

India

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NOTES AND NEWS.

THE Monsoon has at last arrived in the famine-stricken districts, bringing long-looked for and glad relief. The Viceroy reports six inches of rain in the city of Bombay, the extension of the monsoon to Berar and the Central Provinces, and even to the sub-montane districts of the North-Western Provinces, and "eight inches of heavy rain in Burma and Bengal." The news has made the House of Commons ring with cheers—the genuine relief of painfully pent-up feelings. Let us hope that this anxious experience will lead members to a more serious consideration of the condition of the Indian rayats, in view of future contingencies as well as of present succour. The numbers on relief, according to the Viceroy's telegram, are 5,923,000—an increase of only 3,000 on last week's return. Still there has been a very large fluctuation: there are 90,000 more on relief in Bombay, besides considerable increases in Native States, the balance being almost redressed by decreases elsewhere. For the week ending June 16, the tale of deaths by cholera is 10,277, about equally divided between British and Native territory. The Mansion House Famine Fund has not done so well this week, notwithstanding the Viceroy's appeal; but it has risen above £300,000.

Mr. William Digby, writing to the *British Weekly* (June 21), again contends that "famine in India is of our making," and "may be of our unmaking." Citing Lord Curzon's rainfall statistics, he remarks:—

That is to say, to follow the Viceroy's way of dealing with the situation, last year, on every acre of cultivable soil, on all the mountain slopes and arid wastes, on the average 30 inches of rain fell; that is to say, 3,000 tons, or 756,000 gallons, of rain-water was available for each acre, and yet crops could not be grown! Why? Probably the most of this tremendous quantity fell at the wrong moment. In the year of the Orissa famine 60 inches fell in that province. . . . Lord Curzon does not tell us the fact that in the year preceding his year of "unparalleled" deficit there was an overplus of nearly six inches—more than half of the "unparalleled" deficit.

Obviously distribution, as well as quantity, must be considered. Mr. Digby is concerned for the conservation of rain when it does fall, so that it may be available for a season of need. Meantime fanciful theories of Indian administration keep people from seeing the facts clearly and in just relation. The "unmaking" of famine, says Mr. Digby, "will come about when the nation becomes earnestly solicitous to give to means of prevention one-twentieth of the time and one-half of the money it is now giving to South Africa." Quite so; and, if the reports from the famine area do not render people earnestly solicitous on the point, it is not easy to imagine what will.

We are glad to observe that the *Londoner*, a young weekly review, takes an independent course on the question of "India's Need," and speaks out in vigorous tones. In the current number (June 23), Mr. Alfred H. Haggard considers the causes of the famine and looks around for a remedy. He concludes his paper in these incisive terms:—

Indian officials will tell you that there is no remedy, that the question is insoluble, and so it is—by them. But it is not insoluble if this country realised the necessity of the case, and the duty it is under to India. If this responsibility were once brought home to the people of England by their assumption of a considerable portion of the Home Charges, and the setting free of a considerable portion of the revenues of India to the regeneration of that country, such act of duty would certainly be coupled with a searching enquiry into the conditions of Indian finance, which would infallibly result in wide and most beneficial reforms. But this should be seen to before, and

not after, India has been bled to death, and while there is yet time to save our nation from the everlasting reproach of having perpetrated the cruellest, because the most enormous, outrage ever inflicted on a subject nationality.

Very true; but the Indian authorities at Westminster will not permit any one of these excellent things to be done, and the responsibility will have to be brought home to the people of England first by the usual means of spreading the light. We earnestly hope that Mr. Haggard and the *Londoner* will continue to insist on the national duty to India in many more articles of cogent fact and argument.

The *Investors' Review* (June 23) deals drastically with comfortable reliance of the Secretary of State on the credit of the Government of India to soothe the rayats set up again after the famine. Our contemporary says plainly that "Lord George Hamilton has not in the slightest degree begun to comprehend what this famine means for India, what its frightful ravages imply in the way of capture upon our reckless exploitation of the peninsula in the past."

"India has still £9,000,000 of unexhausted borrowing power," the Secretary of State declares, as if borrowing was going to deliver India, as if borrowing had not been the curse of India, the readiness with which nine-and-thirty times nine millions have been raised and spent, not for India's benefit, but for ours. It is not more debt that will deliver the Natives of India from the effects of famine, or put them in the position to resist the ravages of drought when next the heavens refuse their bounties: it is the reduction and removal of debt, not only on the part of the State, but on the part of individuals

the cultivators on whom alone the prosperity of India rests. We say that because the people are dying of starvation, because they are over head and ears in debt; to the local user, as the cultivator, requires nothing done for it, no help, no gift from the British Government, since the Vice-regal Government has power to still further increase the debt since in its hands there is an undefined liberty to borrow, is surely a monumental exhibition of folly, suggestive of a speedy end to many things on whose everlasting strength we now pride ourselves after the manner of the abandoned.

"Surely a monumental exhibition of folly" in the eyes of every person that possesses a spark of statesmanlike instinct or intelligence. But we know the reason.

We have received from Bombay a touching appeal for subscriptions to the "Queen's Birthday Gift Fund," started by a correspondent of the *Times of India* (May 22), "for clothing the naked famine-stricken." The situation of the wretched people is faintly depicted in the following sentences:—

These poor people, before they left their village homes for the far off famine works, had to sell everything to satisfy the gnawing cravings of hunger, even the flimsy materials of their huts were disposed of either for fuel or for grain. They are now quite worn out by constant and unfamiliar work, sustained only by a scanty diet. Their clothes, if any, are thread-bare and hardly sufficient to ensure decency, much less to cover their body. In this condition, if they are exposed to the inclemency of the rains when they return to their villages, they will simply die by thousands. Clothing for them is urgently required. All the endeavours of the Government are directed only towards keeping them alive. The cry for clothes from all parts is most piteous.

There can be no possible doubt of the necessities of the poor people. But it seems quite hopeless to do anything for the special fund here, except through the scanty efforts of private friends. Perhaps the case may come within the scope of the *Investors' Review* Fund. Anyhow, the Bombay committee for the disposal of that fund will no doubt consider the claims of the distressed persons on whose behalf the appeal is made; and contributors to that fund will perhaps keep the case in view.

The *Pioneer* publishes a letter, signed "Ajmere," which in effect charges the Government of India with serious procrastination in one matter connected with famine relief. The States of Rajputana have been heavy sufferers, and it may well be that at first neither the European nor the Indian officials were alive to the dangers of the situation. That is not the case now. The officials of one state in

particular have applied to the Indian Government for permission to contract a loan, but their prayer seems to have been persistently ignored, though a loan is necessary to save the cultivators from starvation and death. "Ajmere" continues: "In a matter of life and death no amount of red-tape should be allowed to trammel the prompt action of Government." He attributes the Government's conduct to a paternal desire to keep the States out of debt, though the real effect is to force the Durbar to borrow secretly at 20 per cent., instead of openly at from 14 to 6 per cent.

The *Times of India* publishes a long letter signed "G. V. J." dealing with famine relief in Gujerat. There can be little doubt that the Government expected the people of this district to make a better fight against famine, and so were unprepared for the numbers who sought relief; but this initial mistake has been overshadowed by the terrible events that have taken place since. The cholera has come, and as a result there has been a vast exodus from the works: between April 21 and June 8 over 170,000 had left for this or some other cause. They have wandered off, for the most part driven by fear, to die in their native villages or on the roadsides, unless some succour can be brought to them. Under these circumstances the Government have reluctantly set up small village relief works for the benefit of the fugitives; but the work is all to be piece-work, and the remuneration is fixed at such a low figure that it is doubtful if the weak can earn sufficient to keep body and soul together. As "G. V. J." says:—

... A scheme of relief is sanctioned, in order to prevent the works being swamped by people attracted from the larger works, for those people, running about in mad terror, depressed and disheartened, which expects them all, famished men, women, and children, to work by the piece as in normal conditions, and earn their famine wage or go without it.

But the Bombay Government declare that it will be impossible to give relief, even on this niggardly scale, to a large proportion of the fugitives. Our Bombay correspondent draws special attention to this letter and to the comments of the *Times of India*, which are also very

The *Times of India* draws an interesting parallel between the great Russian famine of 1891 and the present famine in India. In both cases, as it shows, the famine came on a people whose resources had been exhausted—the Russians having experienced a long series of lean years, while the Indians had scarcely recovered from the sufferings of 1897. In both the loss of cattle was a distinguishing feature. The parallel, however, goes deeper. Sir Edward Law, who wrote the Report on the Russian Famine for the British Foreign Office, and is now Financial Member of the Government of India, points out how the distress is aggravated by the collection of taxes in Russia at inconvenient times, and how this forces the peasant to have recourse to the money-lender. It is instructive that the two countries in Europe which have been visited by famine in the last sixty years are Ireland and Russia. Both, like India, have a population the great mass of which depends solely on agriculture. Russia, like India, supports a heavy burden in its civil and military expenditure. Ireland, like India, has to pay a vast tribute—in the one case, chiefly the rents of absentee landlords, in the other, home charges, etc., etc.—but in both cases involving the payment of money without economic return. Such comparisons throw considerable light on the difficulties of India.

The *Indian Spectator* expresses surprise that its London namesake—"so thoughtful and well-informed a critic"—should have shown itself so unthinking and ill-informed as to ridicule Sir William Wedderburn's suggestion that the peasants of India should be encouraged to store grain in pits, after the manner of their ancestors. It says:—

Does our contemporary know that the same proposal as that made by Sir William Wedderburn was suggested by Sir James Caird and Mr. H. E. Sullivan in a dissenting minute appended to the report of the first Famine Commission? The rest of their colleagues disagreed with them, but they said: "We are unable to adopt the views which find expression at paragraphs 160-164, inasmuch as the evidence which is collected has led us to form the opinion that, under present conditions, it might be not only expedient but absolutely necessary for the State to make provision in the manner condemned by our colleagues. There are certain localities in Southern, Western, and Central India which are now, and may continue to be for some time, distant from the lines of railway communication, and which are in an especial degree liable to visitations of famine."

