Bombyx Textor* by means of artificial hatching of eggs, (3) to extract yellow dye from the Indian jackwood and to apply the same to silk-dying, was communicated to Government in a Report, which was printed and published by the Agricultural Department to the Government of Bengal. Experiments are being made this year to acclimatise foreign silkworms imported from France and Turkey in Europe, and the result will be published in due course.

This class of work is obviously of the utmost importance, and deserves judicious encouragement. Babu Akshay, accordingly, suggests "that the school should, in the first place, be enabled to improve the status of its laboratory and workshop by installing machinery suited to the industry," and then, he thinks, "research work may be carried on under the guidance of the Agricultural Department of the Government of Bengal, to which the school is already greatly indebted for help and encouragement." The principle is of universal application, that "the existing facilities in India should not be dissociated from the existing workers who have hitherto done some useful work, if their qualifications and special skill to carry on research work under the new scheme are not deemed in any way below the mark." One can only hope that notions of concentration and opportunities of patronage will be kept in wholesome restraint, so as to avoid widespread discouragement.

It was inevitable that the Hindu Gains of Learning Bill should cause grave division of opinion, honest and well-grounded on both sides. The current number of the *Madras Review* has two articles on it, for and against. The personal weight of Sir Bashyam Iyengar appears to have had much to do with its passing the Madras Legislative Council, and its opponents have not fought their guns at all keenly. Mr. G. A. Natesan, we observe, has put the case against the Bill with much vigour in the columns of the *Madras Mail*, and made an urgent plea that the Viceroy should be memorialised to refuse consent to the measure. Probably, however, the *Madras Mail's* comment hits the nail on the head :—

The "articulate" class of Hindus of the present generation are specially benefited by this revolutionary change in Hindu sociology; and, though there is strong opposition to it on moral and religious grounds even amongst them, it has failed to find decided expression. *A fortiori*, therefore, it is not likely that an effective protest will proceed from the less "articulate" classes of the community.

In practice, we are inclined to think, apart from the religious considerations, steps may easily be taken to prevent the measure from working injustice in particular cases; and there can be no doubt that the system it supersedes did often work injustice. It is always the way to dread the operation of a new order of things; and it seems quite certain that the Bill will be looked on with very much less hostile feelings after a few years' experience of its working. The chief part of the outcry will then come from the laziest members of the family, who really cannot expect sympathy in this workaday world. Meantime one can quite sympathise with the hesitations of good and active men, who lay special stress on the religious aspect of the case.

ANOTHER FAMINE APPEAL.

ON Monday last (April 9), the *Times* printed a supplementary statement on the subject of the famine in India, addressed under date April 2 by the Secretary of State for India to the Lord Mayor of London. There is no explanation why the document has been withheld from the public for a week. The delay, however, at any rate maintains the consistency of official action. No steps were taken for the institution of a Mansion House Famine Relief Fund till about three times as many starving Indians were on relief works as there were at the date of the institution of a like fund in the previous famine. It was, apparently, the lamentable wail of the Governor-General in Council on January 19 that stirred the Lord Mayor to address Lord George Hamilton on January 23; a week elapsed before Lord George accorded his sanction (Jan. 30), and even then he postponed the opening of the fund to the middle of next month (Feb. 16). The appeal, when it did come, was burdened with an unworthy anticipation in view of the claims of the South Africa campaign. The *Times* itself sees the unhappy effects of this now. "Perhaps," says our contemporary (April 9), gently, "it was unnecessary for the Viceroy and the Secretary of State to accentuate this point as strongly as they did. To hint to people that they can hardly be expected to contribute largely is not a very good way in which to start a successful subscription." Then came indications, in answer to questions in the House, that India was really able to pay its way without assistance; and the Budget surplus of two millions and a-half, followed by a chorus of delight in the Press over the "elasticity" and the general "prosperity" of India, put the coping-stone on the preposterous edifice of official satisfaction. How the charitable public should be expected to hasten to contribute to a prosperous country of amazingly elastic resources, it would require an official ingenuity to explain. The plain non-official man sees nothing to be surprised at in the painfully slow rise of the Mansion House Fund to some £170,000—not by a considerable amount so much as one-third of the sum collected in 1897-98 (£550,000).

In every aspect the result is melancholy. We have done our best to warn the British public to pay no heed to the optimistic statements of Lord George Hamilton and his abettors, and of his ignorant echoes in the Press. Even the Conservative *Globe*, as we pointed out the other week, laboured to guard its readers against the obvious danger, declaring that "it would be deplorable were the flow of subscriptions checked by any misconception of ministerial statements." On the other hand we would urge the most earnest attention to Lord George Hamilton's famine statistics. His new statement, while repeating much that has been made public already, brings the whole situation up to date—so far as official reticence permits. The affected tracts, we learn, "contain a population of 85 millions, of whom, perhaps, 62 millions may be severely affected;" and "of the 85 millions, 43¾ millions are inhabitants of Native States and 41¼ millions are in British territory." There are said to have been 4,879,000 in receipt of relief on March 31—3,454,000 in British provinces, and 1,425,000 in Native States:—

> Of these people six-sevenths were employed on relief works, and one-seventh, who by reason of age, infirmity, or custom, are unable to work, are gratuitously relieved without being subjected to any labour test. The Government undertakes to prevent death, and to relieve misery, from famine in British India at the cost of the Indian Treasury, so far as organisation and effort can accomplish these ends. The relief operations in the Native States are conducted by the Native rulers and their officials; but the British Government in India lends money, and sends skilled officers to assist in relief work, to those States where such help is needed.

It will be observed that, while rather more than half of the population of the tracts affected is Native, the British Indians in receipt of relief are much more than twice as numerous as the Natives on relief. The proportions of the 62 millions "severely affected" are not stated; but probably they must be taken on the basis of the numbers on relief, not of the population of the affected tracts. Lord George Hamilton's statement informs us that "one notable feature of the present famine is that Gujerat, Kathiawar, and Baroda are very seriously affected"—"the richest and most fertile tracts of Western India." But the suggestion will not stand, in the face of the comparative figures given above, which show decisively how very much more severe the calamity is in British India than in Native States. We must wait for details; but the comparison will be extremely important and suggestive.

The *Times* does not doubt that the Government will faithfully perform its duty as above defined, and "will be able to boast, as was possible at the end of the last famine, that, though much suffering was unavoidable, there was no danger of death by actual starvation, in the presence of an extensive and well-managed system of relief open to every human being who was in need." What can the writer mean? Surely he must know that, however open the relief system is, there are thousands in need who cannot reach the works. Has he not read the *Times of India's* special correspondent's account of the wretched country people struggling towards Ahmedabad? "Many," wrote the correspondent, "died on the roads. Others have just lasted till they reached their destination, which, perhaps, they entered at night, and the next day were found dead where they slept. A corpse or two by the wayside is no uncommon thing." Has the *Times* writer not read Mr. S. Smith's quotation from a letter written by Mr. L. E. Marks (Ajmere, in Rajputana, February 26)? Mr. Marks writes:—

> In many places dead bodies may be seen lying here and there. Mr. Inglis has just returned from the very worst district, and tells me that it was a common sight to see bodies being devoured by dogs, and that he and Dr. Huntly took a walk one evening and counted 40 bodies, and on other evenings 20, 33, and so on. He could not go through a field without seeing skeletons by the wayside, the bodies bleaching in the sun.

In the last famine, we know, "privation" was the word—not, if possible, starvation; yet starvation was admitted. What can a writer in the *Times* mean by suggesting that, in this famine as in the last, there is "no danger of death by actual starvation?" Little wonder if the India Office and the *Times* between them cripple the Mansion House Fund.

How painfully acute is the need of money may be gathered, if not from a realisation of the facts stated, at any rate from the plain terms of the description given by Dr. Smeaton, member of the Governor-General's Council, now acting as Special Commissioner. Dr. Smeaton has "witnessed two famines," and understands the case. Listen to his words:—

> The officers of the Government have not money enough to do more than barely sustain the life of the 5,000,000 who are now employed on relief works and of thousands upon thousands of those silent sufferers in deserted villages who would rather die than labour in the relief works. More money is wanted, and wanted quickly.

