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NOTES AND NEWS.

WE are on the eve of two important discussions in Parliament upon Indian affairs. Lord Northbrook has given notice that, in the House of Lords to-day, he will call attention to the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure, and ask her Majesty's Government whether they propose to accept the recommendations of the Commission. And on Thursday next the "Indian Budget debate" will be taken in the House of Commons.

The monsoon has been doing better in the past week. In the Punjab alone of all the famine-stricken districts it is reported insufficient; elsewhere it varies from moderate to heavy. With all this improvement in prospects, however, "no early diminution of relief," says the Viceroy, "is possible; on the contrary, the figures this week are the highest yet reported." The numbers on relief are given at 6,148,000. The figures from Baroda are not included, and these are probably somewhere about 60,000. The total is therefore rapidly approaching six and a quarter millions. The evident uneasiness of the Government is thus very intelligible. The pressure of relief is not diminishing; it is only in process of transference from the works to the villages and homes of the people. While about three-fourths of the live-stock have perished, "the condition of the surviving cattle is deplorable in Western India." It is not easy to see how these cattle are to be replaced, however liberally the Government may supply the money for purchase.

The Governor of Bombay continues to send appalling reports of the progress of the cholera. In the week ending July 7 there were 9,928 cases in the famine-stricken districts of Bombay, and of these no fewer than 6,474 proved fatal. In the Native States there were 9,526 cases and 5,892 deaths. The disease is more severe apparently in the British territory—as might indeed be expected from the greater severity of the famine. It is also stated that "the total number of deaths among the number on relief works in the British districts is 5,870, or 3·9 per thousand." The cause of these deaths is not communicated. Is it starvation? or privation? or debility? or natural infirmity? Substantially, in any case, the whole of this ghastly mortality and distress—in spite of all that the Government has done—may be set down to famine. Is it not about time to waken up and enquire into the possibilities of prevention of such a frightful calamity in the future?

Though there are over six millions on relief, it is not to be forgotten that, as the Simla correspondent of the *Standard* (July 17), writing on June 28, reminds us, "the total population of the affected districts is some 95,000,000," nearly all of whom must feel the pinch in varying degrees. The cholera epidemic, says this correspondent, "succeeded in almost entirely upsetting all the arrangements and all the calculations of the local authorities in many parts of the Bombay Presidency." What happened he thus describes:

When the cholera came, and spread with the rapidity of lightning amongst the workers at these large camps (of two to ten thousand souls each), the people at once became stricken with panic, and fled in all directions. . . . . It was simply a case of *sauve qui peut*, a blind rush in any direction so long as they could leave the terrible cholera fiend behind them. Thus thousands of people were scattered about the face of the country, emaciated, starving, and, in many cases, already stricken with the disease from which they were vainly essaying to seek safety in flight. In these circumstances, it is small wonder that the Government arrangements for the time being broke down. There was no organisation ready to hand whereby relief could be promptly afforded to these panic-stricken ones. And so there was little cause for surprise when reports, both public and private, official and unofficial, began to come in from Gujerat and other districts describing the state of the people as something too terrible for words. Many hundreds of the fugitives from the relief camps died in the jungles and by the wayside. Many thousands died of the cholera which they were seeking to evade. What the exact mortality has been from this terrible cholera outbreak will probably never be known.

But the official records admit some four to five thousand deaths per week, and the correspondent estimates some 50,000 already. The description affords a faint suggestion of the terrible disorganisation of social conditions and of the difficulties of remedial action.

The same correspondent remarks on a difficulty that we have more than once pointed out—the difficulty of obtaining cattle at any price. He says:—

As a matter of fact, even were the money forthcoming—and there is not a hundredth part of the necessary total available—it would be entirely out of the power of the Government, or anyone else, to supply the peasants with cattle. . . . The mere monetary value of these (the millions of cattle that have died) is such that all the resources of the Government, supplemented by the charitable contributions of the Empire, America, Germany, and other sympathisers, would not suffice to make good the loss. And, still more to the point, we have the undoubted fact that in the whole of the non-afflicted districts of India there are available for sale or transfer not one-hundredth part of the total quantity of cattle which could be used on the land the moment the rains set in. . . . . At least twenty years, indeed, must elapse before the numbers of cattle in Central and Western India in any way approach the total which obtained twelve months ago.

The painful significance of this state of things not merely emphasises the superiority of prevention to remedy, but opens up a vista of agricultural distress that may only too readily pass into political dissatisfaction.

The ravages of cholera in Rajputana are graphically described in a letter (June 21) which the special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* (July 12) has received from a British official engaged in the famine service there. The writer says:—

In Udaipur city and suburbs the recorded deaths amounted in twelve days to 5 per cent. of the population. In the hilly tracts and in Dungarpur and Banswara I made as careful an estimate as I could, and found that about 10 per cent. of the people must have been swept off. . . . Here have we been struggling to keep life in these poor creatures, and in a fortnight the cholera carries off nearly as many people as the famine would have done had we left them alone. Of course, our works were upset, and people bolted in all directions. Now we are getting them back, but there has been—oh! such suffering.

Join with this description the statement of the Simla correspondent of the *Standard*, apparently based on reports from missionaries, that "in South-Western Rajputana the mortality amongst the jungle tribes has been immense." "Forty per cent. of the population in the Bhil country, for instance, are already dead. In the whole of the country of which Kherwara is the centre there has been appalling mortality among the people."

The special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* (July 17) succinctly reviews the situation in the distressed districts of India and the means available for helping the people to recover themselves. "Is it conceivable," he asks, "that the Viceroy of India should be supplicating alms from the world, not for food or clothes or medicine, but for turning starved and naked wretches, subjects of the Queen, wards of the British Empire, into farmers and revenue payers, unless things had reached a desperate pass?" "The charity fund is hopelessly insufficient."

In the Bombay Presidency alone, the loss, he estimates, "cannot be far off 50,000,000." The Government advances—some three-quarters of a million—are therefore "miserably inadequate." "If this be the way of it," he says, "the mass of the rayats are doomed beyond hope of recovery. It is idle for Ministers to talk of the resources of India being equal to the occasion when this is the measure of the help afforded." If the rayat is to be saved, "there must be instant help, help on a generous scale, and help without thought of return." Where, then, is such help to come from?

The correspondent puts aside the idea of exhausting the borrowing powers of the Government of India, and expects nothing, in the meantime, from a reduction of expenditure. "The demand for an Imperial grant seems therefore to be irresistible;" and such a grant should be liberal and immediate. He concludes thus:—

Frankly, I do not see how else the cultivator is to get to work again, or how—monsoon or no monsoon—we are to avoid another famine next year. If the famine-stricken plains go back again to desert and jungle, we shall have to face the liability of a periodical grant in place of one to meet an emergency. Five millions given now would help India to breathe again. . . . . Moreover, the moral effect of such a gift would be enormous. . . . . But what is to be done must be done quickly.

On this point there can be no two opinions; and the sooner Lord George Hamilton and Sir M. Hicks-Beach lay their heads together to meet the necessity, the better for all parties concerned.

The *Times of India* publishes figures to show that considerable suspensions and remissions of revenue will be granted in many districts of Bombay. It may be doubted whether the remissions are adequate to the distress; but there should be general agreement that it is undesirable to keep revenue suspended till next year. As the *Times of India* says:—

The call for a liberal policy in the matter of suspensions and remissions—but especially of remissions—is accentuated by the facts we have presented. Districts which on the most favourable estimate are deemed in 1900 to be capable of paying only a third of the revenue demand ought not in 1901 to be called upon to face the future with the burden of suspended claims.

Our contemporary suggests that in view of the unexampled severity of the present famine, all official prejudices against remissions should be laid aside, and an assurance given that this intensity will be taken into account. It adds:—

The Bombay Government have been described by one of their English censors as being "forced on occasion into partial and grudging suspensions, but into remission never." There is one very effective way of meeting this charge, and we must look to them to courageously adopt it.

So say we all.

The Council of the Bombay Presidency Association has addressed to the Government of Bombay (June 28) a strong "representation on the subject of the urgent expediency of making large remissions of the land revenue for the official year in those districts of the Bombay Presidency which have sorely suffered from the effects of the prevailing famine." The famine caught the people before they had "emerged from the dismal situation" caused by the visitation of 1896-97, and "has paralysed their resources by consuming men and cattle with the fierceness of a wild conflagration." The surviving people are "broken down in health and resources," and the future fills them with "extreme despondency." The hardest obstacle to recovery is the frightful destruction of cattle, especially the plough cattle. The Council adduces the following figures:—

The Government are aware that for some years past, even before the famine of 1896-97, the number of live stock had been steadily diminishing in this Presidency. In 1893-94 the number of bulls and bullocks alone, not to say aught of cows, buffaloes, and young stock, was estimated by the Agricultural Department at 31,92,462. In 1898-99 it was 27,50,510. The diminution in three years came to 4,41,952, or 13·84 per cent. . . . . What may have been the subsequent decrease in the number of this diminished stock none can state definitely. But all accounts agree in stating that the mortality has been immense and unprecedented. Computing even at a moderate rate that the number is now less by 75 per cent. than what it was at the end of 1898-99, some idea of the appalling mortality of the plough cattle in the afflicted districts may be formed. It is also recorded that the number of ploughs came to 11,18,162 in 1893-94 in the entire Presidency, while it was only 10,36,604 in 1898-99, equal to a diminution of 81,558. Again, the total net area cropped for the Presidency in 1893-94 was 24,697,464 acres against 23,962,157 in 1898-99, or a decrease of 735,307 acres, equal to 3 per cent. But the total area of the afflicted districts was 18,453,572 acres in 1898-99 against 20,521,377 in 1893-94, which shows a contraction of 10 per cent.

In these dire circumstances the Council seeks alleviation in two measures of State. First, "a free advance of seeds, cattle, and implements of husbandry, accompanied by adequate distribution of grain by means of village organisation to maintain the cultivator and his family till harvest time without once more driving him into the arms of the sowcar." The Council thankfully acknowledges the large *taccavi* advances already made and the promise of more; yet it points out justly that, while these amounts "appear considerable in the totals," yet, "when spread over such a large area, they will be hardly sufficient to be of much help." Besides these temporary loans, it is hoped, will in large numbers of cases "soon be converted into free gifts." Second, "liberal remissions of all land revenue arrears." This is no time for nice discrimination—a process which "would be not only extremely difficult but most unsatisfactory, and likely to be attended with a good deal of injustice, partiality, and even corruption." Suspensions would be "lamentably ineffectual" for the present purpose, which is "to give the peasant a fresh start in his agricultural career, unshackled by the millstone of past liabilities due to the State." In any case, suspensions are only too promptly collected in Bombay. The moral effect of policy needs also to be very carefully considered:—

In the opinion of the Council, if the Government of India, on the representation of the Local Government, authorise the granting of the same liberal scale of remissions as were sanctioned in the North-West Provinces, it would inspire new hope and new confidence in the heart of the depressed rayat as to the benevolent intentions of Government. It would inform him how far the State considers its most vital interests as indissolubly bound up with his. It would tell him that his prosperity is the State's prosperity, and that his difficulties and distress are the difficulties and distress of the Government. It would impress on his mind, deeper than was ever impressed before, the solicitude of the Government to watch and nurse his welfare, which in reality spells the welfare of the entire country.

If the Government has any foresight with respect to its land revenue in the years to come, it should need very little persuasion to adopt to the full these exceedingly moderate representations.

The *Champion* quotes the case of Jaipur as an example of what can be done by irrigation, which in that case paid its own way. It proposes that the Government should draw up a programme for irrigation as it does for railways, and suggests a loan of one and a-half or two crores annually for irrigation alone. Wells, tanks and revenues are wanted more than canals involving heavy expenditure. While most Anglo-Indians declare that the old Governments of India did nothing to rescue the famine-stricken or prevent famine, the *Champion* points to the great works of irrigation or water storage which show that her old rulers more fully appreciated the need of irrigation than do her present rulers. Increasing the Indian debt even for so good a purpose is, however, a somewhat reckless policy.

Yesterday Sir William Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India:—

Whether, looking to the loyalty and patience manifested by the Indian people while suffering from grievous calamities, and looking to the benefit to Imperial interests from such manifestations at the present time, he would consider whether, by withdrawing recent penal legislation, this loyalty might be recognised, and the Indian people assured of the confidence and appreciation of Her Majesty's Government.