They reckoned that such inaccessible tracts covered one-fifth of the whole extent of India, and contained a population of some forty millions. "We propose no new practice," they said, "but recommend that, in outlying places, the Government should, through their resident officials, do for the safety of the poorer classes what the wealthier now do for themselves." The means of communication have not extended in the past twenty years so far as to render this opinion obsolete.

Speaking of the plague, which as usual shows some decline with the advent of the hot weather, the *Pioneer* reiterates those sentiments on the necessity of popular co-operation which are now commonplaces in the most loyal quarters, but were not so long ago thought to be signs of rank sedition. We are now told that the confidence of the people must be won in the first instance to secure the information, and it is here that the difficulty comes in. In Barh village, for example, there was systematic concealment until the deaths became so numerous that the truth leaked out by necessity.

How to inspire the people with confidence is a problem that has not yet been solved. Even the educated Indians have too much distrust in the Government to help—which is not surprising, considering that one of the first to come forward and assist was imprisoned without trial for a long period. Yet to those who are free from the prejudices of the majority of their countrymen "the authorities must turn for support wherever they can be found." So the educated Indian is, after all, not merely useful, but necessary.

The *Pioneer* again comments on Mr. Dutt's Congress speech and the controversy that has grown out of it. It begins with a vigorous attack, but it ends with rather a lame attempt to show that he has not justified his indiscriminate (?) denunciations of the Indian land-tax, although he has successfully defended it in particular cases. It says:—

As regards the Central Provinces the fact that the Secretary of State admits the possibility of occasional error in assessment hardly justifies the triumph of Mr. Dutt. No one with the slightest acquaintance with the facts ever maintained that any assessments were altogether free from error.

The Secretary of State, it is claimed, maintained that the assessments of the Central Provinces were not as a whole pitched too high, although they had been up run too quickly. Our contemporary adds:—

We are ready to admit that in drawing attention to the assessments in the Central Provinces Mr. Dutt has done usefully.

In face of this praise from an enemy, Mr. Dutt may well disregard his controversial attacks.

The Imperial developments of politics are casting useful light upon the question of the necessary strength of the Indian army. At least 10,000—and it may have been 15,000—white troops were despatched from India for service in South Africa, and neither has the remnant of them been sent back to India, nor have others been sent out to replace them. Now a whole division of the Native troops, numbering at least 16,000, is on the point of being despatched to China, nor do we hear of any steps for supplying their place, or of any apprehensions for the tranquillity of India. The argument of the *Morning Leader* seems perfectly just:—

Either these troops can be spared or they can not. If they cannot, then we are jeopardising our Empire in India for the sake of gold mines in Africa and commerce in China. If they can be spared with safety, then it is equally clear that we maintain an excessive garrison in India. In that case there is a direct connexion between our military policy and the present famine.

There is in fact no danger whatever to the country, for, as we have pointed out already, the strength of the Indian army is still based on the calculations that were made under the fright occasioned by the Mutiny, and is much beyond the practical necessities of the present circumstances. But, however that may be, it is plain that India has a serious grievance in this matter.

Our statesmen at home point complacently to the convenience of having a central eastern depot in India, whence troops may be drawn for service east, west, or south, much more promptly than they could be drawn from England. Here is one of the advantages of an Imperial position. Nor is India in the least disposed to grumble at this view, for India is not only willing, but anxious to assume her just position in the Imperial organisation. India readily supplies the troops—at least 25,000, so far. But inasmuch as neither South Africa nor

China is any concern of hers, she naturally expects to be paid for the marked service she performs. True enough, the Imperial Government will pay all the expenses, ordinary and extraordinary, of these contingents during the period of their absence from India. But then the above dilemma comes in: "either these troops can be spared or they cannot." Evidently, however, they can; and, for the same reasons, they could have been spared any time during the past generation. There is a long debt for their maintenance, therefore, which India might fairly ask to be paid, and to be done with. And in respect of the present contingents, and of as many more as are in excess of the reasonable needs of India, there are also all the expenses of training and transport. In point of fact, India has a valid claim to payment for the temporary loan of all these troops. India cannot indeed resist the demand of such a loan, but that is no reason why in justice she should not be properly remunerated for it. India in a sense is "ours," but we ought to be more honourable than to take advantage of the ambiguity covered by the pronoun.

It is well to learn from Lord George Hamilton's reply to Sir Lewis M'Yvor (June 22) that "the Government of India have given a most careful and thorough consideration to" the Rangoon outrage, and that the reports and conclusions of the Government of India have been reviewed by Lord George and by the Secretary of State for War. There is nothing really new in this, however; for we were well aware that the Government of India were shocked by the deplorable event, and were seriously bent on manifesting a righteous displeasure. Nor does it take us any farther to be informed that "a certain number of officers, both civil and military, have been censured or otherwise punished for their part in the proceedings." That, too, was already known. But Lord George Hamilton declines to publish more fully the final decisions in the case; "it has not been thought desirable." Why not? Even General Sir Redvers Buller and Sir Charles Warren were publicly brought to book for Spion Kop. What reason can there be for shielding the very minor officers responsible for the shameful—the peculiarly shameful—episode at Rangoon? One has no desire to pillory the particular men; but it is matter of public importance that justice should be done in the full light of day, and not in this huggermugger fashion.

Another move in the right direction is announced from the Indian frontier. The 200 regular troops stationed at Gilgit as an escort to the Political Agent are to be withdrawn. At one time there was a battalion at Benji as well as these two companies at Gilgit, but that has been removed long since, and now the Political Agent must rely on the Kashmir Imperial Service Troops alone. The *Pioneer*, which has been honourably distinguished by its opposition to adventures beyond the frontier, looks on this decision as a "sensible one."

The *Pioneer* inserts a letter signed "Pro Bono Publico," protesting against the conduct of the Government of the North-West Provinces in sending a message to a Court of Justice by the mouth of the prosecuting counsel. In a criminal trial at Lucknow, during the course of the case and just before the closing speech for the prosecution, the prosecuting counsel announced that an official witness had acted on his own discretion, and that the Government "had no reason to be displeased with the conduct" of certain persons reflected on by his evidence. As the writer says:—

In any country the interposition of the executive in a judicial proceeding would be an irregularity. . . . In India, where the executive has such influence and is so far beyond the reach of effective public restraint, such a course is objectionable in the highest degree, and fraught with the possibility of serious danger to the individual.

An Anglo-Indian correspondent writes:—"The paper read before the Royal Statistical Society last week by Sir Charles Dilke, entitled 'The Defence Expenditure of the Empire,' offers much to cut at and come again for politicians and financiers generally. Our concern with its figures and statements only relates to those that purport to show what is India's contribution to that Imperial object. It may be a new light to most English politicians that India does so contribute; and in 1896 the (Anglo-Indian) member for Cardiff thus tersely stated that broad fact:— 'India pays 2½ millions [nearly one-third] out of a total

expenditure of 70 millions on the armaments of our Empire.' This statement was corroborated and amplified in a leaflet which most of our readers will have seen, under the title 'India's Subsidy to the British Army.' Since then the figures of the British budgets of military and naval charges have enormously increased, so that the proportion borne by India is now less than above stated; but, as in the paper before us, the current war charges are excluded, it is 'the normal peace expenditure' which is set out. What really concerns the Indian peoples is the actual amounts of the military burdens and naval charges they have to sustain. But in India's case it sounds like mockery to speak of those burdens as being 'normal,' for, as often shown in these columns, the amount of India's unproductive expenditure is altogether abnormal compared with her capacity to sustain it. However, all that can be done here is to take note of the figures put down in this paper to India's account, and to trace how the method of their presentation would enable the critical audience to appreciate the bearing of these on India's financial and economic condition.

"After citing figures of the 'defence' expenditure of the United Kingdom—what becomes of loan money, naval aids and annuities, *et cetera*, almost baffles the skilful author—Sir Charles remarks: 'the expenditure of India upon army is a matter far less definite and tangible.' But here we take leave to differ from the honourable baronet; for India's military charges are only too definite in their extent and weight, and are very tangible in the sense that neither the Indian peoples nor their friends can touch them by one rupee in the way of reduction or control. It may suit the atmosphere of the Statistical Society to bemoan itself with the strangely mixed guesses and estimates—of which the paragraph just quoted from consists—regarding 'the rupee at its average value,' 'a floating divergence of eight millions sterling,' and 'the British Treasury view of Indian military expenditure'; but this will not help our public men to see their way into the subject. Still less will this needlessly intricate treatment of figures abate by one jot the burden of India; or avail to check the ever 'abnormal' military expenditure forced on her by this country. And what the British Treasury can have to do with the Indian Government's details of monetary numeration, it is not easy to see.

"Sir Charles Dilke is on safe ground, though dealing in 'round figures,' when he writes: 'the total charge on the Indian revenues for army is always over 25 millions Rx.,' and reminds us that in 1895-6 the figure had reached 27½. The amount directly budgeted for in the year closing with last March was—thanks to less exchange cost—only about Rx. 23,000,000, but military works cost Rx. 1,250,000 besides. Sir Charles duly notes that '£4,500,000 is spent in England' of the Indian army charges; but in a paper of this kind he could not enable his audience to realise what a ponderous factor this huge foreign expenditure constitutes in the economic and financial condition of India. It is to be regretted that in the table of Indian army and navy charges—founded on the budget figures of 1899-1900—though citing the Rx. figures, he has applied the Dawkins alchemy to the totals of war charges. This method is very misleading. It cannot be too often repeated, and should constantly be borne in mind, that it is only to that portion of Indian revenues sent over here that sterling figures apply, also that these mean to India one-third more in tens of rupees, even while the present artificially disguised cost of remittances obtains. To the 'poor Indian' the tola rupee remains the same, though he does not know how, but by this device the coin costs him more labour and trouble to obtain than ever it did."

Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji is again actively at work, after his recent sharp illness. At present he has on hand the following programme:—

June 28.—Takes the chair at a Garden Meeting at 5 Bedford Place, Geydon, where Mrs. Charles Mallett gives an address on "The Indian Famine."

Presides at the Annual Dinner of the London Indian Society.

July 1.—Delivers an Address to the Lighthouse P.S.A. Society in his old constituency of Finsbury.

July 12.—Speaks at a Garden Meeting at 1 Thornsett Road, Anerley.

July 21.—Addresses a Meeting of the Metropolitan Radical Federation at Plumstead Radical Club.