And Dr. Smeaton has a word for Lord George Hamilton, a word that puts justice before generosity:—

> Great Britain and Ireland owe a debt to the Indian peasant of millions upon millions. Let the United Kingdom stretch out to her now a helping hand and extricate her from the deadly grip of famine.

Yes, "millions upon millions;" and yet Lord George Hamilton stifled the obvious willingness of Parliament in the debate on Sir William Wedderburn's motion. Not only so, but his myrmidons appear to be ravaging the wretched people for revenue. The special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* (April 9), writing from Bombay on March 21, concludes an appalling picture of famine and plague as seen in the Western capital with these awful words:—

> I wish I could have been spared the sight of this same Government collecting the revenue from the starving rayat who has stayed in the village to sink his well while wife and children have gone to the works. It seems incredible, but I am only writing the truth when I say that the Government of India have decided that the revenue must at all costs be gathered in, and at this very moment the entire collecting machinery is at work on the business. Why should Government insist on picking the bones of the people at a time like this? And would it not be better for the Government of India to tide things over with a loan than to increase the people's indebtedness—that ever-growing burden which the rayat carries from the cradle to the grave?

"Incredible"? Truly anyone that does not know the official capacity of contempt for deluded public opinion at a distance of many thousand miles would think so. But now the special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* is in a position to give us the facts authoritatively at first hand, we shall see what the public thinks of them. It is more than time that constituencies took this thing in hand and saved the name of the country for justice and humanity and common sense.

What a curious consistency in blundering Lord George Hamilton has developed! In the same issue of the *Manchester Guardian*, Mr. Romesh Dutt occupies nearly a column of small type in rectifying the misrepresentations

of his position which Lord George placed before the House on April 3, and in controverting his criticisms. It is a painful absurdity that in an emergency like this, when the very basis of the Indian Empire is menaced, such a perverse and feeble hand should be allowed to remain at the helm. Mr. Dutt is driven, out of sheer elementary courtesy, to doubt whether Lord George Hamilton has been correctly reported. Otherwise, he says, "there is not a schoolboy in India who will not smile, and there is not a young English administrator of two years' experience in India who will not blush, at the ignorance of Indian facts shown by this statement made by a Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons." The British public therefore will do well to ignore Lord George's official ignorance and official strategy, and, accepting the plain facts of a calamitous situation, pour into the Mansion House Fund a contribution adequate to the occasion and worthy of the British nation.

THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE AS A CAREER.

THE name of Sir John Jardine, to Indians and Anglo-Indians alike, is a guarantee of knowledge, experience and sympathy. The people of the country in which he spent so many years of strenuous labour have always looked upon him not only as a devoted public servant, but as one in whose impartiality and goodwill they could repose implicit trust, while his own countrymen and colleagues know him as a civilian who did honour to the service. Anything that such a man may say on the Civil Service is bound therefore to be of interest alike to rulers and to ruled; nor is it likely to contain aught that could offend the most sensitive of Indian ears. And yet in Sir John Jardine's paper, although there is nothing to offend, there may yet be something to complain of, something lacking to the completeness of his treatment, something present which strikes a jarring note.

This is in the very title of the paper, which runs, "The Civil Service of India—Past and Present. An Object of Ambition to British Youth." Now this implies that Sir John is considering the subject only from one point of view, that of the young civilian, or at least the young Englishman—or must it be Briton—who is on the look out for a suitable profession. He ignores the young Indian, who may also cherish his ambitions, and he ignores the Indian people, over whom the civilian is to rule and from whom are derived all those emoluments and advantages that make his position seem so desirable. And while the paper ignores these, it by implication treats the British empire in India as having for one of its functions the provision of suitable appointments for young Englishmen of education and character. To this last charge, indeed, the author of the paper might make a good defence. He might say that given the present constitution of the Indian Civil Service, its high emoluments and the great preponderance of the European element therein, it was desirable to attract the best men possible to it; that whether the country was able to bear so heavy a financial burden or not, whether the luxury of so able an Administration was within its means or was too great a drain on its resources, it was at least an advantage that as long as the present system of recruiting and paying the civilians lasted, India should get the best material available. Nevertheless, and in spite of the obvious soundness of this position, there is no little danger in holding up the governing of our dependencies as "an object of ambition" to our youth. It brings out into marked contrast the opposition of interest between the young Englishman and the young Indian; it introduces into the question of the best way of governing India—a question which should surely be answered with reference to the prosperity and good government of India and the safety of the Empire, a consideration entirely foreign—the effect of any change on the possible careers open to the youth of these islands. To envisage the British Empire in India as existing chiefly to provide suitable careers for such of our youth as have obtained and profited by a good education is assuredly far from the thoughts of Sir John Jardine. Yet his title is too well calculated to strengthen that ungenerous feeling, already so prevalent in certain classes in Great Britain—the feeling that our Empire generally and more especially the British Empire in India exists in order to provide an answer to the question "What shall we do with our boys?" It is desirable that the best of our youth should go to India, as long as the civilians are drawn from this country in large numbers. It is not desirable that India should be looked upon as the natural and fore-ordained outlet for the clever boys, just as in times gone by the unpromising members of the family were shipped off to Australia. It is not desirable that certain classes in this country should imagine that they have acquired a vested interest in Indian appointments, and that in all changes of the regulations or emoluments the interests of their boys must be taken into consideration. Sir John regrets the reluctance with which young Englishmen go out to India and their preference for the Home Civil Service, poorly paid as it is by comparison. It is, no doubt, unfortunate that the choice of capable administrators should thus be narrowed. But, after all, to the true patriot the best of all countries is his own; and it is surely a healthier ambition to wish to serve your own countrymen than to rule over men alien in feelings, in habits, and in beliefs. That to noble natures the work of an Indian Civil Servant presents itself not only as a part of a career, but as an absorbing duty, binding him to the people of the country with ties which grow stronger with the years, is indeed of happy augury. We all know of men who, when their official life is done, and the last good-bye to India is said, bring with them to this country an interest in the scene of their manhood's labours which nought but death can quench; of men who become the champions and the mouthpieces of those whom they once ruled. But it is too much to ask for this at the beginning of a career; and it is unfair to blame those who prefer their own country to all the novelties and the advantages of India.

In what has been said above, it has been assumed that the worth of an Indian civilian's life must be judged by his real services to India, not by his supposed services to England; for the ultimate justification of our Empire in the East must rest not on the glory or gain of England, but on the happiness, the prosperity and the progress of India. And in this connexion, as has been already said, there is another point of view—that of the young Indian and of the Indian people. If the ruling of India and the manifold openings of the Indian Civil Service be a legitimate object of ambition to the young Englishman, how much more to the young Indian; and if the young Englishman nevertheless prefers a humbler career in the Civil Service at home, we can gauge the strength of the vexation with which the young Indian views the difficulties that meet him when he essays to enter the public service of his country. Everything is made easy for his distant competitors, till the Oxford man finds his college course the best preparation for the Government examination; while the Indian has to compete thousands of miles from home and in a foreign tongue. But the competition ended, the balance of advantages is reversed, and India has to pay for the blessing of seeing her sons ousted by strangers. As Sir John Jardine says:—

> The interest of life is increased when sudden calls arise to deal with local disturbances or desolating famines or epidemic cholera, or such a calamity as the plague. The mere mention of these things explains the high salaries which are meant to compensate for exile and danger and the diseases of the tropics.

But these high salaries, and still more the heavy pensions paid in England and the remittances sent home, constitute a terrible burden on India.