The "recent penal legislation" was enacted under the influence of a belief that there existed a widespread seditious feeling that required to be curbed and controlled—a belief that has never been justified by any evidence whatever, and that has been wholly discredited by the enthusiastic loyalty of the Indian people in connexion with the South African war. We have withdrawn, or are withdrawing, some 25,000 troops, British and Native; and it is far from improbable that we shall withdraw still more. Nor have their places been filled; indeed, it is hardly contemplated they will be filled. But either India cannot spare these troops or else she can spare them. If she cannot spare them, how on earth comes it that they are despatched? If she can spare them—and it is perfectly

clear that she can—where is the sense of talking about sedition? We go to press before receiving Lord George Hamilton's answer to Sir William's question, but it is inconceivable that any rational grounds can be shown for maintaining "recent penal legislation" in a country seething with loyalty.

It will be remembered that we drew attention to the case of Private O'Gara, who was tried and acquitted on a charge of killing a punkah coolie by a blow on the head with a dumb-bell. As the *Madras Standard* says, "the whole country was scandalised at the verdict"; but "Lord Curzon has given yet another proof of his praiseworthy determination to characterise his régime by a desire to vindicate the reputation of British justice in India to the very utmost of his power, regardless of his certain unpopularity with the Anglo-Indian community." We quote from our contemporary's columns a press communiqué issued by the Military department:—

The case will be remembered in which Private O'Gara, Royal Scots Fusiliers, was tried at the Criminal Sessions in the Chief Court of the Punjab on January 29, 30, last, for having killed a punkah-coolie at Peshawar, by striking him on the head with a dumb-bell in August 29, 1899, and was acquitted by the jury on all counts. This result appeared to the Government of India and to the Commander-in-Chief, upon a careful review of the evidence and of the entire circumstances of the case, to involve a serious and regrettable failure of justice, for which the negligence shown in the earlier stages of the affair was partly responsible, while the evidence given at the trial by Lance-Corporals McKenna and Mulligan raised the strongest presumption that there existed a conspiracy among his comrades to screen the prisoner. O'Gara, McKenna and Mulligan have since been summarily discharged from the army by the Commander-in-chief and the Serjeant-Major of the battery has also been removed from service.

This deliverance is greatly to the credit of the Government of India and of the Military Department. But it is sad commentary on the spirit of the British in India that such action should involve the Viceroy in "certain unpopularity with the Anglo-Indian community."

The last number of the *Pioneer Mail* to hand contains two letters on the hardships of poor soldiers at the mercy of Indian punkah-coolies and peasants. It is quite possible that now, when there is a tendency on the part of the authorities to punish assaults on Indians, those who have had to endure for so long may pay off old scores and may be lacking in due civility; but after all there is a good deal of difference between an uncivil word or look and a blow that causes death. Another correspondent cries out for the introduction of the long promised mechanical punkahs, or, failing that, for an improvement on the punkahs already in use, as they are often far beyond the powers of the coolie. These may seem small matters, but everything is important which aids in improving the relations between soldiers and Indians.

We read as follows in the *Power and Guardian* (June 20):—

An impression has been gaining ground amongst Indians that in these days it is rather unsafe for Indians to travel second-class on Indian railways, for the simple reason that they are wantonly insulted by Europeans, and, on remonstrance being made, assaulted too. The fact is, the happy old days are gone by, and Europeans in this country have, with honourable exceptions, learnt to hate the ruled, and feel it a degradation to find themselves on equal footing with them. We wish we were mistaken in our conviction, but it is the general impression of our countrymen and we give publicity to it for the elucidation of our rulers, and those who grope in the dark for finding out the real cause which leads to occasional assaults. Surely the times are out of joint and we are face to face with things which a generation ago were sheer impossibilities.

The occasion of our contemporary's comment is some magistrate's adverse criticism of the Viceroy's promulgation of rules for putting restrictions on the issue of shooting passes to soldiers and for the apprehension and conviction of those who commit assaults on Indians. This magistrate appears to argue that the assaults committed by European soldiers upon villagers are due to grave provocation. Of course, this notion has been conspicuously exploded by a series of cases in the Punjab and the North-Western Provinces, and the *Allahabad Journal*, which had adopted it, has openly given it up as untenable after the enquiries into such cases. The *Power and Gurdian* says:—

At times a European is seen to assault an Indian from imaginary wrongs, due, of course, to a complete ignorance of the Native life. Opening of an umbrella, failure to salaam, exposure to view of the upper part of the body, are in these days regarded by some Europeans as insults. Could anything be more monstrous?

A coolie, wishing to leave the plantation on which he worked, consulted the Jemadar and Chowkidar, who offered for bribes to represent his case to the manager of the Balicherra Tea Estate, his master. This he refused, and when he made his appeal to Mr. Hatch, the manager, that worthy called on the Jemadar and the Chowkidar to hold him while he beat him with a cane. The sub-divisional manager of Karimgunje, to whom complaint was made, fined Mr. Hatch Rs. 50, remarking that,

assaults of Europeans on Natives as well as of Natives on Europeans are very much to be deprecated as they tend to breed unnecessary ill-will between the races.

We are obliged to hold over to a future occasion certain correspondence that has taken place between Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and the Secretary of State for India on the subject of appointments in the Indian Educational Service. For such appointments it is laid down that "distinguished graduates of Universities of the United Kingdom" are eligible; and Mr. Dadabhai inquired specifically whether "Her Majesty's Indian subjects, if so qualified," are regarded as "eligible and fairly treated for these appointments, or whether a race distinction is made and Indians are excluded." The Secretary of State in Council referred Mr. Dadabhai to the answers to certain questions put by Sir William Wedderburn in the House of Commons in March and April, 1898, from which it appears that "there is nothing to prevent the selection of the Natives of India." So far, good. But Mr. Dadabhai was still concerned about the practical operation of the principle. An applicant might have to send his application through a series of officers, and so it might take a considerable time to reach the Secretary of State, and might easily enough arrive at its destination too late. "Will every applicant," asked Mr. Dadabhai, "be able to apply directly to the Secretary of State?" The answer was entirely satisfactory: "Persons desiring to be considered candidates for appointment should forward their applications, with testimonials and references, direct to the Secretary of State for India at the India Office." Prospective candidates and their friends will do well to take notice of the arrangement.

The Punjab Land Alienation Bill having reached the Imperial Legislative Council, the *Tribune* thus enumerates its opponents:—the intelligent agriculturists, the educated community, whether Moslem or Hindu, the moneyed classes and the local Anglo-Indian newspaper. On the other side it can find none but a few officials. This leaves out of account the part taken in favour of the Bill by a local Moslem newspaper. But, even when one allows for this, there seems a sufficiently large amount of public opinion on the other side to justify the authorities in proceeding very cautiously.

We observe with interest that *Womanhood*, in its issue for July, contains a paper on "A Noted Parsee Impressionist," Mr. Navroji Nusserwanji, by the Baroness de Bertouch. Mr. Navroji is a rising artist, who has pursued his professional studies "in an almost European spirit, going from capital to capital, and gleaning therefrom the leading and most valuable characteristics of the different schools of painting peculiar to each centre of advanced education." He has acquired "quite an enviable reputation" in Italian Art circles, and in Paris "his work is much admired and appreciated," three of his pictures being now exhibited in the Indian Pavilion of the great Exposition. It was at Sir Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy's School of Art in Bombay that Mr. Navroji's artistic gifts first received recognition, and it was not till he had given ten years to hard preliminary study that he visited the Art schools of Europe. The Baroness de Bertouch says:—

Portrait painting is the "line" which Mr. Navroji has made peculiarly his own, although he excels equally in subject pictures, especially the ideal ones. It is, however, to portraits that he devotes the larger portion of his time and energy, and this reminds me of a wonderfully lifelike portrait he showed me of his friend the famous Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, well known as the "Grand Old Man of India." I had the pleasure of comparing the portrait with its original side by side, and was able to criticise the resemblance between the two, which was so striking as to be almost startling. . . . . Mr. Navroji is an impressionist in the truest sense of the term. His strokes are rapid, bold, and even now and then rough, but they are full of life and power, and the *ensemble* of his pictures is splendid.

Mr. Navroji will no doubt put his strength into national subjects, and extort Western respect for modern Indian genius in the department of Art.

ENGLAND'S RESPONSIBILITY.

THE dominant note of all the speeches at the influential and representative meeting which was held at the Westminster Palace Hotel on Wednesday was England's responsibility for India—the immediate responsibility of relieving her famine-stricken people and the larger responsibility of doing all that may be done to prevent the recurrence of famine. The meeting was arranged by Sir William Wedderburn to welcome back to this country Mr. Vaughan Nash, who lately visited the famine-afflicted districts as the Special Correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, and whose brilliant letters, instinct with the strength of knowledge, insight and modesty, have done so much to inform and to rouse the public at home. Mr. Nash in his able speech on Wednesday summarised and completed what Sir Wilfrid Lawson called his plain, unvarnished tale. It comes to this, that India, still feeble from the effects of former famine, has been overtaken by a calamity which is unprecedented for intensity and against which officials in India, English and Indian alike, can battle with only partial success. Mr. Nash, in common with all other competent observers, is deeply impressed by the devotion with which our officers are spending their energies, their salaries and their lives in the effort to succour the stricken people. It does not follow that the system which they have to administer is perfect or that it has been administered with uniform sympathy, foresight and skill. Mr. Nash mentioned, as he has mentioned before, some of the matters which cannot escape censure. He spoke of the indecent haste of the collectors of land revenue to get in arrears. He showed that, though there was plenty of fodder in India, the Government and the railways had somehow failed to carry it where it might have saved from starvation the new cattle provided by charity for the cultivators. He dwelt, again, upon the mischievous effects of withdrawing huge tracts of grazing lands from the use of the people and reserving them for the use of doubtful trees. Finally he referred to the breakdown of the relief system in Bombay, where it was started too late, administered with undue severity, and impaired by lack of medical and other resources. The lack of medical equipment is indeed shocking and deplorable and calls for instant attention. These and other defects might have been, and therefore ought to have been, avoided. But upon the whole Mr. Nash has nothing but praise for the zeal of the famine officers, and he paid a high tribute to Lord Curzon, who is doing his best, and who has come to regret the notorious Circular of last December. That sinister document suggested that the people of India had become demoralised and that they were unduly ready to accept relief from their fellow-taxpayers. The suggestion caused an increase in the severity of relief tests, but it had no foundation in fact. Nothing impressed Mr. Nash more than the patience and submission of the people except their self-reliance and reluctance to leave their homes. To say that they are becoming pauperised is to talk nonsense, and Western nonsense. We need not worry about their self-respect, which they are really quite capable of looking after for themselves. There is, however, a risk of demoralisation in India not from famine-relief but from famine. It is with this problem of recurrent famine that the English people must for everybody's sake begin to grapple in earnest.

The *Times*, discussing a different matter, said a few days ago that "optimistic official assurances are so common and so profuse upon all official transactions as to have lost whatever efficacy they once possessed." It would be well if it were so. But optimistic official assurances about India have still a terrible efficacy with a people that learns with difficulty even a little of the truth. Hence it is that charity, whether individual or collective, has in this country so signally failed in its duty in the present famine. While cattle have been dying in India for want of fodder, and men, women, and children have been perishing in thousands from smallpox, cholera, or starvation, the British public and Parliament have had their natural instincts of justice and generosity choked by official assurances as to the hypothetical resources and borrowing powers of the Government—or, to be accurate, the indigent people—of India. Departmental propriety and prejudice, in the effort to prove that a Treasury grant is not needed, have dried up the channels of individual liberality. The answer to the suggestions of official cynicism is to be found, as Mr. Nash says, in the conclusions which follow from Lord Curzon's urgent and even despairing appeals for assistance. Take, for example, this passage from his last letter to the Lord Mayor of London, dated Simla, May 23 :—

> If the question be asked, Why is Government not able to assume the entire burden, and to dispense with all external aid? no false pride need deter me from giving a frank reply. Government is straining every nerve, is pouring out its money, is shrinking from no obligation, however severe. From October, 1899, the beginning of the famine, until December, 1900, we anticipate that we shall have spent 5½ millions sterling upon direct relief, 2 millions upon suspensions and remissions of Land Revenue, 1½ millions upon advances (that will, in many cases, never be recovered) for the purchase of seed and cattle, ¾ million upon loans to distressed Native States. But over and above this expenditure, which cripples our development in a score of ways, there lies a vast area of need which, do what we may, we can barely reach, and in which extraneous contributions supply an invaluable reinforcement. I may instance the relief of the aged and infirm, of sick patients in the hospitals, of children and orphans, of those men and women who will endure almost any privation sooner than submit themselves to the quasi-publicity of Government relief. This is a field of enormous and almost undiscoverable extent, the margin of which the already over-worked official hardly touches, but which is, in a peculiar and inevitable degree, the property of individual effort and private generosity.