THE PUNJAB LAND ALIENATION BILL.

THERE is being circulated in the Punjab a petition to Lord Curzon which embodies in a succinct form the various arguments which have been urged against the Bill to prevent the Alienation of Land. It is in fact an answer to the invitation of the Viceroy, who expressed the desire that the amplest opportunity should be given "for the expression of the opinions, and even of the criticism, of those whose interests will be affected." As the Bill is in some of its clauses retrospective, and as it interferes with existing rights, it must be admitted even by its most fervent advocates that the case for the measure should be fully made out and that all the arguments on the other side should be given their full weight. To those who think that our elaborate and expensive system of government is an overwhelming advantage to India, and who insist on looking elsewhere for all her ills, the opposition to this bill seems almost impious; for the money-lender has long been with them one of the great causes of Indian distress, and this bill seemed to offer a means of clipping his claws and enabling the agriculturist to free himself from his grip. But there is another side to the question, and one that should be taken into consideration whether it be wholly right or not. To many the statement of the petitioners that the measure is "subversive of those concrete rights of property which are vested in us by the law of the land, and economically and politically inexpedient," and "fraught with consequences alike disastrous to ourselves and our families and inimical to the best interests of this Empire," will seem a paradox. These are strong words, which can only be justified by strong arguments. In view of the great differences of opinion to which the Bill has given rise, it is very desirable that the reasons urged against it should be put before the public.

The criticisms of detail which the petitioners append to their more general judgments need not detain us long. It is certainly unfortunate that a Bill intended to limit the right of alienation in cases where it already exists should appear to set aside some customary limitations which already exist and are universally acquiesced in. It is alleged that under the new law the heirs will have no power to question the validity of an alienation, provided the alienation is made in accordance with the terms of the Bill. Again, land is not to be leased for more than fifteen years, and in any case the lease will end with the death of the lessor—a precarious tenure which will surely be fatal to good agriculture. Further, it is objected that the Bill is to be applicable to the whole of the Punjab, even to those districts where the evils it is intended to remedy scarcely exist; and attention is drawn to the opinion of Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick, who considered that a Bill so much in the nature of an experiment should first be tried in limited and selected areas, and then extended as it proved successful. But these are really matters of secondary importance. The attack on the principle of the Bill goes deeper. It might leave the customary restrictions on alienation in full force, it might allow of long leases for a fixed term, and it might at first only operate in particular areas, and yet it would not satisfy its opponents, for in their view it would aggravate the very evils it was intended to prevent.

The object of the Bill as defined on its introduction in the Viceroy's Council is "to obviate the political danger arising from the expropriation by money-lenders of sturdy landholders, men who furnish the flower of the Native Army of India, who look forward amid all the hardships and glories of a military career to spend their declining years on their ancestral acres." Further, Lord Curzon himself said: "We cannot afford to see the yeomen-farmers of the Punjab—the flower of the population and the backbone of our Native Army—dwindle and become impoverished before our eyes." The means by which this excellent purpose is to be accomplished is the prevention of the alienation of land by an agriculturist save to another agriculturist. Nor is the yeoman to give more than one mortgage on his farm. It is unnecessary to follow the authors of this petition into their enquiry as to how far rights of property in land were recognised by the ancient lawgivers of India, or how far private property in land is in accordance with the old traditions of the Punjab. Let it suffice to say that in the opinion of the petitioners

these ideas are no new innovation of English rule. We prefer, however, to consider the question from the point of view of practical expediency, and to see what the petitioners have to say in support of their contention that the proposed legislation would defeat its own ends and intensify the evils it is intended to prevent.

Now in the first place it is contended that the money-lender by trade—the *sahukar* (sowkar)—is less dangerous to the peasant than the rich landowner who lends money. Borrow the peasant must. Bad harvests soon exhaust his scanty reserves; the claims of the tax-gatherer must be met, and met in money; seed must be obtained; and his family must be provided for. He can borrow from two sources only—from the *sahukar*, who usually does not wish to become an agriculturist, who has no special reason for selling the peasant up, and who, if he does so, usually retains him as his tenant; or else from the rich *zamindar*, who often wishes to increase the land which he cultivates. This difference is borne out by statistics. In the two years 1897 to 1899, there were in the Punjab 72,554 mortgages by landowner to landowner and 26,527 sales, while the mortgages by landowner to *sahukar* were 85,214 and the sales only 19,229. In other words, in dealings with professional money-lenders the sales bore a much smaller proportion to the mortgages than in dealings with rich landowners. Expropriation is therefore more often due to a fellow *zamindar* than to a *sahukar*. Yet the new Bill proposes to prevent expropriation by forbidding alienation to a *sahukar* while allowing it to an agriculturist.

As we have already said, the Indian peasant must borrow. In so far as he will in future be forced to borrow from another landowner, instead of from a professional money-lender, he will be forced to borrow from one who has a much stronger interest in getting hold of his land. In so far as he still has to borrow from the *sahukar*, he will be able to give less security and so will have to pay higher interest or pledge more of his land. In so far as he will be unable to borrow, he will be obliged to sell. If he wants the money for the purpose of paying his land-tax, he will, if unable to procure it, be sold up by the Government. If he wants the money for the cultivation of his land, for the purchase of seed or bullocks, or to sink a well, should he be unable to obtain a loan, the land will go to waste and his poverty will force a sale. Thus in every case the landholder, under the restrictions of the new law, will be in a worse position than he was before. Moreover, the difficulty of obtaining a loan in seasons of scarcity, and the consequent distress, cannot fail to produce an increase of crime. Morally and materially the agriculturists will suffer. Forced sales will become more and not less numerous, and the class that supplies the flower of the Indian Army will diminish more rapidly than ever.

If we look with the eyes of the petitioners, not at the immediate effects prophesied from the new Bill, but at the causes of the evils which the Bill is intended to remedy, we shall find no more reason for supporting it. The petitioners decline to regard the rapacity of the money-lender as the chief factor in the situation. They say:—

The expropriation of the small yeoman proprietor from his ancestral holding, if any, is due not to the greed or the rapacity of the money-lender, but to the fact that such holding is, in by far the majority of cases, an extremely small one and consequently unable to provide its proprietor, even after a good season, with more than a bare subsistence for himself and those dependent on him.

Thus the alienation of land is partly a natural result of the smallness of holdings, which sooner or later are found unequal to the support of the whole family, and partly to more general causes from which all suffer and under which the poorest go to the wall. Such causes are the periodical settlements and the rigid and punctual collection of the land-tax even in bad seasons. But it is possible that there are deeper causes still which do not come within the scope of this petition—the expensiveness of the Government of India, the fruitful mother of taxation, and the drain on the resources of the country due to the vast sums annually transmitted to Europe without economic return.

The peasant does not go to the money-lender because he enjoys it, but because he must. To limit, then, the security he has to offer, or the persons to whom he can apply, is no remedy. His poverty is at the root of the evil, and, if that be left untouched, all legislative nostrums are in vain. If the attack on the money-lenders

has the effect of distracting attention from the true evils of the peasant's lot, it will only leave him further than ever from that position of security in which it is the high aim of the Indian Government to place him.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN'S RETIREMENT.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN, we are very sorry to record, has announced to his constituents, in view of an early dissolution of Parliament, that he does not propose to seek re-election to the House of Commons. Throughout Banffshire, except in narrow circles of fevered militarism, the unexpected announcement has been received with disappointment and regret; and far outside the constituency there has been recognised the prospective loss to the House of a distinctive personality, and of especially skilled and independent opinion on the affairs of the Indian Empire. One does not know where to look for a substitute of such large Indian experience, of such judicial temperament and training, or of such disinterested sympathies. The heaviest loss will fall, not on Banffshire, but on India: Banffshire may easily enough obtain an adequate representative, but it seems impossible, so far as one can see at present, to regard the loss to India as otherwise than irreparable. Happily, Sir William's interest in Indian affairs will not cease with his retirement from Parliament—temporary retirement, we should like to believe. He will continue to labour for the cause of India, probably in enlarged measure, in his private capacity. Yet the influence of his character and his experience will be grievously missed on Indian questions in the House of Commons.

In a letter to Mr. A. R. Stuart, the President of the Banffshire Liberal Association, which we print in another column, Sir William explains briefly the reasons for his withdrawal, at the same time acknowledging that his decision "has been arrived at with deep regret." In seven years the political tie of staunch Liberal principles has drawn constituency and member closely together, and the natural kindness of Sir William has drawn out a reciprocal feeling, which has cemented the political relation. The union of two ties of such strength could not be severed without pain on both sides. The determination to sever it could not have been lightly adopted, nor could it have been confirmed without some peculiarly compelling reason. The reason is: "because in the present temper of the British people I see no prospect, during the next few years, of forwarding the purposes for which I have desired a seat in the House of Commons." Sir William's object in entering Parliament was, he states, "to do some work, however humble, in support of peace, economy, and reform, which I regard as the only solid basis of national welfare." It seems a pitiful pass for public life in this country to have reached when an experienced, hard-working, and moderate man, keenly interested in many departments of affairs, feels driven to despair of immediate progress in matters of fundamental national importance. More specifically Sir William says:—

"The ways of militarism which has swept over the country seems to ensure, at the next general election, a fresh lease of power, for seven years, to the present Government—a Government which engages in mischievous and costly wars abroad, and misapplies public funds at home by doles to political supporters. Under these circumstances, it seems useless to continue these personal sacrifices without which it is not possible to fulfil parliamentary duties.

The conclusion is much to be regretted, although it is anything but surprising on the part of a man that has always striven after "a high national ideal," and has yet been stigmatised as "unpatriotic" for his pains. There comes a time when the most public-spirited citizen must yield to the claims of private considerations. "Parliamentary life," wrote Sir William recently in another connexion, "has attractions for many, especially those who look for political or social advancement. But this is not the case with me. To me it represents the sacrifice of leisure and independence, the abandonment of favourite pursuits, and an excessive strain upon my strength." As it is, Sir William has added to an exacting official career of over a quarter of a century in India a dozen years of active political work at home, the last seven years of which have been spent in laborious exertion in the House of Commons. Few men have more fully earned the right to shift the public burden on to younger shoulders.