Sir John records the high and tempting salaries of the covenanted civilian, which may not seem quite so enticing to the Indian taxpayer. Here is his list:—

		£	£	
At	4 years' service from	630 to	979	a year.
,,	8 ,, ,,	900 ,,	1,267	,,
,,	12 ,, ,,	1,349 ,,	1,749	,,
,,	20 ,, ,,	1,962 ,,	2,475	,,

And this is without regard to the great prizes in Government or Judicature. Moreover, after twenty-five years, of which at least twenty-one have been years of active service, he is entitled to a pension of £1,000 a year, partly paid for by a deduction of four per cent. from his salary, but altogether independent of his position in the service or of the success or failure of his work. We are not complaining of this, for the exile, the danger, and the disease are common to all; but it adds terribly to India's burden.

But this is not the whole of the burden. The young Indian has to see himself excluded by the competition of the Englishman, who competes in his own language and his own country. The Indian taxpayer has to pay

heavily for the privilege of being governed by aliens. And the Indian patriot has to see his countrymen losing the power of government and the skill required for administration. To exercise the highest functions, to fill a great part, the British Indian must go outside the borders of British India and seek office in one of the Native States. These are some of the causes that make the Indian Civil Service a desirable "object of ambition to British youth," causes which appear much less delectable when viewed from the side of the Indians.

But though we have thus ventured to criticise some of the tendencies of Sir John Jardine's paper, it is impossible to fail to recognise that he is a true friend to India. This would appear from the paper itself, even if nothing else were known of his sentiments. His remarks on the advantage to the State of low assessments on the land and the protection of the occupiers' improvements are well worthy of attention, and his evident joy in Indian life shows the breadth of his sympathy. After quoting the glowing words in which Macaulay pictures India as it presented itself to Burke's imagination, he goes on to say:—

> These are the scenes mine eyes have seen, with which for thirty years and more I was familiar, and as I was fortunate enough to preserve fairly good health, and to keep on most pleasant and delightful terms with the Native world, I may as well confess that I would like to live that life all over again.

A very honourable confession after an honourable and useful career.

OUR LONDON LETTER.

WESTMINSTER, Thursday.

PARLIAMENT separated for the Easter recess as if with reluctance on Monday night. Yet the first part of the Session had been much longer than usual and although barren of important legislative result had made exacting demands on the energies of members. Viewed retrospectively, the events of the past two months are seen to have been something quite different from the forecast framed by imagination on the eve of the Session. People took with too much seriousness the fulminations of the Ministerial Press. The mock thunder was silenced as soon as Parliament met. Criticism which had been both loud and acrimonious on the Conservative side, as long as there was no danger of a challenge to action in the division lobby, was promptly delegated when that risk arose to the Opposition. The instinct of party prevailed, and Conservatives who had spent the winter in inventing new superlatives of contempt for the War Office and all its works were the first to rally to the side of the Government at the crack of the Ministerial whip. The Session, so far as it has gone, has thus been a contradiction of most of the prophecies with which it was anticipated. It has produced no narrow divisions, few scenes of excitement, no great cleavages of party. The war-cloud has lowered over the assembly, crushing the life out of its debates and giving an aspect of shadowy unreality to controversies which at another time would have stirred the passions of the nation. Ordinary political life has been in a state of dull suspense.

A striking illustration of the paralysis of Parliament was forthcoming in the debate on the motion for the Easter adjournment. Mr. Courtney had intended to raise the question of the future settlement of South Africa. When he rose, his neighbours on the Ministerial benches expressed their annoyance by a movement of impatience succeeded, as soon as the member for Bodmin began to speak, by angry interruptions. They might have saved their breath. By a fantastic rule of Parliamentary "common law" which might have been devised by the author of the "Bab Ballads," Mr. Courtney found himself precluded from touching on the question at all, because, forsooth, another member now on his way to South Africa, had previously given formal notice of his intention to move a resolution on the subject. "Suppose this gentleman never comes back to us," quoth Mr. Patrick O'Brien, "are we to be for ever debarred from discussing this question?" The interrogation sounded like an extravagant attempt at a *reductio ad absurdum*. It was really nothing of the kind. Unless special measures are taken the House of Commons will be precluded throughout the remainder of the Session from discussing questions of South African administration; for it is quite certain that Mr. Duncombe, the ingenious author of this dilemma, has no immediate intention of returning to his duties.

While the discussion was in progress, Mr. Balfour witnessed with fear and trembling the development of a new and unnatural alliance. Signs began to pass between Sir William Harcourt and Mr. James Lowther. Finally the member for West Monmouth raised his finger with a beckoning gesture to the member for the Isle of Thanet, and at the same moment by the exercise of a little physical pressure made room for that strange guest on the front Opposition bench. Mr. Lowther stole softly across the floor of the House and seated by Sir William's side engaged in an earnest colloquy. Retracing his steps, he had scarcely resumed his customary seat below the Ministerial gangway when a forgotten thought occurred to his mind and once more he made a mysterious expedition into the camp of the enemy. Everyone waited for the sequel to the conspiracy. It was soon forthcoming. At the earliest opportunity Mr. Lowther rose and announced in his usual cold-blooded manner that he had decided to load the Parliamentary notice paper with motions touching on every conceivable subject of public interest. "By that device," he explained, "I shall hope to preclude Parliament from discussing anything at all, and once the rule is discovered to be an intolerable nuisance something may be done to annul it." Everyone was shocked—especially Sir William Harcourt. "I hope you will embark on no such piratical course," pleaded Mr. Balfour. The buccaneer was obdurate. "Then what do you propose to do?" he demanded doggedly. For once, Mr. Balfour had to confess himself cornered. His promise to grant a committee of enquiry into the anomalies of procedure was really a triumph for the persuasive powers of Mr. James Lowther.

Military enthusiasm is seldom retrospective. Sir Donald Stewart did noble service to his country both as a soldier and as a statesman, but the field of his activity was India, and he was unwise enough a few years ago to be wiser than the Government. Are those things remembered after death? Sir Donald died at Algiers, and as his body was borne on board ship to be conveyed to Gibraltar, the French garrison turned out 5,000 strong, and paid no less honour to the illustrious remains than if they had been those of a Marshal of France. On the other hand the British authorities could find no better temporary repository for the body than "a rat-infested warehouse." At Gibraltar the dead soldier was received by an improvised and scanty guard of militia; and when the time came to bring the body home it was found, in the words of Mr. Goschen, that to employ a warship for the purpose would be inconsistent with the public service. So home they brought our warrior dead—in a cargo steamer. The whole proceeding has been viewed with deep resentment, especially by Sir Donald's fellow-countrymen. If anything had been wanting to emphasise the shabbiness of the Admiralty the omission would have been supplied on Monday by Mr. Balfour's eulogy of the chivalrous homage rendered to the remains of a British field-marshal by the officers and men of a foreign garrison.

An amusing incident was generally believed to have happened in the House of Lords a few days ago. Many people imagined that they had seen it with their own eyes, and some were daring enough to write descriptions of what they thought they had seen. The illusion up to a certain point was familiar enough. Lord Salisbury, as is his wont when things are dull, left his place on the Government bench to exchange a merry jest with the Lord Chancellor. Presently he returned to the table, with the intention, as simple-minded spectators believed, of proceeding with the business of the day. Imagine the general surprise when the Prime Minister moved the adjournment of the House, when the Lord Chancellor accepted the motion, when the Peers assented, and when the day's work remained untouched. One of the clerks was seen to whisper to the Lord Chancellor, on whose face, which is not inexpressive, a look of annoyance was detected by some observers. Everyone jumped to the conclusion that the Lords, in a fit of sheer absent-mindedness, had overlooked their work. The official minutes, indeed, modestly admitted that everything in the nature of public business had been "put off." Nevertheless, Lord Halsbury on taking his seat on the woolsack next day warmly denounced the wicked narratives which had been built up on this supposition as absolute fiction. After which, the peers did the work which somehow had not been done on the preceding day.