In face of an appeal like this how can optimistic officials, who dread the intervention of Parliament more than they dread the recurrence of famine, bring themselves to enlarge upon the "ample resources" of the Government of India? And do they not perceive that all such talk is fatal to the success of Lord Curzon's appeals? The public does not readily grasp departmental subtleties as to the point where official relief ends and the work of private charity begins, especially when they see both kinds of work mainly discharged by the same hands and paid for through the same channels. Over against Lord Curzon's eloquent appeals the public has therefore been apt to set Lord George Hamilton's smooth assurances. In these circumstances, even if there were no competing claims upon the charity of individuals, the inadequacy of the Mansion House Fund would hardly be surprising. As it is, the war in South Africa has at one and the same time made a heavy demand upon public liberality and filled the columns of the newspapers, without whose cordial and continuous co-operation no Mansion House Fund is likely to thrive. But what the public has failed to do individually it can still do collectively—by voting a national grant in aid of the relief funds. There was not a speaker at Wednesday's meeting who did not advocate this course, as it has from time to time been advocated by members of all parties in the House of Commons and organs of all parties and of none in the Press. Much no doubt may still be accomplished by appeals to individuals. The Bishop of Hereford, for example, in his admirable speech, made the happy and timely suggestion, which we hope to see very widely adopted, that part at least of the proceeds of collections in the harvest festivals that will shortly be held in churches and chapels throughout this country should be paid into the relief funds. The fact remains, however, that contributions from such sources as these cannot be expected to meet the necessities of the case. Nothing but a Parliamentary grant, to which the India Office and the Treasury alone object, can suffice. Perhaps in view of the well-known susceptibilities of the India Office the House of Commons might refrain from voting the grant to the Indian Exchequer and vote it instead to the Viceroy, to be used, especially through the various Local Governments, for supplementary relief.

There were many members of Parliament present at Wednesday's meeting, and it may be assumed that when the Indian Budget comes before the House of Commons next Thursday they will support the proposal for a grant from the British Treasury. But even if, in Dr. Percival's phrase, the Imperial Government should be brought to do an Imperial act, England's duty to India in relation to the famine will by no means have been discharged. The more fundamental obligation, of which Sir W. Wedderburn spoke, to enquire into the causes of famines in India, and to strive to prevent them, remains. Upon this topic Mr. Nash did not expressly enter. But there are many hints in his address which convey a significant moral. He has spoken, as Mr. Maclean said, "with absolute fearlessness and with high intelligence," and it behoves the English people to lay the lesson to heart.

"FAMINES AND LAND ASSESSMENT."

LAST week we announced the publication of Mr. Romesh C. Dutt's "Open Letters to Lord Curzon on Famines and Land Assessments in India" in volume form (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., Ltd.). Mr. Dutt has introduced the Letters by a chapter summarising the main recorded facts of the melancholy series of 22 famines since 1770, within a period of 130 years. In the olden time war and devastation harassed the population and hindered cultivation, thus strongly reinforcing the effects of unfavourable seasons. But since 1858, when the administration passed formally from the East India Company to the Crown, and profound peace has reigned within the natural frontiers of India, famine still persists in recurring, and apparently with increasing violence. Mr. Dutt says:—

> The land is fertile; the people are peaceful and loyal, industrious and frugal; and generations of British administrators have been trained in the duties of Indian administration. And yet famines have not disappeared. Within the last forty years, within the memory of the present writer, there have been ten famines in India, and at a moderate computation the loss of lives from starvation and from diseases brought on by these famines may be estimated at fifteen millions within these forty years. It is a melancholy phenomenon which is not presented in the present day by any other country on earth enjoying a civilised administration.

Lamentations and recriminations apart, the question is how to explain, and so to prevent, such lamentable occurrences. Mr. Dutt rejects the usual causes—the improvidence of the people, the rapacity of the money-lender, and the fecundity of the rayat. He points to the heavy public expenditure and the enormous public debt, which have not been reduced by the prevalence of internal peace. He is at one with Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji on the exhaustion of India by the annual "drain." But in his particular exposition and argument at present he limits himself to the point that "the intensity and the frequency of recent famines are greatly due to the resourceless condition and the chronic poverty of the cultivators, caused by the over-assessment of the soil on which they depend for their living."

The letters themselves, which form the *pièce de résistance* of the volume, we have already referred to on various occasions. They constitute a development of a main part of Mr. Dutt's Presidential Address to the Congress at Lucknow; and the profound importance of the matter receives marked testimony from the interest displayed by the Viceroy in inviting the President of the Congress to meet him in Calcutta. Instead of following Mr. Dutt through successive letters, which deal with province after province—a task that every man who discerns the critical position in India will readily impose upon himself—we will note the various points which Mr. Dutt himself sets forth by way of summary of his proposals. Of course, we take it, no one will dispute Mr. Dutt's ample right to speak on behalf of his fellow-countrymen.

1. Where the State receives land revenue through landlords, and the revenue is not permanently settled, we ask that the "Saharanpur Rules" may be universally applied, and the State-demand be limited to one-half the rental.

The Mahometan rulers erred on the safe side (for them), fixing the State demand at a very high figure; but then they did not exact it to the uttermost, contenting themselves with what they could realise without trouble. Their British successors maintained the high demand, but pressed for realisation of the whole. The mistake was pointed out in an early year of the century, and even Regulation IX of 1833 fixed the State demand at two-thirds of the rental. Poverty continued, and famine was recurrent and intense. At length, in 1855, the State demand was reduced from two-thirds to one-half of the rental by the "Saharanpur Rules," which are still in general application over Northern India, much to the relief of the people. The advantage of the lower assessment was manifested in the famine of 1860, "and Colonel Baird Smith, who enquired into the causes and effects of the famine, declared that its comparative mildness was due to the moderate demands of the State." The "Saharanpur Rules," however, are only too widely infringed, not to say nullified, by the superimposition of cesses assessed on the rent. These cesses—for roads, schools, post offices, dispensaries, famines, patwaris, chowkidars, etc., etc.—amount in Northern India to 8¼ per cent. on the rental, and in the Central Provinces to 12½ per cent.

2. Where the State receives land revenue direct from cultivators, we ask that the rate be limited to a maximum of one-fifth the gross produce of the soil. In Madras the old rule demanding one-half the net produce as revenue is supplemented by a rule limiting the revenue to *one-third* the gross produce, and this has led to over-assessment in that Province. Having regard to the rates of rent and revenue in all Provinces of India, we ask that the old rule of demanding one-half the net produce be supplemented by a rule limiting the revenue to *one-fifth* the gross produce, wherever revenue is paid to the State direct by cultivators.

Mr. Dutt emphasises in a note the point that "the maximum of one-fifth the produce should not be exceeded in the case of any single holding. The average land revenue for a whole district, including wet and dry lands," he says, "should be limited to one-tenth the produce, as in Northern India." Elsewhere Mr. Dutt has pointed out the Madras rule of one-third the gross produce (that is, in cases where the land is not irrigated at Government cost) would inevitably impoverish the peasantry in any part of India. He also justly urges that the British Government should show a good example by proving less exacting than private landlords in India.

3.—Where the State receives land revenue direct from cultivators we ask that the rule, laid down by Lord Ripon, of making an increase of prices the sole ground of enhancement at the time of re-settlements, be universally applied.

This rule, as we have already seen, was laid down by Lord Ripon in his despatch of October 17, 1882, was accepted by the Madras Government in the beginning of the following year, but was vetoed by the Secretary of State in his despatch of January 8, 1885. It is the only just principle. Not only would it "do away with those harassing operations, leading to re-classification of soils and re-calculation of grain outturns, which are felt as the most oppressive features of settlement operations in Madras." It would also secure the tenant from having his rent raised on the basis of his own improvements—a form of open confiscation that tenants at home even yet struggle against in vain.

4.—Where the land revenue is not permanently settled we ask that settlements be made not oftener than once in thirty years.

Thirty years is the rule in the North-Western Provinces and in Bombay, and ought to be the rule everywhere, so as to give the tenant a fair chance of the luck of averages, as well as a tolerably quiet life. In the Central Provinces not only have the excessive amounts payable by cultivators to malguzars and by malguzars to the Government under the old settlement been in many cases increased, but the period of settlement has been reduced from thirty to twenty years. Such an arrangement gives the Government three pulls in sixty years instead of two. For the stability of the Government, which rests on the prosperity of the people, this is but too obviously progress in the wrong direction.

5.—We pray that no cesses be imposed on the rental of the land except for purposes directly benefiting the land; and that the total of such cesses assessed on the rental may not exceed 6¼ per cent. (one anna in the rupee) in any province of India.

We have anticipated this point in remarking upon the "Saharanpur Rules." The various cesses have been gradually accumulated upon the land rental mainly on account of the convenience of assessment and collection. Unless they were tacked on to the land revenue or some other handy tax (which is not particularly obvious) they would have to be raised directly, and that would be a source of some administrative trouble in the existing poverty of the people. The total of cesses is limited by Mr. Dutt to 6¼ per cent. of the rental on the basis of the Bengal practice; in the Central Provinces, it will be remembered, it is just double (12½ per cent). "There may be some reason," Mr. Dutt admits, "for assessing the land for works which directly benefit the land, like roads and wells; but," he thinks, "there is no reason or justice in assessing the land for schools and dispensaries." The essential point is to keep the cess in all cases well within the ability of the local population.

6.—We pray that where the Government provides water for irrigation, the cultivator may be left—as he has been during the last forty years—the option of paying for the water if he choose to use it, and that no compulsory water-rate be imposed.

At present this option is open to the rayat all over India and the principle very naturally has had the express support of the highest authorities. But lack of money sharpens the wits of Government understrappers, and the Water Cess Bill now before the Legislative Council of Madras is based on the astute ground that "where a field is in the midst of wet cultivation, any attempt to exclude the water is frustrated by percolation." Under the

existing law, as decided by the High Court of Madras, the rayat is free from water-rate if he has not applied for water. The Madras Legislature sapiently propose to alter the law. Not only so, but they wish to bar the jurisdiction of the High Court and all Civil Courts in cases relating to assessments of water-rate made by the Collector. One can readily see that the estimate of percolating water is not likely to proceed on a scientific basis, and that the inevitable disputes between Collector and rayat will be more comfortably and expeditiously settled by excluding the rayat from an appeal to the Court. The idea is purely tyrannous, and cannot surely be upheld. There would be much more reason for a compulsory rate in Northern India, but there the idea has not been mooted.

7. Lastly, we pray that, in the case of any difference between cultivators and settlement officers in the matter of assessment, an appeal be allowed to an independent tribunal not concerned with the fixing and levying of rents and rates.

Mr. Dutt points out, in his letter on Bombay assessments, that "there is no real check against undue enhancements made by Settlement officers; that enhancements out of all proportion to the increase of produce and the rise of prices are made in the absence of effective checks; and that this is the real reason of that distressed condition of the Deccan cultivator which Sir William Hunter deplored in 1879, and which every beneficent English administrator in India deplores at the present day." The check provided by Sir Charles Wood (Lord Halifax) in 1864—the principle that assessments on land should not on any account, or under any circumstances, exceed one-half of the net produce of the land—broke down on the elastic estimate of the deduction for cost of cultivation. It is high time that the Bombay Revenue Jurisdiction Act of 1873, which excludes the jurisdiction of civil courts in matters of assessment, were repealed, and that every rayat in the country should have the civil court open to him whenever he thinks he is over-assessed. If the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885 is good for Bengal, it is not easy to see why the rayats of the other provinces should not be invested with the like freedom of civil appeal against unfair and excessive assessments.

All this means a decrease of revenue. How is it to be met? The answer lies with the Government. Clearly it must be by a firm reduction of expenditure and a slowing down of the energy of development. The thing has got to be done somehow: there is no going on further in the traditional process of skinning the rayats. We need only remark further that two-thirds of Mr. Dutt's book is most usefully occupied with numerous appendices illustrating important points in the Letters. The volume is a most serviceable collection of material on its subject, and the Letters give point and direction to a varied mass of information.

OUR LONDON LETTER.

WESTMINSTER, Thursday.

WE have supped so full of horrors in this *annus mirabilis* of the Imperial era that even an event like the cataclysm in China fails to stir our plethoric pulses. All who watched the demeanour of Parliament on Monday night when Mr. Brodrick virtually lent the weight of an official confirmation to the fearful story of massacre which had appeared in that morning's papers must have been struck by the apathy of members. Here and there some sympathetic auditor could be seen quietly removing his hat. The action was quite exceptional. Few heads were uncovered and few faces betrayed the slightest emotion. After all, a demonstration of regret or of passion might have been premature. Mr. Brodrick was careful to explain that while he hardly dared to doubt the accuracy of the news its source was unofficial. A day later, moreover, Mr. Pritchard Morgan, who has travelled in China and who appears to be rather proud of his intimacy with Li Hung Chang, startled the House by proclaiming as a fact that the British Legation was still standing on July 9—twenty-four hours after the time of the reported massacres. The Government received the intimation with pronounced scepticism, while members laughed at it, half sadly, half ironically.