Even such electors of Banffshire as have been most

strongly opposed to Sir William Wedderburn's views on the South Africa war would be forward to acknowledge that he has always acted from conscientious motives. It is also generally recognised that he "was most assiduous in his duties as their Parliamentary representative and spared no efforts to do what he could, both inside and outside Parliament, to assist his constituents, whether friends or foes." But while Sir William has discharged his Parliamentary duties to his constituency with strenuous fidelity, it may be doubted whether he would ever have sought the thorny honour of a seat in the House but for his ardent desire to help in bringing before the British public the Indian view of Indian affairs. There ought to be no need to state here how faithfully he has served India—and the Empire—in the House of Commons during these past seven years; nor to recall the dignity of forbearance that has characterised his endurance of the contumely of official ignorance and despite. The labour involved in the chairmanship of the British Committee of the Indian National Congress, as well as of the Indian Parliamentary party, has no doubt been very genuinely a labour of love. Yet how onerous that labour has been will not readily be appreciated by anyone who has not sat continuously on both boards and followed closely the stream of important, delicate, and pressing questions that has steadily poured in for consideration and for action. The Indian people, we are well aware, have always appreciated highly the steadfast service of Sir William; but we are very sure that most of them would be considerably surprised if they knew by personal experience, and not merely by the ineffectual effort of imagination, the true meaning of the variety of his labours in their cause. It is reassuring to know that Sir William will not resign his post on the British Committee, and no doubt his hands will be strengthened from India for continued exertion in that sphere. It is only too obvious how much the man that may constitute himself his successor in the House as "Member for India" will need the moral support of the Indian people.

It is interesting now to recall the Address which Sir William Wedderburn delivered as President of the fifth meeting of the Indian National Congress, at Bombay, in 1889. "I have passed a quarter of a century among you," he said, "and during that period of time I have not known what it was to suffer an unkindness from a Native of India. During that period I have been in the service of the people of India, and have eaten their salt. And I hope to devote to their service what still remains to me of active life." At a later point he said that "the main interests of the Indian taxpayer are peace, economy, and reform"—the three interests which, as he tells his Banffshire constituents, he regards as constituting "the only solid basis of national welfare." Reviewing the situation in England, Sir William pointed out the strength of the organised forces in the hands of the opponents of the Congress views—the India Office, the Services, Society, the London Press, and most members of Parliament with Indian experience; and he referred hopefully to the growing forces on the side of the Congress. If the review were made to-day, the conclusions would be considerably different. In consequence of the steady and patient vigilance of the British Committee and the activity of the Indian Parliamentary party, essential changes have been operated in the past ten years. Even the India Office itself has felt the effects of the strenuous efforts that have been made on behalf of India. The Services and Society indeed are not very susceptible to democratic impressions; but it would be a mistake to underrate the independent interest of members of Parliament of both parties, with and without Indian experience, in the British Indian Empire. The London Press, too, has developed a different spirit in quite recent years, and while several of the younger and more enterprising journalists advocate Congress views without reserve, the most aristocratic of Tory sheets opens its columns to the expression of the most advanced opinion. The provincial journals also, with the *Manchester Guardian* at their head, now treat Indian affairs with an amplitude, knowledge, and sympathy far beyond anything that could have reasonably been anticipated ten years back. It would be but just to attribute the main causes of this healthful change to the laborious persistence of the various organisations in whose work a leading part has been taken by Sir William Wedderburn.

There need be no fear that Sir William will swerve from

his determination to devote to the service of India what still remains to him of active life. Though still keeping a warm side for his old constituents, and maintaining his interest in national affairs, he will yet, after the dissolution, be free from the special demands on the time and the energy of a member of Parliament, and thus able to press more strongly in other ways the interests of the Indian people. The Parliamentary field, it is true, is too important to be ignored; and Sir William will be able to make his influence still felt there, indirectly if not much longer directly. But there is also a vast field open in the constituencies, and Sir William will no doubt put much of his strength into the new lines of popular appeal so successfully struck out by the British Committee. One great object now is to get the Indian case presented in fulness and with force to British audiences. The large amount of this needful work already accomplished under the direction of the British Committee has been notified from time to time in these columns; and the success of the lecturers invites an increase of campaigning activity, in the arrangement and direction of which Sir William will still manifest an undiminished interest.

There is another matter that merits careful consideration. The British public is eminently disposed to help those that help themselves. It seems opportune, therefore, to suggest to our friends in India whether they should not take advantage of the sympathy evoked by the unhappy condition of their country and make some worthy effort to place able Native representatives face to face with the British working-man, who controls the ballot-box. Even in Conservative circles the usual confidence in the Government policy is rudely shaken, and distrust widely prevails. And need we recall the warm welcome accorded to Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, Mr. A. M. Bose, Mr. Romesh Dutt, and other Indian gentlemen who have spoken to British audiences on various aspects of Indian affairs? Moreover: might not some steps be taken towards a further Native representation of India in the Imperial Parliament? Since Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji ceased to occupy a seat in the House, there has been no Indian representative of Indian thought and feeling in Parliament. This is not as it should be. We hope Mr. Dadabhai will again find a seat in the House. We trust that Barrow will do itself the honour of sending Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee to Westminster, and that some constituency of Imperial conceptions will secure the services of Mr. Romesh Dutt. But much more than that ought to be done, or at least attempted. British friends of India may do their best, and will do their best; but it is hard work for them to hold the ground in face of the opposition of old Anglo-Indians, and still harder to push forward the cause in the face of official resistance. A few Indians of first-rate ability might communicate an impulse that would, under the favourable conditions already gained, soon transform the face of Indian politics. Meantime, India will look back with deep gratitude on the past services of Sir William Wedderburn; and she will look to the future with hope—a hope capable of fulfilment in proportion to her own exertions.

OUR LONDON LETTER.

WESTMINSTER, Thursday.

PERSUASION having failed to soften the obdurate heart of Mr. Balfour, members interested in the affairs of India were determined last Monday to try the effect of coercion. In other words, had the Leader of the House of Commons persisted in his *non possumus* to all appeals for the ventilation of Indian grievances a debate would have been forced forthwith on a motion for the adjournment. The mere threat proved enough. Two or three days earlier the First Lord had met Sir W. Wedderburn's request for information as to the probable date of the introduction of the Indian Budget with the brusque reply that it would be about the usual time. Mr. Maclean on that occasion pointedly enquired whether there was any special reason for delaying the Budget till the last day of the Session. "There is no special reason," was Mr. Balfour's curt retort. Something must have happened between Thursday night and Monday afternoon to melt this stern mood. One would probably not be far wide of the mark in suggesting that a whisper of the possibility of reprisals had reached the Ministerial ear. At all events Mr. Balfour showed himself more conciliatory to Mr. William Redmond than he

had been to less aggressive members, graciously admitting in reply to that gentleman that in the peculiar circumstances of the case it was desirable that a favourable opportunity should be given for discussion of this year's Budget. Interpreting this somewhat vague observation as a promise to bring the Budget on before Parliament has virtually separated for the recess, Mr. Redmond refrained from pressing the matter further.

To hear the monsoon welcomed by the cheers of Parliament is a novel experience, and considering that such a demonstration could only be possible after a long period of suspense and anxiety, nobody will desire that it should become less rare. The incident happened on Tuesday night. Questions about China had been put and answered, but the House was still full of members. Mr. Herbert Roberts, acting perhaps on official inspiration, rose and asked for news of the monsoon. There was a tremulous uncertainty in the voice in which Lord George Hamilton framed his reply that took the House fairly by surprise and touched it to the quick. The monsoon had broken, said the Minister for India, and was spreading satisfactorily. Sentiment of a tender kind is so seldom betrayed by the noble lord that his emotion on this occasion had the electrical effect of a revelation. A sympathetic chord was touched in the breasts of all present. As Lord George Hamilton returned to his seat he realised that for the first time in the history of his Secretariat the House of Commons was vehemently cheering the monsoon.

Although the week's debates have ranged as usual over a bewildering variety of topics, the dominating subject of interest has been the situation in China. A profound impression was caused by the curiously sensational phraseology of a message read from Admiral Bruce last Monday. Tientsin was described in this document as "fighting for its life." Our maritime vocabulary was enriched at the same time by the addition of a word hitherto limited to the terminology of South African warfare. "I have commandeered a small coasting steamer," reported the Admiral, the whole tone of whose message suggested that he had also commandeered the phrase-book of some special correspondent. The reassuring reports which were forthcoming next day failed to relieve the prevailing anxiety. Much of our news—especially the cheerful part of it—continues to come from Chinese sources, on which Ministers evidently put no reliance. Mr. Brodrick, for example, distinguishes between "private" and Chinese sources by describing the former as credible and the latter as unauthenticated by corroboration.

International jealousies have of course received a stimulus from the presence of the allied forces of Europe and Japan on Chinese territory and in Chinese waters. Emulation in vigorous initiative is distorted by nervous observers into selfish and grasping rivalry. We have had some exhibitions of this amiable spirit in the House of Commons. Sir Ellis Ashmead Bartlett has as usual been a foremost exponent of the gospel of suspicion. His bugbear is Russia, and again and again he has put questions to the Government suggesting that the Tsar was endeavouring to steal a march on the other Powers. The member for Sheffield trembles with rage or with apprehension whenever he hears of a new move on Russia's part, yet the other night he saw no inconsistency in suggesting that the British Government should "arrange" with Japan, as the nearest Power to China, to land an adequate force in that country for the purpose of suppressing the Boxers. Mr. Balfour replied that the Government would welcome the employment of such a force by any Power. Perhaps Russia will take the hint. At present, however, it can scarcely be said that either Russia or any other Power is displaying a reckless haste to plunge deeper into the hornets' nest.