Rumours of an early dissolution were boldly concentrated in the one-line placard of an evening paper at the beginning of the week. "Date of the General Election," read the startled politician as he produced his hasty halfpenny. The statement

of which the placard was an advertisement proved slightly illusive. Despite all assertions to the contrary, the dissolution, we were solemnly assured, will certainly take place in July—provided that no further accident occurs in the interval to retard the occupation of Pretoria. The qualification governs the prediction. No less an authority than Lord Kitchener is reported to have said that under skilful direction—such, for example, as his own—the Boers, considering the nature of the country, might be able to hold out for two years. Nobody at home seriously imagines that the period of suspense will be quite so long, but it is obvious that if the Government intend to appeal to the country this year they must do it while the war is still in progress. Mr. Chamberlain would probably offer no objection to that course, and in recommending it he might command the support of the younger Tories. But Lord Salisbury is understood to be a stickler for form and political decency in such matters. He is the Macbeth of the drama, Mr. Chamberlain the Lady Macbeth. "Infirm of purpose!" one can imagine the latter saying, "Give me the dagger." If Macbeth yields, the catastrophe will be hastened.

No sooner does the Easter vacation begin than the Ministerial press, feeling itself unmuzzled, resumes its long-suspended attacks on the War Office. Lord Lansdowne is again accused of inconceivable lack of foresight in neglecting to supply Lord Roberts with the means of transport and movement which everybody but himself saw months ago would be required at the present juncture. Not only is the War Office censured, but the military staff as well. Some, indeed, of the terms employed by the chief Ministerial organ to express its contempt for the incapacity of the officers at the front have excited the indignation even of stop-the-war advocates. The astonishing thing is that these outbursts of Unionist wrath should always synchronise with a Parliamentary interregnum. As soon as the Easter holiday is over the thunder will again die down and all further criticism of the Government will be denounced as factious disloyalty.

NOTES FROM BOMBAY.

A "CLAPTRAP BUDGET."

[From an Indian Correspondent.]

BOMBAY, March 24.

The topic of the week is of course the Budget for 1900-1901. I shall not recapitulate its broad facts, as they are already known on your side. Bombay nowadays is made aware of the summary of the annual financial statement at about the same time with London. But London is fortunate in learning it even earlier than Madras, where, through some strange procedure, it is alleged, it is not possible to post advance copies which might be published simultaneously with those in other parts of India. But to proceed with my remarks on the Budget. There is again a change in nomenclature and a change in the arrangement of the Estimates. The Accounts and the Revised Estimates are relegated to the back pages of the statement to be signed by the Controller-General, who is supposed to be responsible for the figures and the reasons of increases and decreases. As a rule these reasons explain precious little—about as much in fact as the Explanatory Memorandum issued on your side by the India Office. The Introduction and the Budget proper are placed in the foreground. These do not occupy more than about forty paragraphs. Then the paragon of finance, as the official Press here have tried to make out Mr. Clinton Dawkins, discourses pleasantly on some of the fads of his Government, such as currency, gold reserve, cash balances, State bank, and so forth. Even the countervailing duty on sugar is pressed into the service, though practically the "monograph" on this subject, like the remarks on the other subjects, contains nothing new for which the enlightened and critical public cares two straws. At the best these "monographs," as they are pompously baptised by the courtier Press, are so many variations of official optimism upon the old tunes now so painfully familiar to the Indian public. They give a meretricious halo to what is otherwise a dismal and dreary narration of the principal facts of the Budget. But nobody here is deceived.

Then as to nomenclature, the authorities have invented another wonderful word, "Rupee-Pound." The old Rx., or Tens of Rupees, are dead and buried. They are now to become part of the ancient history of British Indian finance. Macaulay's New Zealander may perhaps some day try to explain the origin of the symbol. The "Rupee-Pound" is fifteen rupees at the exchange of sixteen pence, so that whenever people on your side want to arrive at rupees, they will have to multiply this "Rupee-Pound" by fifteen. But is it a change for the better? Is it not likely to mislead the Britisher? Will he try to bear in mind that 100 "Rupee-Pounds" are something different from 100 pounds sterling? If Anglo-Indian financial statesmen cannot devise anything better than this to place our finances on a sound footing, let us by all means give them free play in changes of terminology. Names have such a charm. So let everybody remember the "Rupee-Pound" in future and try to forget tens of rupees or Rx. But how about the great Mogul when at the end of the Session he comes to discourse in glowing terms on India's elasticity in finance, and expound the figures of revenue and expenditure, of famine and famine expenditure, of surpluses and deficits? May he not flounder in the mire of rupees, tens of rupees and fifteens of rupees?

But to pass over the forms of the Budget, let me refer to the principal feature of it. I call it a "claptrap" Budget. There is claptrap throughout, and the claptrap reaches its climax when the Finance Minister comes to indulge in his "brilliant monographs." But I must confine myself to the claptrap "surplus" of 24 lakhs. Is it a true surplus? No. Is it an honest surplus? No, again. Then, what is it? It is a fictitious surplus, wrought by the usual methods for which civilian finance in India has won a name for itself. The authorities have over-estimated the land revenue. Though the year will to all intents and purposes be a famine year, and though even by March, 1901, the millions now on famine works, and the millions more who will flock to the relief camps in the next few weeks, will be back on their fields, it is certain that even with the most abundant rainfall they cannot have such a harvest as will enable them to pay their dues, current and suspended. No ghost is required to tell that plain fact. This time, to say nothing of other causes, the peasantry in Gujerat, where they have not known famine of this acute character for over a century, have no cattle. The plough cattle are dying by hundreds and thousands. So that cultivation will be circumscribed, and crops cannot be large. Yet the Government apparently means to screw out of the cultivator the uttermost pie of land revenue. The authorities speak of a suspension and remission of 178 lakhs. True. But when 1901 comes round, will all this suspended revenue have become irrecoverable? No. On the contrary, we may then hear that almost all of it is recovered. The remissions will be few and far between. They were few in 1896-97, and we may depend upon it that they will be fewer still in 1901. But that matters little. The authorities have to show to the world that, in spite of all famine expenditure, and other charges, India is able to pay. They want to show that India is independent and needs not a penny of grant (let alone £5,000,000) from the British Treasury. So here are 24 lakhs of surplus after meeting all charges and without raising a loan, and another crore into the bargain—flung into the lap of the insatiable military Moloch. They must have new arms of precision. The peasantry may famish. It may not have salt cheapened for it. It may have to be fleeced or flayed of all the wool on its back. But the military Moloch must be appeased. The authorities apparently have never asked where all this so-called "surplus" and other expenditure of millions might have been, if the enhanced and new taxation, levied since 1886, had been remitted as was solemnly promised by Viceroy after Viceroy. This fact is forgotten. The taxpayer is nowhere; the peasantry is nowhere. All is for the Services, including the hallowed "Exchange Compensation Allowance." India may go to the dogs if only there are plenty of "Rupee-Pounds" for the Services and the precious railways.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

4,976,000 ON RELIEF.

The Secretary of State for India has received (April 9) the following telegram from the Viceroy on the subject of the famine:—

"The numbers demanding relief have continued to increase, except in Punjab, where harvesting of irrigated crops gives some employment.

Number of persons in receipt of relief:—Bombay, 1,272,000; Punjab, 200,000; Central Provinces, 1,552,000; Berar, 362,000; Ajmere-Merwara, 115,000; Rajputana States, 458,000; Central India States, 82,000; Bombay Native States, 501,000; Baroda, 66,000; North-Western Provinces, 3,000; Punjab Native States, 21,000; Central Provinces Feudatory States, 51,000; Hyderabad, 285,000; Madras, 8,000. Total, 4,976,000. Punjab and Central Provinces figures incomplete."

[THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.]

NEW YORK, MARCH 31.

Mr. Klopsch, proprietor of the *Christian Herald*, has been authorised by Great Britain to charter a steamer to take corn for the relief of the sufferers by the Indian famine. The vessel will sail as early as possible in April.

"ONE VAST, BARE, BROWN, LONELY DESERT."

"*Great Britain and Ireland owe a debt to the Indian peasant, a debt of millions upon millions.*"—Mr. DONALD SMEATON.