Blundering to the last, Mr. Balfour in announcing the names of two unexceptionable nominees as additional members of the Military Hospitals Commission contrived to impress the House of Commons with the conviction that it had been gagged into acquiescence. He peremptorily declined to give members an opportunity of discussing the constitution of the completed Commission. Mr. Burdett-Coutts was so incensed by his leader's behaviour that he attempted to move the adjournment. The Speaker declined to accept the motion, whereupon a lively if irregular debate ensued in the course of which Mr. Swift MacNeill, Mr. Burdett-Coutts, and Mr. Balfour found themselves the principals in an inharmonious trio. Ultimately, the Speaker intimated that while the controversy as to the appointment of Professor Cunningham could not be re-opened the member for Westminster might, if he pleased, discuss the two new nominations. As Mr. Burdett-Coutts had no fault to find with either Sir David Richmond or Mr. Harrison, he naturally declined to avail himself of the privilege. "My objection," he said, "is to the appointment of Professor Cunningham, a gentleman described by Mr. Balfour as having no connexion with the Army Medical Department, who, nevertheless, turns out to be a salaried official in connexion with that department." Mr. Balfour's inglorious victory gave no satisfaction either to himself or to his sullen and discontented followers.

Among the members of the present Ministry who have long "lagged superfluous" none is more conspicuous than Mr. Goschen. If Lord Randolph Churchill were now to revisit the glimpses of Westminster he could "forget Goschen" with impunity. It is not that the great intellectual gifts of the First Lord of the Admiralty have become dimmed. His failure is purely physical. When he rises to speak members rise to go. They might as well be on the terrace as in the House; for Mr. Goschen, notwithstanding his pathetic efforts to be audible, rarely succeeds in achieving that miracle. His voice is a shadow of its former self, and the struggle to give it substance is almost as painful as a surgical operation. Yet with all this physical deterioration the mental energy of the man is amazing. For an hour and a-half on Tuesday night he stood at the Table playing with the details of a most complicated and technical question with every appearance of enjoyment. If Mr. Goschen had been able to use one of his subordinates literally as a mouthpiece his speech would probably have been a great success.

Nothing, however, could have saved it from being at the same time a great surrender. A skilful, eloquent, and up to a certain point, courageous defence of the adoption of the Belleville boiler in her Majesty's navy ended with an intimation that the Admiralty, though with reluctance, were prepared to submit the whole matter to the investigation of a committee of independent experts. The announcement was received with jubilation by such persistent critics of the water-tube principle as Mr. William Allan. Members generally were glad to hear that the disquieting succession of accidents which had done so much to shake faith in this type of marine boiler and consequently in the efficiency of the navy, were at length to be traced to their proper cause. As Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman put it, even those who had no prejudice against the water-tube principle felt that a substantial case had been made out for investigation.

"You are treating the House of Commons," said Mr. Dillon in the course of a heated wrangle the other day between himself and Mr. Brodrick, "as it deserves to be treated." The House of Commons is evidently of Hamlet's opinion that if all men were treated according to their deserts none would 'scape whipping. Members protested vehemently against the suggestion that the Government was dealing so harshly with them. "No, no," they shouted, and "Order, order," was the cry. Perhaps, however, those signs of feeling were capable of a different interpretation. A long-suffering assembly may have felt that it was adding insult to injury to suggest that any body of reasonable beings could deserve such contempt as has been showered by Ministers on the present Parliament. After all, Mr. Dillon's outburst was merely the echo of an earlier explosion on the Government benches. The cause in both cases was the same—a gratuitous affectation of Ministerial reticence on a matter of burning public interest. Unless a little more discretion can be exercised by the Foreign Office in the muzzling and unmuzzling of Mr. Brodrick unseemly squabbles are certain to recur whenever questions of foreign policy become acute. Some members can bear with an articulate snubbing, but to be silently ignored is more than the most patient of them can endure.

Who would suspect Mr. Flavin of the guile attributed to him by Mr. Labouchere? Rising last Monday at the close of

Mr. Balfour's statement on the arrangement of business for the remainder of the Session, the member for Kerry innocently suggested that the Government should at once state the amount of the supplementary war estimate which is about to be submitted on account of China and South Africa. "Round numbers will do," explained the hon. member modestly, "I only ask for round numbers." The House laughed at what it was pleased to regard as Mr. Flavin's simplicity. Later in the day, however, Mr. Labouchere let the cat out of the bag by telling Mr. Balfour that as soon as the amount of the estimate was known members would be able to deduce from it a pretty shrewd forecast of the date of the dissolution. The Conservative leader, of course, vehemently repudiated the insinuation that the estimate had been prepared with any regard to Parliamentary exigencies. "It would be the same," he declared, "were the House of Commons to be scattered to the winds within a fortnight or to drag out a lengthened existence to the last day of its legal term." Nevertheless, members will still draw their deductions. It is obvious, at least, that Ministers mean to keep their hands free for the autumn.

Sir William Wedderburn's breakfast party at the Westminster Palace Hotel yesterday proved a conspicuous success. Among the guests who responded to the host's invitation to meet Mr. Vaughan Nash on his return from the famine districts in India, where he has been acting as Special Correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, were Mr. C. P. Scott, M.P. (the Editor of that great journal), Mr. H. W. Massingham, Mr. J. M. Maclean, M.P., and other representative journalists. The Church was appropriately represented by the Bishop of Hereford, whose former association with Mr. Nash in philanthropic work was recalled by Dr. Percival himself; the House of Lords by Lord Kinnaird; the House of Commons by Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Serjeant Hemphill, Mr. Thomas Shaw, Mr. Samuel Smith, and a host of other distinguished members; and native India by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and a group of younger compatriots. Although six or seven speeches were delivered, including a deeply interesting narrative of his impressions by Mr. Vaughan Nash, the eloquence of the occasion was brief and pointed rather than diffuse, and scarcely occupied an hour. Some slight differences of opinion came out in the speeches. Thus, while Mr. Nash quoted with approval the general opinion of India that "Lord Curzon has done as much as man could do," Mr. Maclean declared that both the Viceroy and the Secretary of State had simply played at battledore and shuttlecock with their responsibilities. Sir William Wedderburn, Mr. S. Smith, and other members made it clear that on the Indian Budget debate next week a strong effort will be put forth to obtain a liberal grant from the Imperial Exchequer.

NOTES FROM BOMBAY.

[From an Indian Correspondent.]

Bombay, June 29.

Some rain has fallen in the Deccan which has been helpful in assisting the rayats in sowing seeds and performing their preliminary agricultural operations. Both Gujerat and Kathiawar are still without a drop of the necessary rain. This is causing the gravest anxiety. If the monsoon in those parts is further delayed it will add to the calamity which has overwhelmed the poor cultivators. The outlook as I write could not be more gloomy and portentous of evils unseen. It is to be hoped for the sake of these two districts, generally so fertile and prosperous, that their people will be spared further misery and distress this season, and that the much-needed rain will come at last, however belated. All is not lost yet. But time in the matter of agriculture is most essential. A couple of weeks now, and the rains may not be so useful as they would be at present.

The agitation on the subject of the imperative exigency of large remissions of revenue continues. To the representations of the Press is now added the appeal of the Bombay Presidency Association, which has just submitted its memorial to the Local Government. The memorial shows how grave is the situation, and how eminently desirable it is that the State should come forward to assist the rayat with unstinted hand. Political expediency, if not generosity, demands a liberal remission, accompanied by a free gift of oxen and of food-grain to enable the rayats to carry on agricultural operations and maintain themselves and their families till harvest time. It remains to be seen how far the combined voice of the Press and the Presidency Association will spur on the Government of Bombay and what liberal measures it means to adopt.

In its issue of to-day's date the *Times of India*, evidently on official information, informs the public of the amount of collections of revenue made in the principal famine-affected districts in the Presidency, and endeavours to meet the statements of more than one correspondent regarding the hard-hearted way in which the local tax-gatherers in certain localities have collected the revenue. One official contradicts a statement made on the subject only three days since. This is not unusual. Conflicting statements are not uncommon. Eye-witnesses bear testimony to one series of facts, while officials tell their own version. Both cannot be right. So we have to receive non-official and official statements alike with a little reservation. But I notice that at least in reference to one allegation by the non-official correspondent in one of the villages in Kaira—that certain revenue underlings make *taccavi* advances on first taking a promise from the hapless rayat that out of the loan he will allow his revenue dues to be first paid to Government—the official himself bears testimony. Curiously enough, it is after the publication of the letter of the Kaira gentleman that one case of this character has come to his knowledge. Was it a coincidence? or was it that the official enquiry following the letter revealed this malpractice in one instance? Let one not enquire too closely into this matter. But it would be grievous were it discovered that *taccavi* advances are made by the Bombay Government with the two-fold object of first taking from them the full State demand and then assisting the rayat with the balance. Under this system one could understand the statement which, when famine is over, is to be read in Administration Reports, that suspended revenue is collected almost in full "without pressure." Commentary on such a procedure is useless.

Lord Curzon has expressed his displeasure in vigorous terms regarding the scandalous miscarriage of justice in the O'Gara case. Dissatisfied with the proceedings in the court, which culminated in the acquittal of the accused, his lordship resolutely set himself to sweep away this fresh stigma on the justice and purity of British administration in India. Having called for the papers and carefully gone through them, he has meted out deserving and adequate punishment to the conspirators who were instrumental in the court in spiriting away evidence which led to the scandalous acquittal. The sergeant and the soldier have been dismissed. This exemplary punishment has further endeared Lord Curzon to the people, who feel that in him they have a strong-minded and sympathetic Viceroy, who is determined to sweep away an abuse which is a discredit to the uniform of the Queen-Empress. All honour for this courageous action to the Viceroy, who is thus able to assert his personality and exemplify the adage that righteousness in administration alone can exalt the British in the eyes of enlightened India.

It is also a pleasing incident to notice that India again is rendering assistance to Imperial Great Britain in the Chinese imbroglio. Once more it is the Indian troops who are going to form the advance guard of the British force in China. They will be the earliest on the scene of the present sanguinary troubles. They will forestall all other Powers interested save Japan. And yet what is the reward India reaps for its devotion to the Queen and for its loyal assistance to the Government in its difficulties in the remoter parts of Africa and Asia? Why, the Secretary of State for India could not even have the heart to advance five millions! The loyalty of every class of the community is rewarded with repressive and retrogressive legislation and other unpopular measures which contribute to vex and annoy the people. How long is England to act as a cruel step-mother? It is to be hoped a generous effort will be made to cast aside the repressive and retrogressive measures of the past few years.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

6,148,000 ON RELIEF.

The Secretary of State for India has received the following telegram from the Viceroy on the subject of the famine, dated July 14, 1900:—

"Heavier and more general rain during week in Berar, Central Provinces, and Hyderabad. Rainfall good and

sufficient for present needs in Rajputana. Central India, moderate general rain, and sowings commenced in parts. Fair rain has fallen in Bombay, Deccan, and Khandesh. Monsoon heavy Surat. Good falls reported in Kathiawar, Broach, Thana. Sufficient rain has not yet fallen in Punjab for dry land sowing. Notwithstanding that prospects have improved, no early diminution of relief possible. On the contrary, figures this week highest yet reported. Village relief and advances are replacing relief works. Condition surviving cattle deplorable in Western India. Cholera continues prevalent Bombay. Health returns for Central Provinces satisfactory.

"Numbers of persons in receipt of relief:—Bombay, 1,462,000; Punjab, 219,000; Central Provinces, 1,999,000; Berar, 516,000; Ajmere-Merwara, 151,000; Rajputana States, 527,000; Central India States, 155,000; Bombay Native States, 474,000; Baroda, report not received; North-Western Provinces, 3,000; Punjab Native States, 40,000; Central Provinces Feudatory States, 60,000; Hyderabad, 509,000; Madras, 17,000; Bengal, 16,000. Total, 6,148,000."

The Secretary of State for India has received the following telegram from the Governor of Bombay, dated July 15, 1900:—

"Following are figures for week ending July 7:—Famine-stricken districts.—9,928 cases of cholera, of which 6,474 fatal. Native States: Cases of cholera 9,526; deaths from cholera, 5,892. Total number of deaths among numbers on relief works, British districts, 5,870, or three and nine-tenths per mille. There has been good rain in Surat, Khandesh, West Deccan; begun parts North Gujerat, where numbers demanding relief have continued to increase."

THE MANSION HOUSE FUND.

The Mansion House Fund for the relief of the Indian famine sufferers amounted on Wednesday night to £327,800.

THE "INVESTORS' REVIEW" FUND.