South Africa, within the last few days, has disappeared altogether from the newspaper posters, and almost as completely from the Parliamentary reports. The British public can think of only one thing at a time, and for the moment China is the eclipsing subject. Nevertheless, there are signs of a revival of interest in the war, or, rather, in the welfare of the soldiers who are fighting under the British flag. A few nights ago members were expected to show some concern in a matter no less trivial than the price of the tobacco supplied to the Boer prisoners and their guards in the island of St. Helena. The former, it was alleged, had no duty to pay on their tobacco, while the British troops were compelled to pay the full amount. Mr. Chamberlain admitted the impeachment, pleading in

extenuation that the British prisoners in Pretoria had enjoyed precisely the same exemption as the Boer prisoners in St. Helena. This specious plea failed to satisfy General Laurie, who, on hearing that the wretched captives chiefly depended for their supply of tobacco on the generosity of friends, fiercely inquired whether such gifts came from the United Kingdom or from Cape Colony. As the gallant officer was obviously prepared to prescribe a short shrift for the peccant donors, it was perhaps as well that the Colonial Secretary found himself unable to satisfy his curiosity. Otherwise, the pipe of peace might soon have changed its symbolical character.

People, however, are no longer discussing the respective comforts of the Boer and British prisoners. Their minds are engrossed by what appears to have been the scandalous neglect of the authorities to supply sick and dying men with the necessities of existence. A profound impression has been created by Mr. Burdett-Coutts's letter in yesterday's *Times*, describing in awful detail the deficiencies of the army hospital arrangements in South Africa. The horrors of Scutari, if this witness may be believed, have been excelled by those of Bloemfontein, while if a Florence Nightingale were to re-appear on the scene she would probably find herself regarded as an obnoxious item in the "plague of women." Mr. Burdett-Coutts's revelations are the more disconcerting because we have always been taught to believe alike by officers, medical experts, and newspaper correspondents that never in the history of war had the sick and wounded been so carefully tended as in this campaign. The hon. member's disclosures have excited deep feeling both in the country and in Parliament. When Lord Rosebery begins his promised "great inquisition" into the short-comings of the campaign one of his most important witnesses will be the husband of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts.

Amid such distractions of war and rumours of war domestic legislation has fallen completely into abeyance. Parliament, after a diet of cataclysms, retains no appetite for the wholesome fare of home administration. Bills continue to be introduced as a matter of form, but Ministers are careful to disarm criticism by explaining that they have no intention of trying to pass them. It was on that condition that the Duke of Devonshire was permitted to bring in an important secondary education Bill the other evening. "I have no hope of its becoming law this Session," his Grace frankly confessed; "but it will be an advantage to have the opinion of the country on the measure." Meanwhile, Parliament has virtually no work to do. Early adjournments, prolonged and frequent holidays, and leisurely deliberations are the methods by which it is proposed to stretch the Session out to its usual period. Education, temperance reform, social legislation of every kind, must await the advent of a new Parliament.

As to the date of the birth of that new Parliament opinion continues to fluctuate. The prevailing impression, however, appears to be that the event will not be witnessed this year, and that it may even be delayed till the spring of 1901. Throughout all the variations over which rumour and speculation have ranged on this fateful subject, the official members of both parties have held firmly to the view that unless opportunity offered for a dissolution next month there would be no General Election till next year. Until next month has passed there must of course still be some uncertainty, but afterwards a long period of sedate electoral preparation may be confidently anticipated.

NOTES FROM BOMBAY.

GENERAL PESSIMISTIC FEELING.

GLAMANT NEED OF AN IMPERIAL GRANT.

OPINION AGAINST "THE DRAIN"

THE JAIPUR FAMINE TRUST.

[FROM AN INDIAN CORRESPONDENT.]

BOMBAY, June 9.

The orthodox date for the break of the monsoon at Colombo is the 25th of May, but it was not till yesterday (June 8) that news came of that meteorological event. Ordinarily, it takes twelve or fifteen days for the currents to move up to Bombay. At the earliest, therefore, we should not expect the burst here till the 20th. This retardation will not matter much, provided the fall this season all over the Presidency is abundant.

The patience of the people has been sorely tried by the calamities of the past year. It will be infinitely worse tried if unfortunately Nature repeats her unhappy freak this season. Heaven forbid that the country should be overtaken by another severe drought! That would spell the break up of the producing classes entirely. I need not disguise the general feeling of dismal pessimism which at the present moment seems to dominate all classes of the people. Let us hope for the best.

Meanwhile the Press here is hammering away at some of the unsatisfactory measures of famine relief adopted by the Bombay Government. True it is that the officers entrusted with the operations manfully discharge their duty against overwhelming odds. The famine relief camps are most unyielding; and not all the utmost efforts of the undermanned staff, with most niggardly resources, which redound little to the credit of the humanity of the local Government, could ever hope to cope with the bare wants of the mass of hungry and enfeebled humanity congregating there. Hence it is beginning to dawn on many an observant mind whether the precious Famine Code, of the perfection of which we have lately heard so much, needs not a radical revision. In fact it is felt that, after all, official organisation, pure and simple, however able and however capable, must be admitted to be inadequate for the relief of a famine of the extensive and intensive character now prevailing. Two points have already been conceded to popular controversy—first, that official organisation alone cannot cope with any famine; and second, that voluntary organisation of villagers themselves is essential, and that the nearer the relief works of a really sound character (such as may have the effect of mitigating the evils of a subsequent drought, whenever it may occur) are devised, the better. These are points to which the Government of India will have to give its immediate attention. Meanwhile every day that passes by emphasises the need of that financial aid for which so many friends of India in and out of Parliament have, as yet vainly, appealed to the Secretary of State. It is India's grave misfortune that Lord George Hamilton should still persevere in his resistance to that appeal.

One gratifying feature in connexion with the present famine is the attention which is paid by Indian publicists to the question of the annual drain of the surplus wealth of the country, to which the far-sighted Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji has drawn incessant attention these last thirty years. Slowly, but steadily, public opinion is ripening on the question. Of course it will require even a worse famine than the prevailing one to compel the official optimists to acknowledge the absolute accuracy of Mr. Naoroji's main contention—namely, that every economic evil from which India is suffering has for its ultimate cause this exhausting drain, the most prominent results being the growing impoverishment of the peasantry and the dire assaults of famine. This terrible drain has sucked away, so to speak, the life-blood of the country. Restore that blood—make it circulate once more in the exhausted veins, and the country will again spring into life, and advance to prosperity. This single dominant fact is now seriously occupying the attention of the Indian public. The Government, however hard it may go against the grain, will have to learn this all-important lesson.

Your readers should not miss an exhaustive letter, signed "G. V. J.," published in the *Times of India* on June 6, regarding the errors of the Bombay Government as to the heavy mortality among the famine refugees on account of cholera, and the objectionable method of driving them at this season back to the relief camp when they should be nearer their villages. Nor should they neglect to note the criticism which the *Times of India* next day founded on the letter. It is indeed a pleasure to see that Anglo-Indian journal doing excellent public service at this juncture, and voicing enlightened and experienced popular opinion on the collection of land revenue assessments and the mischievous minimum wage policy.

Lastly, there is the State Resolution in respect of the Maharaja of Jaipur's noble benefaction of fifteen lakhs of rupees (£100,000) towards famine relief in future. The money is handed over to the State to be held in trust, with liberty to swell the principal by donations exceeding 15,000 rupees. The rules and regulations under which the Trust is to be administered have already been promulgated, and objections, if any, to these are invited from the public. The time given is up to July 3. This is quite fair, and it is satisfactory to note that in a matter of such public interest Lord Curzon has taken

the public into his confidence. There is a potentiality about this fund which bids us be somewhat hopeful for the future of famine relief by private charity. All honour to the noble founder of this Trust! At the same time, why should the Indian Government not grant at least an equal sum? Should the various principal Feudatories of the Empire follow the good example of Jaipur, the fund would promptly reach a crore. That sum would mean an annual income of at least 3, if not 3½ lakhs, which might accumulate in ten years to 30 or 35 lakhs, assuming that the next famine may not recur till ten years hence. The Trust will, no doubt, in the course of time become a rich fountain of private charity, which will perennially flow to gladden the heart of the helpless and the infirm, of the widow and the orphan. May it go on prospering. It is a "beam in darkness" on the misery of India.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

5,923,000 ON RELIEF.

ARRIVAL OF THE MONSOON.

The Secretary of State for India has received (June 26) the following telegram from the Viceroy on the subject of the famine:—

"Situation unaltered. Frequent showers fell in Deccan and elsewhere, but copious general rain is much wanted for ploughing and sowing of autumn crops, and this holds off. Numbers of persons in receipt of relief:—Bombay, 1,378,000; Punjab, 160,000; Central Provinces, 1,941,000; Berar, 480,000; Ajmere-Merwara, 143,000; Rajputana States, 493,000; Central India States, 150,000; Bombay Native States, 468,000; Baroda, 89,000; North-Western Provinces, 3,000; Punjab Native States, 36,000; Central Provinces Feudatory States, 64,000; Hyderabad, 493,000; Madras, 17,000; Kashmir, 1,000; Bengal, 7,000. Total, 5,923,000."

The Secretary of State for India has received (June 26) the following telegram from the Governor of Bombay:—

"Following are figures for week ending June 16: Fourteen famine-stricken districts, 7,568 cases of cholera, of which 5,042 fatal; sixteen Native States, cases of cholera 7,911, deaths from cholera 5,235. Total number of deaths among number on relief works and gratuitous relief in British districts, 4,340. The numbers demanding relief have continued to increase."

The Secretary of State for India has also received (June 27) the following telegram from the Viceroy on the subject of the monsoon:—

"Monsoon considerably improved west coast. Rain six inches in Bombay City. Rain extending to Berar and Central Provinces. Eight inches of heavy rain in Burma and Bengal. Frequent showers submontane districts North-western Provinces."

THE MANSION HOUSE FUND.

The Mansion House Fund for the relief of the Indian famine sufferers amounted on Wednesday night to £305,000. The Lord Mayor during the day remitted a further sum of £12,000 to Lord Curzon for relief purposes.

THE "INVESTORS' REVIEW" FUND.

We take the following from the current issue (June 23) 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.

Amount acknowledged last week	£625 15 0
Collected by Darwen W.L.A. (per Miss Alison Garland)	3 15 0
Mrs. Lee (per Miss Alison Garland)	25 0 0
T. Warren Crosse, Esq., South Kensington	5 5 0
S. O. Witting, Esq., 49, Cannon Street (second donation)	10 0 0
E. Breffit and Co., Limited, and their Work-people, Castleford	10 10 0
Total to date	£680 5 0

Remittances should be made to Mr. A. J. Wilson, *Investors' Review* office, Norfolk House, Norfolk Street, Strand, W.C.