Reuter's correspondent telegraphed from Bombay on April 7:

I have just had an interview with Mr. Donald Smeaton, member of the Viceregal Council, who was sent as special Commissioner to visit and report on the condition of the provinces affected by the famine. He thus describes the situation:—

"In my visit to the famine-stricken provinces, which was undertaken by order of the Viceroy, I travelled through Central and part of Western India. The condition of the country is much worse than I had anticipated. For hundreds of miles on end not a single stalk of corn or even dry stubble is to be seen, nor yet a blade of green pasture. There is no water except in the larger rivers and streams. The deepest tanks and reservoirs which have never before been known to run dry are now as dry as a rock. The whole country is one vast, bare, brown, lonely desert. Where in ordinary seasons one may see busy threshing floors studded all over with heaps of grain only a few cattle are to be found huddled together, thin and spiritless, in shady corners. The mortality among cattle is appalling, especially in northern Bombay and parts of Kathiawar and the Punjab, where there is no fodder and no water, and they are dying at the rate of thousands weekly from starvation and thirst. The people in many districts are enfeebled by successive bad seasons. They have not recovered from the calamities of 1897. In some districts poor little children are suffering acutely. Cases of desertion on the part of parents are not infrequent. The present condition is one of intense suffering for man and beast, for the people of both sexes, old and young. The officers of the Government are doing their very best to alleviate the general misery, but they cannot achieve the impossible. They have not money enough to do more than barely sustain the life of the five millions who are now employed on relief works and of thousands upon thousands of those silent sufferers in deserted villages who would rather die than labour in relief works.

"More money is wanted and wanted quickly to enable the officers and the bands of volunteers who are now grappling with the famine to bestow small comforts and the more generous diet and clothing which are needed to save the lives of the more delicately nurtured. More money is also required in order to husband the few remaining cattle for the coming autumn, when, if the rains are favourable, people with the help of plough cattle may raise food and obtain credit from the hereditary money-lenders. With the money already at our disposal the very strictest economy will be necessary. With more money a little liberality would be possible and the prospect of an adequate harvest would be brighter. I am drawing no sensational picture. I have had an extensive experience in India proper and in Burma. I have witnessed two famines; I know the people well and their patience under suffering; but I think the crisis through which we are now passing is by far the most acute of the century. God help the people! Great Britain and Ireland owe a debt to the Indian peasant, a debt of millions upon millions. India has risen as one man to support by her voice as well as by money her fellow-subjects in the South African struggle. Let the United Kingdom stretch out to her now a helping hand and extricate her from the deadly grip of famine."

THE MANSION HOUSE FUND.

The Indian Famine Fund at the Mansion House amounted on Tuesday night to £170,500.

THE "INVESTORS' REVIEW" FUND.

We take the following from the current issue (April 7) of the *Investors' Review*:—

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

LIST OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

	£	s.	d.
Amount acknowledged last week	367	12	0
"D." Bolton	2	2	0
Bowen and Company, London	2	2	0
James Skinner, Esq.	0	10	0
James Fisher Armistead, Esq., Blackburn ..	5	0	0
W. P. Wall, Esq., London	5	0	0
R. K. Taracham, London	5	0	0
Whitby	0	2	0
X. Y. Z., Portock	1	0	0
The Right Hon. Sir Richard Martin, Bart., Dublin	10	0	0
W. R. Hamilton, Esq., Nottingham	1	1	0
Parton, S. W. Parry, Esq., Woolwich	0	5	0
Total to date	£399	14	0

FURTHER MEMORANDUM FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

The Lord Mayor has received the following statement from the Secretary of State for India on the subject of the famine in India:—

The present famine was caused by the failure of the accustomed rainfall during the autumn of 1899, and the effects of this failure were greatly aggravated in Bombay, Rajputana, and the Central Provinces, and to a less extent in the North-West Provinces and the Punjab, by the lateness of the usual winter rains.

According to the latest accounts the tracts affected by the present famine contain a population of 85,000,000, of whom perhaps 62,000,000 may be severely affected. Of the 85,000,000, 43,250,000 are inhabitants of Native States and 41,750,000 are in British territory. The most severely affected tracts are the Central Provinces, the northern parts of Bombay Presidency, and the Bombay Native States, the greater part of the Rajputana States, and a large part of the Central India States. At the end of March, 1900, the number of people in receipt of relief were:—

NUMBER OF PERSONS IN RECEIPT OF RELIEF, MARCH 31, 1900.

British Provinces.		Native States.	
Bombay	1,249,000	Rajputana States	457,000
Punjab	211,000	Central India States	129,000
Central Provinces	1,513,000	Bombay Native States ...	468,000
Berar	365,000	Punjab Native States ...	19,000
Ajmere-Merwara	112,000	Central Provinces Feudatory States	46,000
North-West Provinces ...	3,000	Baroda	60,000
Madras	11,000	Hyderabad	246,000
Total British Provinces ...	3,454,000	Total Native States	1,425,000
Grand Total	4,879,000.		

Of these people six-sevenths were employed on relief works, and one-seventh, who by reason of age, infirmity, or custom, are unable to work, are gratuitously relieved without being subjected to any labour test. The Government undertakes to prevent death, and to relieve misery, from famine in British India at the cost of the Indian Treasury, so far as organisation and effort can accomplish these ends. The relief operations in Native States are conducted by the Native rulers and their officials; but the British Government in India lends money, and sends skilled officers to assist in relief work, to those States where such help is needed.

It is believed that the food supply of India will suffice to meet the present need. The afflicted tracts are traversed by or are near to railways, so that the distribution of food will be practicable. As in the famine of 1897, the Government do not propose—save in special cases of peculiar local difficulty—to interfere with the supply and distribution of food; what they undertake is to provide employment for all who need it. Prices are not generally higher than they were at the same season in 1897; in parts prices are lower. There was a great rise in prices about the end of October; since then the advance in prices has not been marked.

One notable feature of the present famine is that Gujerat, Kathiawar, and Baroda are very seriously affected. These are the richest and most fertile tracts of Western India, and it is said that these regions have not suffered seriously from famine for about a century. The Central Provinces, which were famine-stricken in 1897, are again severely distressed. They enjoyed good harvests in 1898; and some of the districts which suffered most severely in 1896-97 are not so badly off this year.

So far as can be foreseen the loss of plough and milch cattle will this season be greater in many parts of the famine area than on any similar occasion as to which we have full returns. If so, the village people will have much difficulty in regaining their prosperity; and it is to help them in this struggle that charitable funds will be largely devoted. After the famine of 1897 the return to agricultural prosperity was, save in some parts of the Central Provinces, more rapid and more complete than had been anticipated.

It is expected that the severity of the famine pressure will not abate until the end of June; and distress may be keener as the heat increases and drinking water becomes more scarce. After June, if the rains are favourable, the numbers on relief will rapidly decrease; but food will not be cheap again until the end of August; and not until the end of September will the prospect of next season's crops be assured, while relief operations may some tracts be required, even under most favourable circumstance the end of November.

While the Government assumes responsibility for saving life and relieving misery from famine, there is a very large field for the operation of charity outside the Government relief. General and local relief committees are appointed in each province or State and in each district, as the experience of past famines shows that this organisation is the best for distributing charitable relief. On the Committees sit Indians, missionaries, and other Europeans, besides officials; and many members of these Committees in 1897 laboured most strenuously to relieve the deserving and to make the funds go as far as possible. The four objects to which any sums which may be collected will be devoted, in accordance with the recommendations of the Famine Commission, are as follows:—(1) The provision of extra comforts in the shape of food and clothing over and above what is provided by the State; (2) the maintenance of orphans; (3) the relief of persons who, though in want, are unwilling to declare themselves publicly as applicants for charitable assistance; and (4) the provision of help, mainly in the form of agricultural implements and cattle, to those who may have lost their property in the famine and who, without such help, would be unable to make a fresh start in life. The relief of distress in the Native States will be a special feature in the administration of the Famine Fund, and it is hoped that this fact will appeal strongly to the generosity of the people of this country.