We take the following from the current issue (July 14) 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 miscry—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	£705	18	6
"Q," per Mrs. Martin Wood, for the children (per India)	5	0	0
F. J. Rainham, Esq.	2	2	0
J. A. Geddes, Esq., Kensington	1	0	0
Wm. Clarke, Esq., Greensted, Ongar	0	10	0
E. M. B., Hampstead	0	10	0
Total to date	£715	0	6

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

MR. VAUGHAN NASH ON THE CONDITION OF INDIA.

The following article by Mr. Vaughan Nash appears in the current issue (July 14) of the *Speaker*:—

The Indian cloud may prove to have its silver lining, if attention is at last devoted to the real problem of "Imperialism"—I mean the questions affecting the life and destiny of some three hundred millions of people whom we hold in the hollow of our hand. I am afraid there are no signs of such attention being awakened as yet. We are not in the habit of troubling ourselves about affairs at a distance unless some conflagration or convulsion compels attention; and if India is still regarded as the brightest jewel in the British Crown, we have managed to convey the impression that De Beers is more to us than India. Still this apathy may give way to a livelier view of our duties, as the plight of our unlucky Empire comes home to the minds of Englishmen through the recurrence of famine and the ghastly spectacle of ancient and splendid races slowly wasting to death.

Famine is, in fact, the grand corrector of the habit of secrecy and of the almost querulous impatience of criticism which mark the Government of India. The plan of governing in the dark seems to me to be one of the greatest obstacles in the way of arriving at an Indian policy. For what India needs above all things is a policy based on knowledge and justice, and on a clear perception of the part which she is qualified to play in a scheme of British dominion. That no such policy exists at present, that India is governed on no intelligible principles, is admitted by everyone; and if the materials for arriving at a policy exist, they are not available to people in this country, or to the great population of Indians, who are challenged, by the education that we give them, to take a share in their country's affairs.

The secrecy strikes a visitor to administrative India with astonishment. He is aware of it, to give an instance or two, in the relations between the Government and the English Press, and in the withholding of information on the most vital points affecting the condition of the people—poverty, indebtedness, land alienation. It arises, I think, in part from a certain poverty of thought almost inseparable from the overburdened life of the Indian official, which makes public controversy and declarations obnoxious to him. But perhaps it is due still more to the fear that publicity may on occasion involve the admission of mistakes—as indeed it is bound to do—or the appearance of making concessions to clamour. But the effect produced upon the mind both of the Native and of the English outlander is bad. The Government almost inevitably appears to pose as the Lord's anointed. At home too the India Office is understood to act as a sort of buffer territory between India and Parliament. As a friend of mine put it to me good-humouredly the other day: "India is a big place, almost as big as the India Office." But there is a price to be paid for all this. The native temper may be exasperated; intriguers who would be disarmed by greater openness may be confirmed in the way of mischief-making; the motives of the able and high-minded men who govern India may be misunderstood; and English opinion, while from the official point of view rendered powerless for harm, may be drugged too deeply for asserting itself to any purpose when a crisis comes.

Famine, as I have said, compels us to ask questions, and perhaps I had better set down here some of the questions I have put to myself in the course of a three months' visit to the famine districts. But first a word as to the condition of the people. The main features of the famine—drought, failure of food and failure of fodder—its vast extent and the unprecedented loss of cattle which represent the capital of the cultivator, will be familiar to your readers. There has never been anything like this triple visitation in the history of India, and it would have been bad enough supposing the people to have been in a sound economic position. But in Bombay Presidency and the Central Provinces they had hardly had time to pick themselves up from the famine of 1896-7, while the economic conditions, apart from famine, were desperate. Out of the ninety millions affected by the famine no one can say what proportion is ruined beyond recovery, any more than they can foresee the number of acres out of the 700,000 square miles of baked and desert plains will go back into permanent jungle. One gets only a rough test of the situation from a study of the relief machinery which is keeping life at the present moment—a month after the rains should have begun—in six million people. The famine camps, poor-houses and kitchens just mark the fringe of destitution. In the villages I was able to visit I found that as a rule the people were living on about half their usual food. Ornaments, brass cooking vessels and all their small stock of marketable possessions had gone; and often enough the tiles and beams of the houses had been sold for what they would fetch. The more solvent cultivators were being helped out by the money-lenders; but credit was in most cases exhausted; and though the people told me they hoped the bunya would come to the rescue in supplying seed-grain and cattle, it is certain that in the bulk of cases they had no security to offer him. The cry of pauperisation has been raised, but I confess I can hardly find words strong enough to describe the manful struggle that the people are making to preserve their independence and self-respect. In Gujerat I saw men and women harnessed to their waggons hauling wood and leaves, trudging long miles under the burning sun with loads of wood on their heads for sale; and over whole tracts of country the trees had been stripped so bare in the search for fodder that the famine officers could find no shade in which to pitch their tents. If there were an ounce of sustenance in the earth, I believe the people would eat it rather than go to the works: and, as a matter of fact, unknown thousands have sat in their homes and died from sheer starvation. I was told at my second visit to Gujerat at the end of May of a young Englishman, a civil servant, who had to be recalled from district work, as the sight of these dying villagers, with their constant "Sahib, we will not go away; we will die here," was more than he could bear. The desolation and the suffering cannot be described, and stout-hearted Englishmen, familiar as they are with the suffering of the East, are overwhelmed and almost broken-hearted with it. As if this were not enough the cholera has come in to finish the work. Week by week we read of from ten to fifteen thousand cholera deaths in Bombay Presidency alone. But during the first burst it was far worse than that. Scores of huge famine camps broke up in panic, and I suppose in the history of the world's horrors nothing more horrible has ever been seen than the flight of these tormented creatures making for their homes with famine and cholera devouring them as they as went—to see the women and little children and the tall handsome youths, worn to the bone by famine, lying in the hot dust, their faces upturned to that terrible sky, with the flies in clusters at their eyes and mouths, and no hand to bring them help, is a thing that sickens one even to recall, and the sight of which turned one faint. In some districts in Rajputana, 10 per cent. of the people—if one can speak of such a thing in percentages—have been carried off. What with cholera and raging epidemics of smallpox—which you meet with everywhere—measles of a virulent type, fever, dysentery, plague, and the starvation diseases, which occur in the Government returns under these and other names, the deaths will have, I think, to be numbered by millions by the time the famine accounts are summed up. Unnumbered deaths,

we may be certain, will never be recorded, especially in the Native States and along the tract of the cholera fugitives. A friend of mine in a Native State in Kathiawar told me that before the cholera appeared he found 400 bodies in the river near his house, and of the stack of bones erected outside his compound I suspect there is not much in the way of official record.

The Englishman tells you that the collapse of the people and their lack of staying power are due to their improvidence. Not that they indulge in gluttony or wine-bibbing, but their marriage feasts are too costly, and so are their fathers' funerals. And the result is debt and impoverishment. So often have I been told this simple and pious tale that I can only conclude that it represents the orthodox creed of the Anglo-Indian concerning the condition of the people: just as a certain school of opinion here would have us believe that English poverty is solely due to improvidence and vice, so the English official believes, you would almost think, that marriage and funeral reform would solve the land question in India. I have not space to argue the question, but it is perhaps enough to say that the excessive scale of expenditure began with the British system, in virtue of which the people were invited to regard their lands as marketable. There was the money-lender's opportunity, and he began forthwith to tickle the people's vanity where he knew that they were weak, forcing money upon them that they might indulge in lavish expenditure, and getting his grip on crops and lands thereby. For the rest, I am satisfied that this social expenditure has in many districts been greatly reduced, and the returns to which I have been able to get access show that debts under this head bear but a trifling proportion to the whole burden, and are far smaller than those incurred for loans for paying land revenue.

Then, again, how comes it that the greatest bulwark against famine—the old and natural form of providence represented by the storing of grain—has almost ceased to exist? The answer is—Railways and the moneylender. The crops that once were grown for sustenance since the railways came have been grown for the market; and in India the market is represented by the personage who is grain-dealer and moneylender in one.

But not only have the people no assets. They are nearly all in debt. And it is the figure of a man more or less hopelessly in bondage that we finally arrive at as the taxpayer who pays us to govern India. There are parts of India in which a third of the land has been alienated to the moneylender. Nor does this mark the extreme to which the process of expropriation has reached under the action of the commerce and the laws we have introduced. To look for staying power in a peasantry which cannot call its crops, let alone its lands, its own, one must put on rose-coloured spectacles and see things through the eyes of those who talk about the recuperative power and the normal prosperity of an India pulled in pieces between the forces of East and West. That our Western laws have hurried the rayat to his doom, I think no Anglo-Indian denies. The law of contract and freedom to alienate the land that was always held as common property have given the money-lender an unimpeachable title to take possession of India, and in possession, or on the way to take possession, we find him to-day.

What about our system of taxation? I answer, look at the man who pays, or who as often as not goes to the money-lender to pay for him, paying the interest in crops and land labour. Is it fair to be always asking how much more his fields will afford to Government when every year some of his cattle starve, and the existence of any taxable surplus depends on keeping him down to a standard of living which balances on the naked edge of famine? I am not denying that there are districts in India of which this would be an exaggerated description. But it represents, as I believe, the main drift of the agencies which are all-powerful.

Here, then, are some of the economic problems with which an Indian policy must grapple—a policy not of the frontier, but of the plains and the rayat. But clearly the first thing is to help the rayat on to his feet again after the famine—a task which can only be accomplished with the aid of a liberal grant from home. It may, for all I know, be useless to ask even for this. When one notices that Mr. Kipling has not contributed so much as a couplet to the Famine Fund, it will be safe to assume that India does not rank among the popular pre-occupations of the moment. If this is so, let us at least realise that, monsoon or no monsoon, we shall have from this time onwards permanent famine in India, an alternative which even from the high Imperial point of view seems worth considering. It is terrible to think that the withholding of this help will mean not only the final ruin of many cultivators who have no means of getting to work again, but the tax collector's grip on poor wretches who are staggering to their feet again.

As to the problems that remain, it wants no more than the mind and the will to find the remedy, and in the Land Alienation Bill for the Punjab I believe that Lord Curzon is marking out at any rate one line of an Indian policy. That policy must largely consist in the undoing of the mistakes of the past. It must give the land rest, help the rayat back to his old position, and it must revise the whole crude and barbarous system of landlordism which we have exported with our individualist economy and our laws of contract and property. As to the apportionment of burden between the rayat and the moneyed class and between England and India, that is equally a question that will brook no delay. The naked and starving cultivator can hardly be regarded any longer as a proper or even as a safe paymaster for our military forces.

MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI AT PLUMSTEAD.

With reference to the meeting already announced, the following leaflet has been issued:—

At the Council Meeting of the Metropolitan Radical Federation, to be held on Saturday, July 21, 1900, at the Plumstead Radical Club, 64 and 65 Walmer Road, Plumstead, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji will address the delegates on the Famine in India, and will move the following resolution:

Resolved,—Considering that Britain has appropriated thousands of millions of India's wealth for building up and maintaining her British Indian Empire, and for directly drawing vast wealth to herself; that she is continuing to drain about £30,000,000 of India's wealth every year unceasingly in a variety of ways; and that she has thereby reduced the bulk of the Indian population to extreme poverty, destitution and degradation; it is therefore her bounden duty in common justice and humanity to pay from her own exchequer the costs of all famines and diseases caused by such impoverishment.

That, therefore, for the present famine and diseases the British Exchequer should pay the whole cost of both saving life and restoring the stricken people to their normal industrial condition and wants, instead of further oppressing and crushing the Indian people themselves to find these costs directly or by loan under the deceptive pretext or disguise of what is called "the resources of the Government of India," which simply means squeezing the wretched people themselves.

That it is most humiliating and discreditable to the British name that other countries should be appealed to or should have to come to Britain's help for relief of Britain's own subjects, and after and by her un-British rule of about 150 years.

And that for the further prevention of famines and plagues, and to restore prosperity to the Indian people, as well as for benefiting vastly the masses of the British people also, measures must be adopted to put an end to the exhausting and impoverishing bleeding, by dealing with justice for all expenditures for British interests, and by honourably carrying out the true and declared policy and solemn pledges of the British people, Parliament, and Sovereign by the Act of 1833 and Her Majesty's Proclamations of 1858, 1877, and 1887.

That this meeting authorises the chairman to send a memorial to the Prime Minister embodying the above resolution.

On the reverse side of the leaflet is given a series of "solemn pledges" as follows:—

ACT OF PARLIAMENT, 1833 (INDIA): "That no Native of the said territories, nor any natural-born subject of His Majesty resident therein, shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office, or employment under the said Company." [The Company's duties were transferred to the Crown.]