BRITISH CHARITY AND BRITISH JUSTICE.

The *Morning Post* (June 14) published the following letter from Mr. H. M. Hyndman:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MORNING POST."

Sir,—Lord Curzon, as Viceroy of India, again appeals to the British public through the Lord Mayor of London for charity in order to alleviate in some measure the misery caused by the tremendous famine which is now afflicting British India. Why does not he appeal to the British Government for justice? I am no lover of the Government of Russia, but I cannot forget that when a great famine attacked nearly one-third of the population of Russia that Government, bad as it is in many respects, actually spent £24,000,000, or close on it, in the endeavour to save the peasants from ruin and death. What are we doing? Why, instead of devoting £24,000,000 on Government account to succouring the Natives from the calamity brought on our Native fellow-subjects in great part, as I contend, by the frightful drain of produce from India without return, we are actually taking out of India in this year of "unparalleled" distress the huge sum of £16,000,000 without return, on official account this alone. The total amount which we shall abstract from India in this same year, likewise without return, will be full far short, including private remittances, of £27,000,000. Why does not Lord Curzon, I ask again, appeal to the Administration of which he was lately a member to remit at least one-half of the Government drawings of £16,000,000—say £8,000,000—in this time of affliction and devastation? Far be it from me to write anything which would tend to check even the tiniest trickle of funds to India. But it does seem to me hypocrisy of the most contemptible kind to drain from India, by way of direct Government tribute to pay pensions, interest, home charges, etc., the sum of £18,000,000 in order to return in charity some £200,000 or £300,000.—Yours, etc. H. M. HYNDMAN.
3, Queen Anne's Gate, June 13.

In the *Morning Post* of June 15, Colonel G. Sartorius made the following reply:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MORNING POST."

Sir,—Mr. H. M. Hyndman's letter is to be regretted. That public and private charity should be extended to their furthest limits in order to help India in her present great distress must be admitted by everyone, especially by those who like myself have spent many years there and are even now sorry to have left that country; but to call the sum sent home from India one that is being paid without return and further to include private remittances therein, is to show a want of knowledge of the subject. The money is in far the greater part spent on the Army, and interest of enormous sums of money expended on public works, the latter including railways.

I dare say Mr. Hyndman thinks the Army a very useless expenditure. It might be so in Russia, but in India, where about 70,000 men are holding nearly 300,000,000 in check, it can hardly be called anything but a very inadequate police. Those who have followed in the newspapers the accounts of the plague, famine, and cholera must have seen how difficult it has been to keep down risings having their origin in the deep distress experienced by the unfortunate Natives of the country. Does anyone who knows the country think that without the British soldiers present in India the general peace could have been kept? Then, without railways, how could the famine have been fought with in any way? Again, the magnificent roads—are they of no help? Enormous tracts are watered by means of canals, on which huge sums of money have been spent. All that country would have otherwise been added to the famine district.

From the way Mr. Hyndman writes it might be supposed that the Government of India are only employed in sending money out of the country. Has he really paid so little attention to his subject as not to note the many millions that are being spent on relief works? How the famine districts are relieved of land taxes; and not only that, but also supplied with seed grain? Even the English officers, I can assure Mr. Hyndman, are doing something, as those who know the language are being sent all over the country on that worst of all duties, namely, cholera, famine, and plague supervision. Thus all are working together and doing all they can. India may have to add somewhat to her debt, and she can easily do so. Therefore there is no reason why the interest should not be paid on the sums so expended that enables her now to face her troubles with incomparably better chances than she ever had before.—Yours, etc.

Thorwald, Godalming, June 14.

G. SARTORIUS.

Mr. H. M. Hyndman made rejoinder as follows, in the *Morning Post* (June 15):—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "MORNING POST."

SIR,—I do not gather from Colonel Sartorius's letter in your journal this morning that he disputes the correctness of my figures,

or that he denies that the Government alone will draw out of India in this year of unparalleled famine and pestilence the enormous amount of £16,000,000, to pay away here in Great Britain without making any commercial return for it. He also admits—what, indeed, it would be impossible to challenge after Lord Curzon's earnest appeal for British charity—that India needs help in this her direst need. I say that if India were an independent country, or if she were at all adequately represented in Parliament, this terrible drain of economic tribute in this terrible year would certainly be reduced or suspended altogether. As India is in no condition whatever herself to resist our exactions, though her poverty is as desperate as Lord Curzon represents it to be, it is the duty of all honest Englishmen to claim for her what she is unable effectively to claim for herself. I am sure Colonel Sartorius will agree with me that if this £16,000,000 were not abstracted from India during the current year a deep breath of relief would come from everyone responsible for the well-being of that afflicted country. And my main contention, that to take out £16,000,000 from India on public account, while returning only £300,000 as private charity, is to trifle with the whole question, remains quite unshaken.

It seems to me also that if famine and starvation are occasioned by our drawings and our administration together it matters little under what social conventions ordained by ourselves we take the wealth, the abstraction of which creates this misery. However beneficial the army and the railways may be, the fact remains that, according to the highest official authority, we are face to face with a famine of extent and severity "unprecedented" in all the long history of Hindostan. Surely, if our rule were so advantageous to the people as Colonel Sartorius and many others take for granted it is, the peasants in our territory would have been able to make provision against this recurrence of death.

I am quite willing, however, to take Colonel Sartorius on his own ground. The charges on account of the depots for the Indian Army paid in Great Britain, for example. These amount, I believe, in round figures to about 24,750,000. But Sir Henry Brackenbury, late military member of council in India, gave it as his deliberate opinion before the Royal Commission on Indian Finance that this expenditure is useless to India. Ought we not, then, as a mere matter of common honesty, to begin at this point, and to relieve India, in this year of horrors, of a useless payment to Great Britain of nearly 25,000,000? I claim Colonel Sartorius's support on this issue, knowing as he does how severe the distress is, and how much 25,000,000 would do to mitigate it. Then the railways of India. These, I repeat, have not prevented famine. Colonel Sartorius seems to think they have been built with British capital. Well, so they have in a sense. But it is with British capital abstracted from India, and then lent back to that country at interest, every such loan increasing the amount of the drain. We have taken out of India in the last twenty years £500,000,000 without commercial return. It is easy to lend some of that back again for public works—most extravagantly and even ruinously built many of these public works have been, by the way—and then to take credit to ourselves for improving the country; while all the time, to use the phrase more than once employed by the Marquis of Salisbury, we are continuously "bleeding India." The railways of India are conveying food to the famine-stricken districts to some extent. I admit that. But the people are too poor to call for it and pay for it in sufficient quantities to save them and their cattle from the wholesale mortality now being described by independent observers, and the Government relief, distributed, in my judgment, in a most unfortunate form, is too parsimoniously administered to be of much avail to save the situation.

"Peace is an excellent thing," as Philip of Macedon said among others. But, as we see to-day in British India, peace has its horrors no less renowned than war. The peasants of British India are becoming steadily poorer and poorer under our rule. However good in itself that rule may be, therefore, it is too expensive for the country. The continuous drain which you have allowed me to force on the attention of your readers involves a continuous deterioration of the soil all over British India, outside of the permanently-settled districts, and manufactures famine on an increasing scale with every successive decade. For just a quarter of a century I have done my utmost to direct the attention of my countrymen to the irremediable mischief they were doing, and I predicted an economic cataclysm as the inevitable result of persistence in the existing policy. That cataclysm is now on us, and British India will never recover from it unless we immediately change our ruinous system.—Yours, etc.,

H. M. HYNDMAN.

9, Queen's Anne's Gate, June 15.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN'S RETIREMENT.

HE WILL NOT SEEK RE-ELECTION.

Sir William Wedderburn, Bart., M.P., has addressed the following letter to the President of the Banfshire Liberal Association:—

To A. R. STUART, Esq., President, Banfshire Liberal Association.

DEAR MR. STUART,

As it is possible that a General Election may take place at an early date, it seems right that I should intimate to you, as President of the Banfshire Liberal Association, that I do not propose again to seek the honour of re-election; also I think that I should, very briefly, state the reasons for my withdrawal. I need hardly say that this decision, which has been arrived at with deep regret, does not arise out of anything in my relations to my constituents. Had I desired to continue in Parliament, I should not for a moment have contemplated a step which will separate me from a constituency

where sound Liberal principles are so firmly rooted and where I have personally received so much kindness. But under existing circumstances I have no wish to remain in Parliament, because in the present temper of the British people I see no prospect, during the next few years, of forwarding the purposes for which I have desired a seat in the House of Commons. My object in entering Parliament was to do some work, however humble, in support of peace, economy, and reform, which I regard as the only solid basis of national welfare. In Home affairs I hoped to assist in measures tending to stimulate industry, develop popular education, and improve the condition of the poor; while as regards the wide interests outside these islands, I desired to support a policy of national righteousness, such as commended itself to our lamented leader Mr. Gladstone. Especially I felt it a duty to the unhappy and unrepresented people of India to place at the disposal of my fellow-countrymen the experience acquired during many years of official life in that country. Further, since I have had the honour to represent Banfshire, I have been anxiously desirous to remove the more prominent grievances of those engaged in the local industries of fishery and agriculture.

In all these matters I hoped to do some useful practical work; but, as I have already said, I see at present no prospect of this. The wave of militarism which has swept over the country seems to ensure, at the next General Election, a fresh lease of power, for seven years, to the present Government; a Government which engages in mischievous and costly wars abroad, and misapplies public funds at home by doles to political supporters. Under these circumstances it seems useless to continue those personal sacrifices without which it is not possible to fulfil parliamentary duties.

I have been charged on platforms and in newspapers with want of patriotism, because I have been opposed to the war in South Africa; but this charge affects me little, because I know that it is undeserved, and because I believe that even my strongest opponents do not seriously doubt that I am acting from conscientious motives. By patriotism I understand love of our country; and as I am convinced that the war is hurtful to our best interests, I should, from my point of view, be wanting in patriotism if I had not done my best to prevent it. According to my view we best show love of our country by striving after a high national ideal. It will not profit a nation, any more than it will profit a man, to gain the whole world and lose its own soul.