In 1897, the charitable contributions to the Famine Relief Fund amounted [1] to £1,134,000, and the money was expended thus:—

Object (1), extra comforts	.. .. ..	£70,700
,, (2), orphans	.. .. ..	10,300
,, (3), special classes of sufferers	.. ..	178,000
,, (4), giving sufferers a fresh start	..	758,000
Reserve for orphans and miscellaneous	..	117,000
Total	.. ..	£1,134,000

The Viceroy, when speaking at a public meeting in Calcutta, held on behalf of the Famine Fund, said, after he had himself visited the famine districts:—

"If any rich man in this city is in any doubt as to whether he should subscribe, I would gladly give him a railway ticket to a famine district, and take what he chose to give me on his return. He might go with a hard heart; but he would come back with a broken one.

"Whatever you give us, will make no difference in the extent and character of our outlay. That is fixed for us by the high conception that we entertain of our public duty. But for all that, there is an ample field for private generosity, both in supplement to that which the State can do and must do, and often in pursuit of that which the State cannot do at all. It is our task to keep the people alive, and to see them safely through the period of their sufferings. But no expert knowledge is required to recognise that there are a hundred ways in which the condition of their sufferings may be alleviated while they still last, and a fresh start in the world be given to the sufferers when the worst is over. The legitimate objects of private charity have indeed been carefully analysed and scientifically laid down both by Government during the last famine and by the Famine Commission afterwards. We ask your money to provide warm raiment, clothes, and blankets for the poor workers, who spend their nights out of doors either in the open air or under flimsy mats of straw. In the Punjab, as you know, it is still very cold at nights. Later on, when the rains come, the same covering will be required to ward off the chills that bring fever and dysentry in their train. Think, again, of the good that may be done by the distribution of small comforts of milk and arrowroot and cornflour, and other medicinal sustenance, to the aged and infirm, to invalids, and, above all, to children. My one happy experience in connexion with the whole famine is my recollection of having saved the lives of two poor little children in Kathiawar, who were very nearly gone, but for whom I ordered milk to be supplied until they were quite recovered, as I have since heard, with satisfactory results.

"There is not a donor, however humble, in India or in England, of even a rupee or a shilling to our cause who may not be honestly confident that that petty sum will bring a ray of light, a dawning of hope, into the heart of some unhappy peasant who for months will not have known what light or hope were."

April 2, 1900.

MR. ROMESH DUTT AND LORD GEORGE HAMILTON.

The following letter from Mr. Romesh C. Dutt, C.I.E., appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* of Monday last (April 9):

Sir,—On my return to England this week from India I read with great interest the debate which took place in the House of Commons on April 3 on the subject of the Indian famine, and I felt greatly flattered by the references which were made in the course of the debate to the statements I have recently made in my speeches in India on the subject of land assessments. I feel grateful to the Secretary of State for India for his kindly allusion to me personally and for his handsome appreciation of the services I have been able to render in India. Nevertheless, I find that the statements I made in India about over-assessments and famines have been misquoted and misunderstood, and I beg you will allow me to correct a few errors which have crept into Lord George Hamilton's speech.

Lord George Hamilton said: "He (Mr. Dutt) was in favour of the permanent settlement which, he said, in Bengal had preserved the cultivators and occupiers from famine. That was not the case. There have been two most serious famines in Bengal in my recollection." Permit me to point out that I have nowhere in my speeches or writings maintained that the permanent settlement had absolutely prevented famines in Bengal. It would have been very extraordinary if I had said so, because I myself was a relief officer in the Bengal famine of 1874. What I have said and maintained, not once or twice but repeatedly, in this country and in India, is that, owing to the permanent settlement and high assessments, the cultivators of Bengal have some power to help themselves and to meet the onset of famines, and that within the present century the permanently settled tracts of Bengal have never been desolated by severe and destructive famines like those which have desolated other parts of India. Everyone who knows India knows this, and Lord George Hamilton might have ascertained this from his office. The famine in Bengal of 1874 caused no loss of life; the famine in Madras of 1877 caused the deaths of five millions of people. Again, the famine in Bengal in 1897 caused no loss of life; the famine in the same year in the Central Provinces caused the deaths of hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions. What is the reason of this difference? The reason is that the Bengal cultivators, assessed by private landlords, pay a moderate rent; they can save something in good years, and to some extent can help themselves in bad years. The cultivators in Madras and the Central Provinces are assessed by Government officers, and severely taxed; they can save nothing in good years, and fall an easy prey to famines in bad years.

Lord George Hamilton further states: "This gentleman (Mr. Dutt) proceeds to assert that the rates are low in Bengal, and never exceed one-sixth of the gross produce. . . . . I have enquired from gentlemen who have legislated on the question of rates in Bengal, I have asked judges who have sat and heard hundreds of these cases, and I have enquired from executive officials in Bengal, and they tell me they have never heard, in a judicial or executive capacity, this principle put forward that the rate was to be limited to 16 per cent." Permit me again to point out that here also I am misquoted. What I have said and maintained is that the "average" rent paid by Bengal cultivators does not exceed one-sixth the gross produce in any district, and that Bengal landlords do not "generally" receive a higher rent than one-sixth the gross produce. If Lord George Hamilton's legislators and judges do not know this, I am sorry for them. It shows how little some English officials, holding high appointments in towns, know of the economic condition of the poor cultivator or his relations with his landlord. It shows how little they care to enquire about the rates of rent and the incidence of the land tax in India of which they speak and write. There is a useful and careful compilation within Lord George Hamilton's reach, and in his office, to which the noble Lord might have referred to ascertain if my statement was correct or otherwise. The late Sir William Hunter's "Statistical Account of Bengal," in some twenty volumes, gives the average produce and the rent per acre in the different districts of Bengal; and if Lord George Hamilton had directed some clerk in the India Office to collate these figures, his Lordship would have been satisfied that I am absolutely correct, and well within the mark, in the statement which I have made, and which I still maintain.

Lord George Hamilton further states: "I am informed that in most cases they [the rents in Bengal] are over 50 per cent., and in a good many cases go up to 75 per cent." I do not know if Lord George Hamilton has been correctly reported; if he actually made this statement, I regret it. There is not a schoolboy in India who will not smile, and there is not a young English administrator of two years' experience in India who will not blush, at the ignorance of Indian facts shown by this statement, made by a Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons. If Lord George Hamilton said that in some exceptional cases, as in the case of "Nij-jote lands," the rents levied are 50 per cent., he may have been correct. But if he has stated that in most cases in Bengal the rents paid by cultivators are 50 per cent, of the gross produce, the statement is not only inaccurate, but simply astounding to anyone who knows Bengal. Let me quote from Sir William Hunter's work referred to above the average gross produce and the average rents per acre for some Bengal districts selected at random:—

Districts.	Value of produce per acre in rice and winter crops.	Average rent per acre.	Proportion of rent to produce.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
24 Perganas	4 7 0 ...	0 13 6 ...	Less than one-sixth.
Midnapur	3 15 0 ...	0 9 0 ...	Less than one-eighth.
Jessore	3 13 0 ...	0 9 0 ...	Less than one-eighth.
Gaya	3 12 0 ...	0 9 0 ...	One-eighth.
Noakhali	3 10 0 ...	0 9 0 ...	Less than one-seventh.

Will not Lord George Hamilton, after going through these figures and others which he can obtain at any time at his office, acknowledge that he has done injustice to the Bengal landlords; I have never held a brief for the Bengal landlords; I have all through my official life fought for the rights of the cultivators against the landlords; and this is known to retired Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal, some of whom are members of Lord George Hamilton's Council. But in the interests of truth and justice it is necessary to state that the Bengal landlords are generally considerate to the cultivators, loyal to the Government, and far more moderate in the rents they realise than the Government itself in parts of India where the Government is the landlord. And this is the main reason of the prosperity of the Bengal cultivators and the wretchedness of cultivators holding lands directly under the State.