THE QUEEN'S PROCLAMATION OF 1858: "We hold ourselves bound to the Natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and these obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil. And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified, by their education, ability and integrity, duly to discharge. When, by the blessing of Providence, internal tranquility shall be restored, it is our earnest desire to stimulate . . . . and to administer its government for the benefit of all our subjects resident therein. In their prosperity will be our strength; in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward. And may the God of all power grant to us and to those in authority under us, strength to carry out these our wishes for the good of our people."

LORD LYTTON (the Viceroy) on the assumption of the title of Empress, January 1, 1877, at the Delhi Assemblage: "But you, the natives of India, whatever your race and whatever your creed, have a recognised claim to share largely with your English fellow-subjects, according to your capacity for the task, in the administration of the country you inhabit. This claim is founded in the highest justice. It has been repeatedly affirmed by British and Indian statesmen and by the legislation of the Imperial Parliament. It is recognised by the Government of India as binding on its honour, and consistent with all the aims of its policy."

LORD LYTTON (the Viceroy), as Chancellor of the Calcutta University, March, 1877: "The Proclamation of the Queen contains solemn pledges, spontaneously given, and founded upon the highest justice."

JUBILEE OF 1887. The Queen-Empress, in reply to the Jubilee Address of Congratulation of the Bombay Municipal Corporation "Allusion is made to the Proclamation issued on the occasion of my assumption of the direct government of India as the charter of the liberties of the Princes and Peoples of India. It has always been and will be continued to be my earnest desire that the principles of that Proclamation should be unswervingly maintained."

INDIA AT THE NEW REFORM CLUB.

[FROM OUR OWN REPORTER.]

A House Dinner of the New Reform Club was held at St. Ermin's Hotel, Westminster, on Tuesday evening, July 17. Mr. Henry S. Lunn, M.D., Secretary, took the Chair, and the guests of the evening were Sir William Wedderburn, M.P., Miss Alison Garland, Mr. G. P. Pillai, and Mr. J. M. Parikh. After the dinner a discussion followed on the subject of "India."

The CHAIRMAN referred to his visit to the National Congress in Madras and said he was very much impressed by the ability of the speakers. The opportunities of serving India granted to her sons were very limited; some of them were able to enter the Civil Service but the majority were precluded from taking the position to which their abilities entitled them. He wondered that under the beneficent rule of Britain there should be these constantly recurring famines, and thought that a Government which had given doles to the clergy and landlords ought not to have left the relief of those suffering from the famine to the private generosity of the people.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN said that last year he gave an address

on "Justice to India—How not to do it," because it appeared to him it was impossible to get redress for any Indian grievance. The reason no remedy was obtainable was that the people of India had no voice in the management of their public affairs. The whole machinery of Government was official and any appeal there might be was from one official to another, so that grievances never came before any independent tribunal. That the Secretary of State for India was responsible to Parliament was a mere fiction. Instead of being the servant of Parliament, the Secretary of State for India by the help of the ministerial majority was the master of Parliament in all matters affecting India, and he could at any time by appealing to the ministerial majority carry any measure he liked. It was also a mere delusion to regard the Secretary of State for India as an impartial and judicial authority on Indian grievances because all his opinions and views were drawn from the official India Office. Instead of being an impartial judge the Secretary of State for India was merely the mouthpiece and apologist of everything done by the official world in India, and if a grievance were brought before him instead of being grateful he regarded it as a reflection on the administration of India. If a complaint was made it was referred to the official against whom it was made. The official said it was quite untrue and then the Secretary of State for India got up in Parliament and said This is a disgraceful calumny and I am ashamed that any English gentleman should stand up in the House of Commons and say such things, and there were tremendous cheers from the supporters of the Government, whichever side might be in power. (Laughter.) Three times at intervals he had asked for an enquiry into the condition of the unfortunate starving rayats now dying in hundreds of thousands and millions, but it had been refused as a reflection on the official management. In all other Departments if there was a grievance, those who brought it forward received a civil answer, but in the case of India that was not so because there were no votes behind it. Another reason they could not get redress was that the Secretary of State for India's salary was not on the British estimates and therefore there was no opportunity of paying him out at the time of Supply by moving a reduction of his salary. But there were three other points which made the case still more difficult. The first was that in all other departments the late minister when he got into opposition was a very useful critic on the the present administration; but that was not the case in India, because the minister who went out was as thoroughly saturated with the doctrines of the India Office as the minister who went in, and therefore instead of helping to redress grievances simply joined in the chorus of approval of everything the India Office did. The next point was that the Indian Budget—which was the only opportunity of discussing Indian affairs—was relegated to the end of the Session. The other point was that in the matter of redress of Indian grievances they were worse off than they were 100 years ago because as long as the East India Company was the responsible executive—there was a jealousy in this country of the chartered monopoly and the people were much more willing to hear complaints against it, whereas now the Government was under the Crown they thought the Government officials must do everything that was right. Before the charter of the East India Company was renewed, there was a complete enquiry into the whole system of government in India, and it was out of that enquiry that all the reforms arose. Now there was no such day of reckoning and the consequence was that grievances went on accumulating. Coming to the remedy for the almost hopeless state of affairs as regarded control over the great bureaucracy of India, he said there was no doubt that to establish control over any official machine they must get financial control, which was at the bottom of all other control. All desire for economy must rest with the taxpayers, because the only limit to spending was the unwillingness of the taxpayer to pay the money. The machinery they wished to deal with was threefold. There was the machinery in India, the Viceroy and Council; the official machinery at the India Office, the Secretary of State in Council; and the House of Commons. They had only recently handed in a report of a Royal Commission upon Indian Expenditure and the reforms he would briefly indicate were those included in the report of the Minority. The Viceroy in India was a very powerful person indeed, and of late years he had not been a very economical person. The person who was supposed to represent economy in the Viceroy's Council was the Finance Minister, and they wanted to strengthen the position of the Finance Minister in the Council. In the Legislative Council there was one element of popular representation which was very valuable, namely, the Indian gentlemen recommended by certain organisations more or less independent. When any Bill was being discussed these gentlemen had the opportunity of stating their views, but they asked that when the Indian Budget was brought forward these representatives should have the opportunity of moving amendments and dividing so that the people of this country might know what were the main objections of Indian public opinion against the different items of expenditure. They also asked that these debates should be reported both to the Secretary of State for India and to Parliament. The Secretary of State for India was an official who had no special knowledge of India, and he was supported by a Council composed mostly of retired officials. What they proposed was that several educated Indian gentlemen of experience and high character who had been in service in India should be appointed to the Council of the Secretary of State at Westminster. (Cheers.) He was certain that the presence of gentlemen of that kind would keep the Secretary of State for India a little more in touch with Indian opinion. These gentlemen ought to be selected by the representative members of the Councils in India. With regard to the House of Commons, it was a scandal that the debate upon the Indian Budget took place at the very end of the Session, and their proposal was that when the Indian accounts were completed and came to this country about May, a Select Committee of the House of Commons should be appointed to investigate them and make a report with regard to the financial condition of India. That should enable the House of Commons to get an understanding of Indian affairs which it now had no opportunity of having. In conclusion he (Sir William Wedderburn) expressed the opinion that the boundaries of India ought to be authoritatively declared in order to put a stop to the many frontier disputes which had been going on.

Miss ALISON GARLAND gave an account of her visit to the Indian National Congress. She was told it was a most seditious body and no patriotic person could attend it, but found it was a body with as high principles as the National Liberal Federation. People in this country had never realised the horrors or extent of the famine, their attention having been concentrated on the war in South Africa. Only one English newspaper, the *Manchester Guardian*, had sent out its own correspondent to know how the famine was proceeding, and before Lord Curzon stated there was no official record of death by actual starvation people had been dying by tens of thousands. In the matter of cattle it was the worst famine of the century, and she pleaded for an immediate Imperial grant.

Mr. PILLAI, editor of the *Madras Standard*, said the refusal of the House of Commons to give an immediate grant to the starving populations of India amounted to criminal neglect and would produce a bad impression in India. He complained of the treatment of Indians in British colonies, and expressed the hope that that would be remedied after the help the Indians were giving in China and the heroic efforts of the Indian stretcher-bearers in South Africa. There was no disloyalty in India, and in order to show that the British Empire meant to rule India for the benefit of the people of that country India ought to be brought under a scheme of Imperial Federation. (Cheers.) Such agitation as there was in India was merely for the purpose of securing their rights, and he looked forward to such constitutional changes as would make India one of the strongest limbs of the Empire of which Englishmen were so proud. (Cheers.)

Mr. PARIKH said that the famine in India was a famine not of food but of money, and that that was proved by the exports from that country and that the Viceroy appealed not for food but for money. The famine was in part the result of the constant export of foodstuff from India.

Mr. Clayton proposed a vote of thanks to the speakers which was seconded by Mrs. Mallet and carried unanimously.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman brought the proceedings to a close.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

MR. VAUGHAN NASH ON HIS RECENT TOUR.

MEETING AT WESTMINSTER PALACE HOTEL.

[FROM OUR OWN REPORTER.]

A large and distinguished company was present at the Westminster Palace Hotel on Wednesday morning last in response to Sir William Wedderburn's invitation to breakfast "to meet Mr. Vaughan Nash, Special Correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, on his return from the famine districts in India." Among those who had accepted Sir William Wedderburn's invitation were Lord Aberdeen, Lord Kinnaird; Lord Welby; the Bishop of Hereford; Mr. C. P. Scott, M.P.; Mr. J. Caldwell, M.P.; Mr. F. Cawley, M.P.; Mr. F. A. Channing, M.P.; Mr. Leonard Courtney, M.P.; Dr. G. B. Clark, M.P.; Sir Charles Dilke, M.P.; Dr. Farquharson, M.P.; Mr. G. Harwood, M.P.; Mr. C. H. Hemphill, Q.C., M.P.; Sir Wilfrid Lawson, M.P.; Mr. D. Lloyd-George, M.P.; Mr. J. G. Swift MacNeill, M.P.; Mr. J. M. Maclean, M.P.; Captain Norton, M.P.; Mr. E. H. Pickersgill, M.P.; Mr. Herbert Roberts, M.P.; Mr. Samuel Smith, M.P.; Mr. Robinson Souttar, M.P.; Mr. Thomas Shaw, M.P.; Sir Andrew Scoble, M.P.; Mr. H. J. Wilson, M.P.; Sir George Birdwood; Mr. H. M. Birdwood; Mr. W. P. Byles; Mr. Harold Cox; Mr. William Digby, C.I.E.; Mr. Romesh Dutt, C.I.E.; Sir John Jardine; Mr. H. W. Massingham; Dr. Sarat Mullick; Professor A. F. Murison; Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji; Mr. G. P. Pillai; Mr. J. M. Parikh; Mr. Harold Spender; Mr. S. H. Swinny; Mr. A. G. Symonds; Mr. T. Fisher Unwin; Mr. A. J. Wilson; Mr. N. B. Wagle; and Mr. W. Martin Wood. Breakfast was served in the large room of the hotel at 9.30. After breakfast,

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN, who was received with cheers, said: My lords and gentlemen, it is a hopeful sign for India that, at this season of numerous and pressing engagements, so influential a gathering of public men should have really met here this morning to welcome Mr. Vaughan Nash, and hear from him a statement of his experiences in the Indian famine districts. The sympathy thus shown is I believe an earnest of the benefit which will accrue both to India and to England from the arduous mission which he has so worthily accomplished. (Hear, hear.) At a time of such deep gloom for India it may sound paradoxical to say so, but I am myself a confirmed optimist as regards the possibilities of India. With a fine climate, a rich soil, and a peasantry skilful, industrious, and frugal, India ought, in my opinion, to be a garden, a land of plenty and con-

tentment. (Hear, hear.) Nor is the problem, of how to make India prosperous, as difficult as might at first sight appear. For the self-contained village community is the unit and microcosm of all India, and if we can discover the way to make one village prosperous we have a clue to make prosperous the half million villages of which India consists. But in the meantime our patient, the Indian cultivator, is very sick—sick almost unto death. And the first step towards finding a remedy is to make a careful diagnosis of his case, to ascertain in detail the facts regarding his social and economic condition. (Hear, hear.) This is the more necessary because there is the widest divergence of opinion with regard to these facts. I therefore rejoiced exceedingly when my friend Mr. C. P. Scott—(applause)—decided to send out a special correspondent, of undoubted competency—(hear, hear)—and complete independence, to investigate the facts on the spot. (Applause.) What we want is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth regarding the cultivators' condition. (Hear, hear.) And when we have that I believe that a remedy will be found for that destitution of the masses which is the chief cause of famine mortality. But, gentlemen, as yet measures of famine prevention are still in the dim future. In the meantime the people are now dying of hunger, and it seems evident that the resources of the Indian Government are overstrained—(hear, hear)—both as regards men and money. Private charity also seems nearly exhausted; and under these circumstances we are compelled to look to our National Exchequer for a free grant. I feel confident that the British people would sanction such a grant—not grudgingly but gladly. (Applause.) The grant should be made through the Viceroy to the Local Governments in India and it would enable them to supplement ordinary official relief on the one hand, and charitable relief on the other, by maintaining the cultivators in their villages till their crops are ripe; by supplying them with cattle and agricultural stock; and by giving them a helping hand to raise them up and restore them to their normal economic condition. (Applause.) Before asking Mr. Nash to address you I may mention that, besides those who are present, I have received letters from the Marquess of Ripon, Mr. John Morley, Mr. Courtney, Lord Reay, Mr. W. S. Caine, and Mr. Justin M'Carthy. Lord Ripon writes: "I am sorry to say that I shall not be able to accept your kind invitation to meet Mr. Vaughan Nash at breakfast on the 18th. It would have given me much pleasure to have done so and have heard the views of so competent an enquirer as to the facts and causes of the grievous famines with which India has been desolated in late years. But I am, I regret to say, prohibited by my doctor from taking part in any public entertainments or meetings at present, and I must therefore content myself with reading afterwards what may pass at your breakfast." I will now ask Mr. Nash to give us an account of what he saw in India.