Should it be the wish of the Council that I should meet them in person, I will hold myself in readiness to come to Banfshire at any time that may be convenient to them. In the meantime will you kindly express to them my gratitude for the indulgent support which has been uniformly extended to me, and especially for the vote of unqualified confidence which they were so good as to accord to me in January last.

Yours sincerely,

W. WEDDERBURN.

House of Commons,

June 20, 1900.

THE JUDICIAL COMMITTEE.

Lord Stanley of Alderley's letter to the *Morning Post* (June 11), on which we have already commented, runs as follows:—

Sir,—As I have been more than thirty years in the House of Lords, and always on the best terms with the Lord Chancellors for the time being, I shall in deference to the opinion recently expressed by the Lord Chancellor, not now raise the question there of the judgments of the Judicial Committee in Indian appeals; and will ask for your hospitality.

There are three classes of questions which come before the Privy Council on appeal from the Indian Courts. They are questions of the construction of sections of the Indian codes or Acts of Parliament, or of mercantile contracts; questions of Hindu, Mussulman, Jain, or other Native law, i.e., the customary laws of the Hindus, Mussulmans, Jains, or other Natives; and questions of fact. For the decision of questions of the first class it is obvious that the English, Irish, and Scotch law lords are the best possible tribunal, as their lives have been spent in the consideration of questions of this kind. Since it is only questions of this first class that arise in the Colonies the Judicial Committee does not require strengthening on their account; it is for India that the Judicial Committee requires strengthening; for it is equally obvious that they know nothing of native Indian customary law beyond what they are told by experts, i.e., at present by Lord Hobhouse and Sir Richard Couch, and an examination of the reports will show that since the death of Sir James Colville the decisions on Hindu and Mussulman law have been mainly the work of Sir Barnes Peacock and Sir Richard Couch. Lord Hobhouse was in India for five years as legal member of Council, but the experience gained in that office would not be likely to render him familiar with the local customs or habits of the Natives of the country. Most of the questions of fact which come before the Indian Courts depend on the evidence of Indian witnesses, and it is very difficult, probably indeed impossible, for any European without an experience of the Indian peoples, and their modes of thought and action, to form any trustworthy opinion of the value of such evidence. Every case which is appealed to the Privy Council has been heard and decided by at least two judges, one of whom, at all events, has had a long experience of the country as a judge, and the appeal is to a tribunal only one member of which has had any Indian

judicial experience at all. Unless the constitution of the Judicial Committee is very much changed or some mode can be devised by which they may be enabled to avail themselves of the experience of more and more experienced assessors its decisions on questions of fact or questions of Native law can never be satisfactory, and it would probably be better, in the interests of justice, that the right of appeal in such cases should be abolished. The appointments to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council are governed by the following Acts of Parliament: 1853-4 of William IV, and 1871-2, 1876-7, 1877-8 of Victoria. These Acts give to the Privy Councillors or Indian assessors very various salaries, ranging from £400 a year to £5,000 and £6,000. An anomalous result is that Lord Hobhouse, having been appointed under the first Section of the Act of 1853, was and has since one of the unpaid members of the Judicial Committee. Sir Richard Couch is the only person now living who has been appointed and sits under Section 30 of the Act of 1853, and, as a later Act allows, he receives the whole £800 a year provided by Section 30 for two assessors. This seems to be misplaced parsimony, probably due to the Treasury. If Mr. Chamberlain's scheme became law there would be great danger that while the great colonies would be able to protect themselves India would be practically helpless, and that the efficiency of the judge for Indian appeals might be sacrificed to home convenience; and it has been suggested to me that it would be better, instead of spending £6,000 a year on one assessor, to spend it in creating six assessors in place of the two created by the Act of 1853. I fully agree with the view, that they would be more useful and more appreciated in India than one ornamental Lord of Appeal who may or may not know anything about them. The larger number would ensure a greater amount of experience and more varied knowledge of different parts of India and of the different schools of law. It must not be supposed that the dissatisfaction felt in India at some of the decisions of the Privy Council is limited to a few, or that this dissatisfaction is in any way stimulated by outsiders. I have before me a memorial of March 30 last to the Governor of Madras from the Madras Landholders' Association, and another from the same body to the Secretary of State of February 5, 1897, of twenty pages in length. This last memorial attributes some of the evil which has arisen to Bengal Regulation XI. of 1793, and it quotes a minute of September 29, 1820, by Sir Thomas Munro. This minutestates: "Our regulations were originally intended to protect all classes of our native subjects in all their rights, but they have not done this with respect to the Zemindars. . . . Our regulations . . . are too much calculated to facilitate the minute division of property and the descent of society to its lowest level. This effect was counteracted under the Native Government by the lands of every public officer, from the head of a village to that of a province, descending undivided to a single heir. . . . and by those officers remaining in their respective districts mixed with the inhabitants, and not retiring with their wealth to a distant country, like the European servants of the company, who have succeeded them." So that Sir Thomas Munro, eighty years ago anticipated what is now considered to be the chief cause of the poverty of India.

Two decisions of the Privy Council may, however, be cited. By the Pittapur judgment, delivered February 24, 1899, the Judicial Committee handed over an impartible family raj or estate, which had been in the possession of a Hindu Rájá at the time of his death, to a person who had been palmed off on him as his son, but who was found by the Court below to be a person of unknown parentage, on the ground that the Rájá had left it him by will. The reason why the decision has aroused so much indignation in India is that it has affirmed the proposition that an impartible family raj or estate is always partible or alienable at the will of the person who happens to be in possession of it.

Further details of this case will be found in an article by the late Chief Justice of Calcutta in the *Law Quarterly* of January last, which concludes with these words: "The customs and laws by which Hindus of the Mitakshara School are accustomed to regulate their lives and properties are well known to a great many people. Every member of the Indian Civil Service who has been in charge of a district in a part of the country in which Mitakshara law prevails is quite well acquainted with them, and there are not a few gentlemen in the India Office who must be perfectly familiar with the subject."

The other decision, delivered in January, 1888, in the case of "Sartaga Kuari v. Deoraji Kuari," is described in the following letter published in the *Reis and Rayget* of Calcutta of April 7 last:

"Sir,—You have done well to reprint in *Reis and Rayget* the article by the late Chief Justice of Calcutta in the *Law Quarterly*; it will attract more readers in Calcutta than in London. It is sufficient to read the names of the members of the Judicial Committee who gave the judgment which is there criticised to understand that there would be room for criticism. With the exception of two they are familiar with Indian law, customs and feelings, and the two exceptions of an age to disarm criticism, and their names and ages appeal for the introduction into the Judicial Committee of younger men more in touch with India."

For instance, the writer of the article in reviewing a judgment of January 21, 1888, points out that "Sir Richard Couch does not notice the fact that the grant was made to a female member of the family and would not in any case ensure for more than a lifetime, but treats it as an absolute alienation by the head of the family from the family of a portion of the ancestral family estate." In this case the appeal was allowed, and a right judgment given, and the advice given to a young and newly-appointed judge not to give his reasons, as they would probably be bad, might have been judiciously followed. It is strange that it should not have occurred to Sir R. Couch that this was not an alienation but only a lifetime, which always terminates with the life of a widow in England, and in some cases, sooner, should she re-marry. This mistake of Sir R. Couch is unaccountable, except by the supposition that he has forgotten that Hindu wives leave their families entirely and merge into that of their husbands, just as the old Roman brides, who on marriage renounced their family penates and rites or forms of worship to adopt those of their husbands. Sir Comer Petheram writes that so far as he knows "no Court or writer upon

Hindu law down to the year 1858 ever doubted that the rights of the entire family in an impartible ancestral estate were the same as the rights of the entire family in an ancestral partible estate except that. . . . Down to that time everyone supposed that such families and their ancestral properties were governed by the text of Manu . . . or the eldest brother alone may take the paternal wealth in its entirety, and the others may live under him as they lived under their father." This state of things ought not to be so strange or unfamiliar to English judges, for a survival of it is found among the old Romans as late as the time of Augustus Cæsar, when Horace praises Proculus, and wishes him prolonged life or fame for his paternal mind towards his brothers, and it is related that one of his brothers got compromised in a civil war and lost his property, and that Proculus again divided and shared his property with him, thus following the spirit, if not the text, of the law of Manu.

Sir Comer Petheram writes that "it is to be feared that the persistent refusal by the Judicial Committee to recognise the right of the family in ancestral estates will not tend to strengthen the confidence of the people in the administration of justice." Reditors in England have for some time been endeavouring by unjust taxation to undermine family settlements in England, but that does not excuse the Judicial Committee for taking a similar course against similar institutions in India and for breaking down those defences against the money-lenders which the Indian Government is endeavouring to strengthen.

PROCLUSIUS THE YOUNGER."

I cannot help thinking that part of the credit acquired by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in former years was due to two able men who succeeded one another as clerks of the Council—first Mr. Helps, then Mr. Henry Reeve. I know of one case in which the Judicial Committee was induced by him to give a hearing to an Indian suitor; he did not win his case, but he and his friends were fully satisfied with his having obtained a hearing. Mr. Helps, being clerk of the Council, of course did not name the Privy Council in his books, but good hints for its improvement are contained in his chapter on "Government" in "Friends in Council, 1849," Book II, pp. 164-176. Following on what has been already said, perhaps the best means of strengthening the Privy Council for Indian appeals, without waiting for any change in the law, would be to appoint another judge by filling up the vacancy under Section 30 of the Act of William IV, and, in order to ensure experience, he should be chosen from one of the retired Chief Justices of the three Presidencies.—Yours, etc.,

STANLEY OF ALDELEY.

Imperial Parliament.

Thursday, June 21.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

East India (Financial Statement, 1900-1901).—Return presented—relative thereto [Address May 28; Sir Henry Fowler]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 226.]

G.I.P. RAILWAY BILL.

On the report of the financial resolution in connexion with the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Company Amalgamation Bill.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON asked whether the Secretary of State for India could anticipate what the future history of the Bill would be. He thought it was most important that the House should exercise some discretion in the matter, either directly or through the agency of a Select Committee.