Lastly, Lord George Hamilton has stated—"Comparing the land revenue of British India with the land revenue of Native

[1] At an exchange of 1s. 4d. per rupee.

States, in every instance the land revenue of adjoining Native States is higher than that in British India." I have within the last three months myself enquired into this matter. I maintain, in the first place, that the land revenue in Native States is not in every instance higher than in British India; and I maintain, in the second place, that land revenue in Native States is very often assessed high after the example and following the precedent of British rulers in British India. I discussed the matter in January last with a distinguished Minister of one Native State. He said the rules followed on the subject were fixed when the State was under British management, and have not been altered. I discussed the matter in March last with some landlords in another Native State; they said they realised about one-third the gross produce as rent, because that was the general rule in the adjoining British territory. The matter is grave and serious. It is an undoubted fact that British influence and British example affect Native States, and that over-assessment in British territory will lead not only to poverty and famines in British provinces, but also to poverty and famines in Native States. In the olden times over-assessment in a Native State would have led to a rebellion and bloodshed. You have secured peace in India; it is imperative on you to see that this peace secured by British bayonets does not create an opportunity for Native princes to realise a higher rental than they would have done in olden days.

In conclusion, sir, I disclaim any intention of making this a party question. The impoverishment of India is a national calamity which all parties in England will deplore and all statesmen endeavour to remedy. And I appeal to Englishmen of all convictions, in the presence of the greatest and most wide-spread calamity which has ever visited India under British rule, to help us and relieve us—not merely by words of sympathy or by charitable funds, but by removing those causes which intensify these visitations. Share with us the cost of that vast European force which England maintains in India for the defence of her Empire in Asia and Africa. Reduce the National Debt and the gold obligations and the annual drain from India to this country. And moderate the land assessments, so that the poor, unrepresented cultivators can live and save in good years for bad years which must come from time to time. Four-fifths of the population of India live directly or indirectly on cultivation; if you over-assess land you impoverish the nation, and your words of sympathy are like idle mockery.—I am, etc.,

London, April 6, 1900. ROMESH DUTT.

MR. ALFRED WEBB ON THE CAUSES AND CURE OF INDIAN FAMINES.

The following article by Mr. Alfred Webb, sometime President of the Indian National Congress, appears in the April number of *The British Friend*:—

The wish has been expressed that I should communicate to the readers of *The British Friend* my views concerning Indian Famines, the causes that contribute to them, and the means by which the likelihood of their recurrence may be lessened. It is a subject overwhelming in its importance, and in the considerations to which it leads. Treating it as I shall do, it will be necessary ever to bear in mind that I, not the editor of the paper, am responsible for the statements and opinions expressed.

We need not dwell on the history of former famines, as given in the report of the Famine Commission of 1878, and after that date in annual departmental reports. It is enough for us to know that within recent years thousands of our fellow-subjects in India have perished of hunger, and that at present, following an appalling visitation two years ago, a famine is in progress affecting 40,000,000 persons severely and 20,000,000 less heavily—"the great extent and unusual severity of which," Lord Onslow, Under Secretary of State for India, in the House of Lords, on March 5, deplored; adding, that he "regretted to say that the present famine was without a parallel in the history of India." A population as large as that of Ireland, is, at the expense of India itself, being employed upon relief works.

We are in India and hold India in reality for our own advantage. England is one of the richest countries in the world. The average annual individual income of her people has doubled within the past sixty years. It is now about £40 per head. India is one of the poorest countries in the world. The average annual individual income of her people is about £2 per head.[1] The people of the United Kingdom spend per head on intoxicants double that amount. Even in Turkey the average annual income of the population is about £4 per head. We have assumed the responsibility and the power. We have gone to India; she has not come to us. Indians are, it is true, of a different complexion, they hold different views from ours on spiritual matters. None the less are they our fellow-subjects, none the less are we responsible for their prosperity and happiness, as much so as if they lived on one side or other of the Irish Sea. History will hold us responsible. We have abounding available means—overplus of superfluities. A large proportion of us could, if necessary, economise in a hundred ways without real detriment to our spiritual—our real—life. There is much we cannot do. There remains much we can do.

We cannot shelter ourselves under the plea of an undue tendency to over-population in India. The average birth-rate there is 29·5 per 1,000, somewhat less than that of England.[1] It is 7·5 per 1,000 less than the average birth-rate of Europe. It is true that in some of the districts where famine most prevails it is considerably above the average—nowhere, however, within 10 per 1,000 of the rate in Russia. And we must bear in mind that a high birth-rate is generally a concomitant of poverty that no amount of reasoning or advice can effect. It is only as people rise in the social scale and cultivate other than mere animal wants and hopes that wisdom comes in such regard. In proportion as comfort has increased in Ireland, the rate has tended to a low level. It is here now 6·7 per 1,000 less than in England.

One of the principal causes of the present, and, I fear, increasing poverty of India, is the drain upon its resources, caused by what is spent in the United Kingdom. Lord Salisbury once in justifying certain expenditure is credited with the cynical admission that "India must be squeezed"; and she is squeezed. We keep the books and apportion the amounts; every burthen that can be, with any face, is thrown upon her. There are two sets of taxpayers and two exchequers in reality, but one government and one policy. Transference from the rule of the Company to the rule of Parliament is not all gain for India. Parliament was jealous and watchful of the Company. At the periodical thirty years' renewal of the Company's charter there was an exhaustive Parliamentary enquiry into all its doings. Parliament is now correspondingly jealous and watchful, and chary of admitting independent enquiry into its own dealings. There is no real enquiry into the Indian Budget as there is into our own. All with any Parliamentary experience are cognizant of this scandal. The London correspondent of the *Hamburgischer Correspondent* (August 11, 1899) makes some drastic comments thereupon. Whilst the affairs of 280,000,000 of people were being hurried through in a few hours, he counted sixteen members on one, ten on the other side of the House, and (translated) "a number of the honourable gentlemen on both sides slept the sleep of the just—or of the unjust."

We were at school accustomed to be impressed with the degree to which the tributes exacted by Rome tended to the impoverishment of the provinces. We have every reason to believe that the resources now drawn from India tend in as great a proportionate extent to a like end. The return for the drain is the same in kind—peace and public works. Its effects are not so direct. It is not spent on gladitorial shows, doles to the populace of these countries, or showy triumphs. It none the less tends to Indian impoverishment.

In charges for the Indian office, recruiting, civil and military pensions, pay and allowance on furlough, preparations in England for the military establishment in India, private remittances and consignments, interest on Indian debt, and interest on railways and other works, there is annually drawn from India and spent in the United Kingdom a sum calculated at from £25,000,000 to £30,000,000 per annum.[2] Alone for "net expenditure in England charged on the revenues of the year, with the exchange added" we find in the Indian Budget estimate for 1899-1900 set down no less a sum than £22,024,500. No nation could stand such a strain. Some of it is, of course, for interest on railways and other supposed reproductive works. Many of these have been made for strategic reasons, and some of the irrigation works have proved a failure. In any case there is between us and India little of the give and take, of the tendency to a balance, that there is in similar borrowings and lendings between other countries. The drain is steadily one way. We have only to ask ourselves what would be the influence upon the economic conditions of these countries if all principal officials, after short service, carried their pensions away with them, if most of them through their service spent a large proportion of their salaries upon their families living out of the country, if most of the interest on railways and loans were spent outside its shores, if the expense of military preparations, the building of ships, the casting of ordnance, the manufacture of small arms and military stores went likewise. Whatever the cost of government in India under the Moguls, it was spent in the country. Nor must we forget that through

[1] Lord Cromer, in 1882, estimated it at 27 rupees a year; Mr. Naoroji, somewhat later at but 20 rupees a year. The rupee is now worth about 1s. 4d. in gold.

[1] Most of my figures concerning wealth and birthrate are based upon those given in the last edition of Mulhall's *Dictionary of Statistics*.