Mr. Vaughan Nash, who had a most cordial reception, said: I take it that my duty this morning is to give you an account, which shall be brief, of the impression left on my mind by a journey of nearly three months in the famine districts. Perhaps I had better say at the outset that the authorities are all agreed that this is far and away the most terrible and desolating famine that has ever afflicted India. It covers something like half the area of India—from the Punjab in the north right down to the south of Hyderabad, eight hundred miles away. The most densely peopled parts of India are untouched; but the famine affects, more or less seriously, some ninety million people. It covers nearly the whole of Bombay Presidency and the Central Provinces, the whole of Berar and Ajmere, and ninety Native States, including all the Rajputana States, Baroda, and Hyderabad. The whole of the Punjab is suffering from a fodder famine, and the food famine is very bad in some of its southern districts. Over the greater part of this region, about twelve times the area of England and Wales, there has been a triple famine—want of food, want of fodder, and want of water. It is this threefold form of attack which has made the famine so appallingly severe, and caused so much suffering to the people, and led to an incalculable and simply ruinous loss of cattle. It ought to be clearly understood in England that the rallying power of the people was never put to such a test as it is put to to-day. (Hear, hear.) It doesn't follow because India has rallied quickly—to all appearance—from other famines that a quick recovery is to be expected now. Even with the best of monsoons and the kindliest of nursing from Government it seems to me to be certain that the period of recovery must be a long and a very anxious one. There is not only the loss of plough cattle to be considered, but the exhaustion which has overtaken the cultivators, whose credit is pretty well gone, and whose strength and energy have been broken by their sufferings. In Bombay and the Central Provinces and the Punjab you see all the terrible cumulative effects of famine; and I must ask you to remember that the cultivators and labourers in these parts had only a single harvest between the famine of 1897 and the famine of 1899; and much of the good effect of this harvest was wasted by the indecent haste with which the tax collectors went about in the villages, getting in arrears of land revenue. Mr. Chairman, the desperate condition of India appears at every step one takes in the famine districts, which, as I have said, include half India. You may travel for hundreds of miles without knowing that the country was ever anything but desert. The rivers and tanks are mostly dry. There are no people to be seen on the burnt-up lands, and no vestige of growth but the trees, which in many places have been cleared of their leaves for fodder—so cleared that the famine officers told me they could find no shelter for their tents. Almost the only people you meet in the country districts are the dismal processions of family parties making their way to the famine camps, or going in search of work. As to the cattle, the greater part of them had died before I reached India in the middle of March; and most of the traffic, after allowing for the grain, consisted of cart loads of hides on the way to the station and train loads of hides going down to the ports. The people were making desperate efforts to keep their remaining plough cattle alive, often enough staying at home and starving by their side sooner than desert them. But the odds against them were too heavy, and throughout my visit they were dying every day in thousands. In Rajputana, which is a great cattle-breeding district, it was estimated in April that 90 per cent. of the beasts had died. And when I was at Lahore the same month, the Lieutenant-Governor made a speech in which he said that in spite of all that his own Government and the Government of India could do, no way could be found of preserving the surviving cattle. In Gujerat and other parts of Bombay Presidency, the loss of cattle by May was 75 per cent. There had never been anything like such devastation; and perhaps I may remark at this point that the loss of cattle was not due to there being no fodder in India. There was plenty of fodder ready cut and packed for transport, from the Government's own forest reserves, and huge stocks of grass, running up to hundreds of thousands of tons, are stacked at this moment along the Tapti valley line and in the Central Provinces. And while this fodder is being left to rot, the new cattle allotted to the cultivators from the Famine Fund are dying for want of fodder. ("Shame.") The reason for this state of things you must ascertain from the Indian railways and the Government. No doubt the railways have been heavily pressed with grain traffic; and grain traffic is a very paying thing; and no doubt, again, it is more important that the people should get grain than that the cattle should get fodder. But it will require a good deal of proving to show that this breakdown is the misfortune of the railways and not their fault. I hope we may assume that steps are being taken to surmount this deadlock—(hear, hear)—which is in a fair way to stultify the attempts to set the people going again. Another point which seems to me to call for searching enquiry arises out of the fodder famine—I mean the effect upon the fodder reserves of withdrawing huge tracts of grazing land from the use of the people, and reserving them for the use of trees—often very problematical trees. I know that in the opinion of competent observers there *is* a very direct connexion between the two things. Steps have been taken to check what may be called the excesses of the Forest Department; but I doubt if the full effect of the Department's operations has been realised. Lord Roberts is credited with saying that if ever a revolution came in India it would be brought about by the Forest laws. That the present famine has been greatly aggravated by these laws I think there can be no doubt. I must turn now for a moment to a still more painful subject. The famine has hit the people hard—a good deal harder, perhaps, than most of our countrymen suspect. The distress may be loss in one district than in another, varying according to the staying power of the people and the effectiveness of the relief machinery. But when I look back on the scenes through which I have passed and think of the sum total of human misery, and the despair I have seen on the people's faces, and the ruin this famine has brought on their homes and fields and on their families, I feel it is hopeless to attempt to put into words the agony of India. Every day you have before you the peoples who in all the world asked for least, were satisfied with least, denied the gift of daily bread—for which again, of all the peoples in the world, they have given the most patient and unmurmuring toil. You see these simple, childlike races, devoted to their homes and their children, made outcasts by the famine and forced to abandon their customs and leave their homes to get a little bread by labour at stone-breaking or earth-carrying. Most poignant of all in the appeal it made to me was the silence and submission with which they bear their trials. In the hospital sheds, where you pick your way between the rows of dying, or out in the burning sun, where mothers are hammering stones with one hand and hugging a child with the other, you rarely hear a complaint. Even the gift of tears seems to have dried up, except among the children, whom you see crying sometimes by the side of a sick mother. Those who know India may be able to tell you what spirit it is that looks out from the eyes of these miserables, broken and quenched as they are, and which keeps them dignified and composed in surroundings that are degrading and horrifying. It seemed to me to be the spirit of a noble people—(hear, hear)—who had won refinement and discipline when our own forefathers were savages, a people we may well be glad to succour and proud to rule, looking out at the wreck of all things, seeing their gods, their homes, their country shrivelling to dust and ashes. The worst districts that came under my observation were in

Bombay Presidency. It is possible that the suffering and loss of life may have been as great in some of the Native States. But I certainly saw nothing in Rajputana to compare with the awful condition of affairs in Gujerat and Khandesh, while in the Central Provinces, where the famine is extremely acute, it was the rarest thing to see a starved-looking person. In Gujerat and Khandesh vast numbers of people were in a famishing state, and famine diseases, as well as starvation pure and simple, were carrying off thousands of people. The condition of the people in Gujerat to-day, both in the British parts and in Kathiawar, is so undermined by hardship and by the shock of the famine that it is difficult to see how anything like a general resumption of work is to be brought about. At the beginning of April, before the cholera came, the death-rates were appalling; and, since then, Gujerat has been going from bad to worse. The city of Ahmedabad has a normal death rate of 80 or 90 a week, and this had risen in April to 500 owing to the influx of starving refugees. In the poor-house at Godhra the daily deaths ranged from 30 to 40, and in the neighbourhood of the famine works close by search parties were bringing in another score of corpses daily. Many of the people in Gujerat and Khandesh, when they came to the works, were past the stage at which food could nourish them; and I was told by experienced men that when the rains came, bringing fever with them, a clean sweep would be made of many broken-down creatures who seemed in a fair way to recover. In many of the Rajputana States, the people's condition is piteous. They are accustomed to rove about in search of food and water for their beasts in times of drought, and hundreds of thousands trekked away to Central India in the autumn, only to find that famine held possession of their old feeding grounds. Many perished on the road; others found relief at the famine camps in the Central Provinces, and the survivors of the family and village parties were coming back to their own country without their cattle, and were being looked after at the relief works established on the sandy deserts of Rajputana. I have no time to deal in detail with the system of relief, but it must be obvious that even in British territory—in Bombay to be specific—there has been a break-down, and the perfect system of machinery which was expected to issue from the last Famine Commission has not been realised. This is due to no want of energy and goodwill on the part of the district officials. (Hear, hear.) It would be impertinence on my part to attempt to appraise their work. The British officials as a whole are toiling as though the lives of their own people were at stake; many of them are simply fagged out; some have died at their post; and the mental strain and physical hardship of the work, to say nothing of its risks, are such that more men will be killed and incapacitated before the famine is over. In some cases the wives of these men are out in camp with them in the terrific heat, helping to comfort and relieve the people, and whilst we are wondering whether the resources of India are equal to the strain, not a few of the civil servants are spending their salaries as well as their lives in fighting the famine. (Applause.) Let me add that there are plenty of instances in which Native officials have died in harness or manfully stuck to their posts in times of danger when their colleagues had deserted them. Things went wrong in certain parts of Bombay, so it seems to me, because there was too much delay in starting the relief machine, and the conditions of relief when granted were made too stringent. These mistakes were avoided elsewhere. The governing idea in Bombay seemed to be that people who had resources of their own would come flocking in to relief works, and therefore the tests and deterrents must be screwed up. I think the distance test was often harshly worked, and that it resulted in people being left to starve in their own villages. At a famine camp in the Poona district which I visited, 500 people had been dismissed shortly before, and I was told by the Native officials that instead of going on ten miles further to the next works—which was to be the test of destitution—they had gone back home, and no one could say how they were living. That seems to me a very dangerous procedure when we are dealing with acknowledged famine. Again at Broach the richest district in Bombay, the screw was being tightened in the same way. Wages were cut down on works north of the Nerbudda to downright starvation level, and the people were told at the same time that if they wanted better pay they must cross the river and go some miles to the works on the south side. Nothing would induce them to go so far from home, and the result was that many thousands went back to their villages in despair, and the work at the camps became little better than a system of organised starvation, while the hospital was crowded with the dying. The experiment went on for several weeks, and at last the Bombay Government seem to have been satisfied that the people really were destitute. My own impression is that the work test—eight hours a day of stone-breaking or earthwork with a bare subsistence wage—is quite hard enough without the distance test being added, and besides it is acknowledged by many of the best administrators to be bad economy to take the people far from their homes. (Hear, hear.) Work done near the villages enables the people to see to their cattle and their fields and homes, besides which, if the village organisation is called in, it can often be done at far less cost. Where this plan was pursued, for instance in the Central Provinces, the people seemed to me to be in far better heart and trim than when they were working in the great camps where every thing is done in a mechanical way, and where the feeling of homelessness must have been beyond words depressing to people who are so bound up with their villages as the Indians are. Another point I should like to say a word on is the dangerous extent to which the people in Bombay camps are massed together, sometimes in crowds of 30,000 or more. For one thing it is almost impossible to get the work properly organised. The people are bewildered and demoralised and often think they are being robbed of their due wages. And the tendency is to introduce rigorous systems of fining to take the place of proper supervision. But the worst feature of these gigantic famine crowds is the liability to sickness and the almost certain vantage ground they offer to epidemics. It was to me amazing to observe the fatalistic way in which this side of the matter was treated. I was told in the spring that cholera was certain to come. But what preparations were made to meet it? There were these huge camps, pitched as a rule in unshaded places, where the heat was overpowering, and with a defective water supply. And to each army of famine refugees one medical man of a kind, generally a hospital assistant or dispenser, was told off. In each collectorate an English doctor was appointed to travel round and inspect the medical arrangements; but the working responsibility for preserving the health and life of the people fell on the unlucky native apothecary who was paid about the wages of a good Native cook. The medical service was grossly inadequate for the treatment of ordinary famine diseases, which are plentiful enough, and for the important work of watching the general condition of the people and their fitness for labour. I asked myself what would happen when the expected cholera came, and really there could be no sort of doubt as to the answer. It was a case of saving the people from famine that they might be swept off in brigades by cholera and smallpox. It is an intelligible position that famine should be left to work its own course, but for this kind of treatment there can be no justification. (Hear, hear.) If it was necessary to have these big camps, which were daily challenging disease, then the Government should have accepted the responsibility of setting them up. And if the proper complement of doctors and ambulance men could not be raised in India, the medical service should have been strengthened from outside. (Hear, hear.) As it is, some hundreds of thousands of poor creatures, for whose lives we assumed an absolute responsibility, have been done to death under our auspices, and with the full knowledge of what was likely to happen. You know what took place when these huge camps were attacked. When the disease broke out and carried off a few hundreds or thousands of the people the rest fled homewards or in the direction of the nearest town or camp. Many died on the way, and where they went they carried the infection with them. At the camp at Devala the English doctor arrived to find 400 dead bodies and people littered about the ground dying, and struggling in the water of the river where they had been seized as they went to drink. Those who could had run away. All the officials but two had made off, and the people had to be bribed to burn the dead. Incidents like this, which seemed horrifying enough in twos and threes, became the regular thing later on in the northern parts of the Bombay Presidency, and in many of the Native States. Even where the officials held their ground and kept panic in check it was impossible to do much for the sufferers. English ideas of the treatment and care of the sick have not impressed themselves on the mind of the Native official. Only the lowest castes can be got to tend the sick, and when you have cholera to deal with the sweepers will shirk their work unless there is somebody to keep them up to it. At the famine poor-house, set up in a ginning compound at Nandurbar, where there was a slight attack, I saw people lying in the burning dust in a dying state with flies clustered on their faces. No one paid any attention to them, until the party of Englishmen who were going round told the sweepers to bring some milk and stimulants. But the men did their work so roughly that it would have been kinder to leave the wretched creatures to die alone. The sense of utter desolation and the feeling that one is in the presence of outcasts from all human succour is very terrible, and you get this feeling in every famine hospital—certainly that I visited. At a famine camp in the same district the cholera was attacking about 70 cases a day when I visited it; 2,000 people had fled, and of those who remained at work a man or woman would drop from time to time and be carried off to the cholera quarters. In these quarters, which consisted of small huts of matting, there were whole families crowded together in various stages of collapse. The outbreak had begun among the children, on whose heads so much of the misery of the famine is falling, and nearly 200 of them were seized with cholera in the first five days. The medical service consisted of a vaccinator who had been called out to deal with an outbreak of smallpox, which had attacked 600 of the people and carried off 100; and the native doctor from Nandurbar came out when he could be spared from the town, which by this time was having its twenty deaths a day from cholera. There was no wood at Talwada to burn the dead, and famine labour was accordingly diverted, to the extent of fifty workers, from earth-carrying to grave-digging. An hour or two in a camp where this sort of thing is the price of relief enables us to fill in for ourselves the statistics of mortality which are beginning to reach this country. Every famine camp in Gujerat was attacked in the same way, and scores of thousands of children, with their parents, have perished, often with out a hand stretched out to help them. The cholera is still raging; and it is not too late even now for those who may feel concerned in the matter to represent to the authorities that some better service is required. (Hear, hear.) In the Native States the system of relief was on much the same lines as in British territory; it is supervised for the most part by British officers, and carried through with funds advanced by the Government of India. Lord Curzon's strenuous initiative in the autumn, and the readiness with which most of the native rulers fell in with his schemes, are notable incidents of the famine. And let me say that Lord Curzon's efforts have been recognised by all classes of opinion in India. (Hear, hear.) As to the issue of the unfortunate circular in which the alarm was raised that people would crowd on relief to the sacrifice of their independence, that circular was, I think, based on a misconception of the character of the people. (Hear, hear.) The Indian people are not paupers in spirit, and the idea of pauperisation is imported from this country. (Hear, hear.) I cannot imagine that any people could work harder to preserve their independence by sticking to their villages and undergoing any amount of privation than the Indian people. So far as their own self-respect is concerned, they are quite capable of looking after it for themselves. (Hear, hear.) The danger of demoralisation arose from the famine itself, and not from the measures of relief. But my point is with regard to the Native States, that having assumed responsibility for saving life the Government are clearly committed to the further step of doing their part to set the cultivators of these States on their feet again. And this brings me to the urgent question—what is to be done to keep the people who have lost everything from sinking into a state of chronic famine? So far as our information goes, the Government have made advances amounting to about £800,000 for the purchase of cattle and seed