Lord G. HAMILTON thought there was still some misunderstanding with regard to the Bill. As a matter of fact, it would not have been necessary to apply to Parliament in order to acquire possession of this railway. Contracts were made and sanctioned in Acts of Parliament passed many years ago, which enabled the East India Company to enter into negotiations with certain bodies, which were afterwards constituted railway bodies, for guaranteeing the interest on their capital and for an option of purchase. He was informed by his legal advisers that that option of purchase could be exercised, and that all the arrangements could be made so far as the purchase was concerned. But the stock of this railway was largely held by trustees, and he was informed that unless some special arrangement was made in connexion with annuities it would be very difficult for trustees to hold their stock hereafter. The transaction was quite simple and above board, and he was ready to agree to any procedure that might be desired provided it would not delay the conclusion of the business. But he was bound by the forms and practices of the House. It was a private Bill, and he understood that it would go to the Chairman of Ways and Means; he assumed that it was not opposed, and that it would in the ordinary course come back to that House without going to a committee.

The resolution was agreed to, and on the motion of Lord G. Hamilton it was ordered that it be an instruction to the Committee on the Great Indian Peninsula Railway Company Bill, that they have power to make provision therein pursuant to the said Resolution.

THE INDIAN EXPENDITURE COMMISSION.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN asked the Secretary of State for India whether, looking to the use that was being made of Indian troops for Imperial purposes in South Africa and China, and looking also to the distressed condition of India, the Government would take into early consideration the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure as to the apportionment of charge between India and the Imperial Exchequer.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I agree with the hon. baronet that no time should be lost in coming to a decision on the recommendations of this Commission. I am already in communication with the departments concerned, and I hope shortly to be able to conclude the whole matter.

THE "EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM."

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN asked the Secretary of State for India if he would state at what date the explanatory memorandum of the Indian Financial Statement would be issued to Members:

And would the total figures be expressed in tens of rupees, so as to allow of comparison with previous statements.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The explanatory Memorandum is in the press, and will be issued to members as early as possible.

The total figures will be expressed in pounds, so as to allow of a comparison of the figures in the Estimates with those in the Accounts. The figures in the Return of Net Income and Expenditure from 1888-9 to the present time, which has just been presented, have been re-cast, and shown in pounds in order to facilitate a comparison of the Accounts during that period.

THE AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN.

Mr. MACLEAN asked the Secretary of State for India whether the Amir of Kabul had forbidden the export of horses to and the import of salt from India.

And whether the Government of India had any means of checking such action on the part of a prince who received a subsidy from the Indian Treasury.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The Government of India has received reports from its agents which seem to confirm the action imputed to the Amir in the hon. member's question. As regards the second question, the hon. member is aware that the Amir is a sovereign who is independent in the conduct of his internal administration.

INDIAN TROOPS SERVING ABROAD.

Mr. MACLEAN asked the Secretary of State for India if he could say what was now the total strength of the British and Native troops withdrawn from the Indian establishment for service elsewhere, including the troops under orders for China:

And whether the Government of India was taking any steps to supply the places of these troops.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The total strength of the British and Native troops withdrawn from the Indian establishment for service elsewhere, including the troops under orders for China is approximately 16,000. We hope that the British troops now serving in South Africa will shortly return to India, but so far no steps have been taken to replace the Native troops serving abroad.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether, looking to the condition of India, he would arrange for the Indian Budget to be brought forward at an early date.

Mr. BALFOUR was understood to say that the Budget would be taken at the ordinary time.

Mr. MACLEAN asked the right hon. gentleman whether there was any special reason why the Indian Budget should be delayed until the last days of the Session. (Opposition cheers.)

Mr. BALFOUR: No, there is no special reason.

Friday, June 22.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the continuance of the condition of affairs in India arising out of the famine, and in view of the desirability that a convenient opportunity should be given to the House to discuss questions of vital interest to the people of India under the present circumstances, he would arrange to take the Indian Budget at an earlier date this Session than was usually the case.

Mr. BALFOUR: I have already answered the question. I cannot give the hon. gentleman any promise of better treatment until I see what course public business takes. If an opportunity for earlier discussion really arises, especially in the special circumstances, I should be glad to meet the wish of the hon. gentleman.

THE RANGOON OUTRAGE.

Sir LEWIS M'IVER asked the Secretary of State for India, if he could state the names and rank of the officials in the several departments who had been held to share in the responsibility for the failure of justice in the case of the West Kent Regiment at Rangoon, and in what form in each instance had the Government of India marked its disapproval.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The Government of India have given a most careful and thorough consideration to this matter, and their reports and conclusions have been reviewed by myself and by the Secretary of State for War. A certain number of officers, both civil and military, have been censured or otherwise punished for their part in the proceedings; but it has not been thought desirable, except in a few cases, to publish the decisions which have been arrived at; and I am, therefore, unable to give my hon. friend the information for which he asks.

Monday, June 25.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE G.I.P. RAILWAY.

Mr. LEVY MOROAN asked the Secretary of State for India whether he would state the maximum amount of Great Indian Peninsula

5 Per Cent. Stock held by the Trustees of the Sinking Fund of the D. Annuities of the East Indian Railway and upon what date, whether he would give the names of the Trustees of the Sinking Fund, and whether he would state upon whose authority the Great Indian Peninsula Stock was sold and upon what dates:

And whether he would state upon what date he gave notice of the intention of the Government of India to exercise its right of purchasing the Great Indian Peninsula Railway.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The management of the Sinking Fund of the D. annuities of the East Indian Railway Company is a matter in which the Secretary of State for India has no concern, and over which he has no control. From returns published in the *London Gazette* it would seem that the maximum amount of Great Indian Peninsula 5 Per Cent. Stock held by the Trustees of the fund was £3,544 9s. 6d., and this amount was held by them from July, 1894, to July, 1898. Under the Act 55 Vic., cap. x, the Trustees of the Deferred Annuity Holders' Sinking Fund are the Governor and Deputy-Governor of the Bank of England, and the chairman and the deputy-chairman of the company for the time being. I do not know upon what authority or at what date or dates the Great Indian Peninsula Stock was sold. Notice of the intention to purchase the Great Indian Peninsula Railway was given on August 18, 1899.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether he would arrange for a day to be set apart at an early date for the discussion of the condition of affairs in India arising out of the existence of plague and famine.

Mr. BALFOUR: I have this amount indicated to the House, on a day when the hon. member was not present, that I intended, under the special circumstances of the present year, to give a favourable opportunity for the discussion of the Indian Budget. The actual day I am not in a position to fix.

FOOD VERSUS OPIUM.

Mr. COLVILLE asked the Secretary of State for India whether he had any official information showing that there were areas of land in India suitable for the raising of food which were at present used for the production of the opium plant; and, if so, whether the Government would, having regard to the famine in India, take steps to have this land recovered for the production of food.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I do not think the suggestion of the hon. member would appreciably increase the food supply of India, as the area occupied by opium is about 550,000 acres out of a total cultivatable area of 223,000,000 acres.

Tuesday, June 26.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

MADRAS LAND REVENUE.

It was ordered, That so much of the Return relative to Madras Land Revenue, which was presented August 8, 1899, as relates to the despatch from the Secretary of State for India, with enclosures reviewing correspondence regarding sales of defaulters' lands in Madras, be printed. [No. 236.]

INDIAN TROOPS SERVING ABROAD.

Mr. MACLEAN asked the Secretary of State for India if the 16,000 men stated to have been withdrawn from the Indian establishment included the Native battalions stationed in Mauritius, Central Africa, Uganda, Hong Kong, etc.; if, since these figures were published, material increase had been made in the force under orders for China, and what was now the total strength of that force. The hon. gentleman expressed the hope that the noble lord would be able to assure the House it was the fact that the number of English officers attached to the Native battalions going to China had been increased. (Hear, hear.)

Lord G. HAMILTON: I cannot state the exact number of English officers who will accompany the Native regiments, but I understand there has been some addition made to the ordinary establishment. The 16,000 men stated to have been withdrawn from the Indian establishment included the battalions stationed in the Mauritius, Ceylon, Singapore, and Hong Kong. There are not some Indian soldiers in Central Africa and Uganda, but they are a part of the regular Indian establishment. Some addition has been made to the force going to China, but I cannot as yet give the exact numbers.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS asked the Secretary of State for India whether, with regard to the regiments and detachments of the Indian Army now serving beyond the frontier and abroad on the continent of Africa, Mauritius, Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, Hong Kong, and with reference to the troops now ordered to China, it was intended to enlarge the regular Indian military establishment to the extent to which it had been reduced, by extra recruitments or by the formation of new regiments; if so, whether he would state the estimated cost of such additions to the Indian army charges.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The question of enlarging establishments to replace Indian troops who may be employed as permanent colonial garrisons is under consideration; but no such intention exists with regard to the Native troops temporarily employed out of India. Any extra expense entailed by the consequent additions will be borne by Imperial revenues.

THE BREAKING OF THE MONSOON.

In reply to Mr. Herbert Roberts,

Lord G. HAMILTON said: I received a telegram in the middle of the day from the Government of India stating that the monsoon had broken, and that the rain was spreading satisfactorily over North Bombay, Behar, and the Central Provinces. (Cheers.)

NOW READY.

CONGRESS GREEN BOOK.—No. III.

The Proposed Separation OF Judicial and Executive Duties in India.

MEMORIAL

FROM

RT. HON. LORD HOBHOUSE, K.C.S.I.
(late Legal Member of the Viceroy's Council, Member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council).

RT. HON. SIR RICHARD GARTH, Q.C.
(late Chief Justice of Bengal).

RT. HON. SIR RICHARD COUCH
(late Chief Justice of Bengal, Member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council).

SIR CHARLES SARGENT
(late Chief Justice of Bombay.)

SIR WILLIAM MARKBY, K.C.I.E.
(late Judge of the High Court, Calcutta).

SIR JOHN BUDD PHEAR
(late Judge of the High Court, Calcutta, and Chief Justice of Ceylon).

SIR JOHN SCOTT, K.C.M.G.
(late Judge of the High Court, Bombay.)

SIR W. WEDDERBURN, BART., M.P.
(late Judge of the High Court, Bombay.)

SIR ROLAND K. WILSON, BART.
(late Reader in Indian Law at the University of Cambridge).

MR. HERBERT J. REYNOLDS, C.S.I.
(late Member of the Bengal Legislative Council).

TOGETHER WITH TWO APPENDICES.

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