[2] Indian Government Statistics have hitherto been kept in tens of rupees, expressed "Rx." With the rupee at 2s., such formerly represented £ sterling. To bring them to sterling with the rupee now at 1s. 4d. I have deducted one-third. The produce of the Indian cultivator has risen little in proportion to the depreciation of silver. Consequently the necessity of India paying all claims outside her shores in gold has been a heavy additional burthen on the Indian taxpayer. The Indian rayat, like our farmer, has had to suffer from the competition of the vast wheat areas being now brought under cultivation in America, Australia, and Russia.

free-trade we have supplanted and gathered to ourselves the profits of industries that formerly over India gave employment to tens of thousands of the population.

Taxpayers in India have no direct voice in the expenditure. Upon this subject, Lord Randolph Churchill, when Secretary of State for India, said :—

The impatience of the new taxation, which will have to be borne wholly as a consequence of the foreign rule imposed on the country, and virtually to meet additions to charges arising outside of the country, would constitute a political danger, the real magnitude of which it is to be feared is not appreciated by persons who have no knowledge or concern in the government of India, but which those responsible for the government have long regarded as of the most serious order.

I now pass on to another more direct cause of poverty and famine, upon which Mr. Romesh C. Dutt, President of the last Indian National Congress, thus expressed himself :—

Famines in India are comparatively mild, and cultivators are able to help themselves to a great extent, where the rent [chiefly paid to Government] is moderate, as in Bengal and portions of Northern India. Famines are fatal and disastrous, and carry off millions in spite of relief operations, where the cultivators are already impoverished and resourceless through a system of rack-renting, as in the Central Provinces of India and in the Province of Madras.

Under the old Hindu rule the Government rent was generally fixed at one-sixth the gross produce. In Bengal, where this rate still prevails, and in Northern India, where one-fifth the gross produce is the rule, the people are comparatively prosperous. In the Central Provinces, where famines most prevail, it is half the net produce (about one-third the gross produce) and every effort is made, at recurring Government valuations, to screw it up. Over large districts, I understand, only six rupees per acre (8s.) is allowed for annual cost of working. The increased returns cannot be to any large extent derived from a larger area of land being brought under cultivation. In prosperous Bengal the increase of Government land rent between 1875-6 and 1885-6 was but 1·8 per cent., and between the latter date and 1895-6, 1·3 per cent. Whilst in the rest of British India (excluding Upper Burma) the increases between the same dates were 5·6 and 15·0 per cent. In a list before me of recent assessments I find increases ranging from 19·5 to 68·0 per cent. Also, at least in one district (that of Alibagh), where I personally enquired into what appeared to me excessive increases, I found the rent calculated, not only upon what the land *as cultivated* was supposed to be capable of paying, but upon what the land, if cultivated in the best manner, should pay.

Whilst educational and other departments, here considered essential to the elevation of a people, are starved, Indian military expenditure has of late years steadily increased—between 1875-6 and 1884-5, by 7·5 per cent.; between the latter date and 1895-6 by 60·5 per cent. As the result of a Royal Commission in 1859 a certain proportion was settled between British and Native troops in India. In evidence before the Expenditure Commission of 1897, it was shown that the British proportion has been exceeded by over 11,000 men. Before the present war, Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India, declared, in answer to appeals for decrease, that during his time the Army in India should not be reduced by a single man. Yet 8,000 British troops have now been drafted to South Africa, and 4,000 Native troops to the Straits Settlements and other dependencies, whence British troops have likewise been sent to the war. If at this juncture India can spare 12,000 men, she might well be saved the expense of a like number in times of peace.

As to the policy of supporting on the Indian establishment an unnecessary number of men, John Morley lately quoted some pertinent observations of Lord Cranborne (now Lord Salisbury) in 1867 :—

I do not like India to be looked upon as an Indian barracks in the Oriental seas, from which we may draw any number of troops without paying for them. It is bad for England, because it is always bad for us not to have a check upon the temptation to engage in little wars, which can only be controlled by the necessity of paying for them. . . . If this garrison which we keep in India is, as all authorities assure us, necessary for maintaining that country in security and peace, that garrison ought not to be rashly diminished. If, on the other hand, it is too large and India can for any length of time conveniently spare these troops, then the Indian population ought not to be so unnecessarily taxed.

This setting at naught by Indian officialdom of an arrangement solemnly come to at home is singularly characteristic of its tendencies and methods. Other instances might be cited. Parliament in 1893 passed a resolution that Indians should in India, as we are in London, be given an opportunity of competing for Indian Civil Service appointments: this was quietly ignored and reversed. There is an Act or resolution of Parliament under which the Viceroy and Council in India should not engage in war beyond the frontier of India without consent of Parliament: the Indian Government retains and exercises a free hand by delaying to lay down upon maps India's line of frontier. Parliament at one time decided against the continuance of the Cantonment Acts in India: it required the devotion and acumen of two American ladies to prove that such decision was ignored.

I have now shortly stated some of the principal causes that lead to the impoverishment of India, deferring till next month a consideration of possible beneficial changes—none of them of a revolutionary character. ALFRED WEBB.

Imperial Parliament.

Friday, April 6.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

INDIAN CAMP FOLLOWERS.

Captain NORTON asked the Secretary of State for India whether he was now in a position to state the result of his enquiries as to the camp followers in the late Indian Frontier Campaign having been deprived at the close of the campaign of the warm clothing issued to them; and whether, inasmuch as this clothing was sold for small sums, these men, many of whom were now serving in South Africa, would be allowed in future to retain it.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The Government of India have reported that, under the rules in force during the frontier campaign of 1897-8, followers who served until the end of the campaign were allowed to retain their field service clothing, except leather belts, haversacks, water-bottles, and waterproof sheets. But for the future the Government of India have decided that they shall be allowed to retain their clothing with the exception of leather belts and waterproof sheets only.

Monday, April 9.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

REPORT OF THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON INDIAN EXPENDITURE.

Indian Expenditure (Royal Commission),—Copy presented—of Final Report of the Royal Commission on the Administration of the Expenditure of India (Vol. IV.), and Minutes of Evidence (Vol. III) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

East India (Use of Government Churches in India),—Copy presented—of Papers relating to the use for Presbyterian and Wesleyan Services of Garrison Churches in India which have been consecrated for the service of the Church of England [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CONSECRATED CHURCHES IN INDIA.

Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS asked the Secretary of State for India whether the consecration of churches in India rendered illegal the performance therein of services other than those of the Church of England; and, if not, would Government churches be used as heretofore under the control of the military authorities for services for her Majesty's troops.

Mr. BRODRICK for Lord G. HAMILTON: The hon. member will find full information on the subject of his question in the papers which I have to-day laid on the Table. The consecration by the Church of England of churches in India does not prevent other denominations from using them, provided they do so with the assent of the ecclesiastical authority to whom those buildings have been transferred. This principle equally applies to all other churches which have been handed over to denominations for their special use. There has been no departure under the new rules from past practice except that the authorities of the Church of England are prepared to assent to a more liberal use by other denominations of the churches appertaining to them than was previously the case.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

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

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE,—Distress in India,—That the spread of famine and scarcity over extensive areas and affecting millions of inhabitants in India, although recurring at irregular intervals, may be regarded as a certain calamity to which that country is periodically exposed; that the disastrous consequences of such visitation are rendered unconquerable by the fact that an unusually large proportion of its population is allowed to remain dependent for its livelihood upon agricultural labour exclusively, whereas nearly all other industrial pursuits for which the natural resources of the country offer wide scope are neglected; that one of the most effective methods by which the rigour of the famines could be modified, and the buying power of the people now succumbing to them increased, would be to enable large classes of the agricultural population to pursue other industries; and that, therefore, it is the opinion of this House that the Government of India should adopt measures for the elementary, industrial, and technical instruction of the poorer communities, so as to fit them for more profitable manual labour in other directions besides agriculture. (An early day.)

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

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS,—On going into Committee of Ways and Means, To move to leave out all after "That," in order to add "in the opinion of this House, the Military appropriations in aid paid by India, in addition to the payment by that country of the cost of the British army in India, are excessive and unjust to India."

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