grain. How many of those cattle have already died, and what percentage of applicants for help have been assisted, we do not know. But we shall be on safe ground in conjecturing that this sum, eked out by perhaps another half million or more from the Famine Fund, is not enough to go a quarter of the way round, or anything like it. I confess I should greatly like to know what estimate the famine officers who are trying to set things going again throughout half India have formed of the minimum of help required; and the Government of India ought at least tell to us what proportion the grants made bear to the most urgent needs of the cultivators. We may draw our own conclusions, I think, from Lord Curzon's despairing appeals to the charity of the world, and from the fact that though the rains are falling the numbers on relief are leaping up; and our own knowledge of the drain that the famine has made on the Government's treasury explains why more has not been done. Surely it is pedantic to discuss the resources of India in the abstract—(hear, hear)—when we know that in this concrete case, where it is palpably to the advantage of Government to set the people going, those resources of which we hear are not available. We are told that India's borrowing powers are unexhausted, in other words, that the relieving officer can make no recommendation to the guardians at home till India comes as a cleaned-out pauper to claim it. ("Shame.") As if it were not ignominy enough to make the Viceroy do the sort of work he is doing in advertising our Imperial meanness to the world. The Sultan and a Chinese Viceroy have responded to his appeal. We as a State will not do him the common justice to believe that his distress is genuine. And while the Governor of Colorado is issuing proclamations about India's extremity, the most that India seems able to hope for here is a Parliamentary day not too far on in August. Let me in conclusion remind you that there is another respect in which India is hoping for something like generous treatment at the hands of Parliament. The cultivator is beset by the need of cattle and seed, and he and his labourers will have to be kept alive at the earliest till October, when the first crops are due—supposing those crops to be ever sown. But after the crop comes the tax-gatherer, and you will find that the Budget Estimates for the current year allow for a failure of land revenue of only five million and odd rupees out of a normal revenue of some seventy-seven millions. That is for Bombay, the Central Provinces, and the Punjab. If this estimate is to guide the tax-collectors, then the old business of getting blood out of stones will be renewed, for it means that only one cultivator in fifteen will have his tax suspended. We ought not to require this iniquity at the hands of Englishmen—(hear, hear)—who are entitled to be regarded as the people's friends, and who, I am confident, are often so regarded. Gentlemen, these are the questions of the moment on which the very life of India depends. As to those wider questions of policy and administration which form, as it were, the framework within which famine is enabled to do such deadly work, and which call for instant consideration, one can only hope that India's sufferings will not be wholly thrown away. (Applause.)

The Lord Bishop of Hereford: I am very glad to have the opportunity of taking part in this morning's proceedings, because I believe I am the oldest friend of Mr. Nash in this room. I have known him more years than you would imagine from his youthful appearance, for I had the pleasure of working with him in Bristol in connexion with various good movements, of which he was the life and soul. (Hear, hear.) I have had much pleasure in listening this morning to the results of his enquiries in the famine stricken districts of India. It is not for me to address this company. I can only express my hope that the terrible experience through which India has gone during the last few years may very soon result in such new arrangements as will to some extent at any rate prevent a recurrence of this terrible and disastrous affliction. One cannot but hope that it may be possible to place the Indian cultivators in such a position that the alien money-lender may be kept from among them, and that there may be hope in that rich country that recurring drought may not bring the disastrous results which are apprehended. From my own personal point of view I have only one little suggestion to make. While one cannot but hope that it may be possible for the Imperial Government to add materially in this matter to the resources of private charity, and while also it may be trusted that those resources of private charity in England are not to be considered as exhausted by the sum which the Lord Mayor's fund has managed to collect, I cannot but think of the time which will soon be with us when almost every church and chapel in the United Kingdom will be holding harvest festival celebrations and will be making collections. I should like to think that in every one of those churches and chapels there will be given, if not the whole, at any rate some portion of the collection for the relief of the stricken people of India. (Applause.) I thank you, Sir William, for having given me the extreme pleasure of listening to Mr. Nash's address this morning.

Mr. Samuel Smith: I am sure we all feel very much indebted to you, Sir William, for giving us this opportunity of listening to the instructive address which has been delivered. Every one of us must feel that he has gained fresh information from Mr. Nash—information which I hope will be of use to us in our Parliamentary work—I see a good many members of Parliament here this morning, and I hope that they will all give support to Sir William Wedderburn when next week he moves that a considerable grant be made out of Imperial funds to India. Many of us who have been following this matter for months past feel that this ought to have been done before. It has pressed like a weight upon my own soul that we have stood so idly and apathetically by while these awful sufferings were being endured in India. It is late in the day I admit, and much irreparable evil has been done, yet even now it is only a reasonable and just thing to ask the Government to grant a sum of several millions sterling in order to set up these poor starving cultivators, who if that is not done will next year die off in their thousands from famine disease. They must have external help because to a large extent their cattle are dead and they are laden with debt. Their little farms are wrecked and ruined, and unless they are given help from an outside quarter they will sink into permanent pauperism and may ultimately be buried in paupers' graves. No doubt the Government at the present time is burdened with obligations of every kind. Still to some extent we have brought them upon ourselves. We have undertaken to govern one-fourth of the world and we must accept the responsibilities of so doing. (Hear, hear.) If we undertake to manage three hundred millions of people in India we must not shirk the responsibilities thereby incurred. No doubt those responsibilities are very heavy, as our people are beginning to find out. We have been taught that the policy of our nation is to grasp more and more, and we are beginning to find out what is involved in that. We cannot shift the responsibility from our shoulders and we must therefore do the best we can. We are indebted to Lord Curzon for the fresh and vigorous mind which he is bringing to bear upon Indian questions. We have had no Viceroy of late years so capable as he has proved himself to be. (Hear, hear.) I do not think it will be a breach of confidence if I read a letter, or rather an extract from a letter, I have received from him. I have been in correspondence with him on the subject of the famine and he writes me: "In my budget speech of March 28, I went at some length into the question of irrigation, upon which I propose to spend more than my predecessors have done. I wish I could spend more even than that, but the openings are not quite so numerous as people at home imagine. The area of possible works on any considerable scale is not enormous. I will however, as soon as the famine is over, look very carefully into the question of openings which recent experience may have suggested, and here, as elsewhere, I should like to inaugurate a continuous policy." I believe the question of irrigation is one of the greatest questions which India has to face. It requires a continuous policy spread over many years, and a young man like Lord Curzon, full of energy, should be given an opportunity of carrying out a continuous policy by being continued in his present post for at least another term. (Applause.)

Mr. Maclean, M.P.: I think that this famine in India, appalling as it has been, has had at least one good result. It has brought together the friends of India from all political parties, men who have hearts to feel and heads to think. It has been a great pleasure to me to be here this morning. In the first place I am glad of the opportunity of showing my respect and goodwill to your chairman. He and I have known one another the greater part of our lives, since we were young men together in India, and although we have had political differences upon many points I have always admired him and been ready to bear my testimony to the disinterestedness which has always characterised him. (Hear, hear.) I see here my old friend Mr. Naoroji, with whom also I have had many political disputes. I think, however, he will admit that on one point we have always seen together. We have both consistently maintained that one of the greatest evils afflicting India is the practice of periodically revising the Land Assessments there. For forty years I have struggled and worked in order to secure a permanent settlement for the whole of India, as I believe that that would be one of the best remedies to apply to that country. At the present moment rents are periodically raised, the unfortunate tenantry are taxed upon their improvements, they sow the seed and reap the harvest with untiring zeal, but then comes in the merciless tax-collector who seizes the greater part of the fruits of their industry. That is very like the evil which absentee landlordism used to inflict upon Ireland. I believe nothing would do so much good to the people of India or tend more to develop their resources so as to enable them to guard against future famine as a fixed land assessment. With regard to what is to be done in respect of the famine I need not say much now, as the matter is to be discussed in the House of Commons next week, but I must point out that in my opinion, the Secretary of State and the Viceroy have been playing a game of battledore and shuttlecock with their responsibility for saving the lives of the people. (Cheers.) The Secretary of State has always spoken in the House of Commons as if he were most anxious to do everything he could for India, but he has always limited the expression of his goodwill by the statement that he would do anything in his power to advance money to the people at a fixed rate of interest. He has also said that if the Viceroy would apply to the Home Government, should he want help, it would at once be granted to him, but the Viceroy has received a very strong hint from home that he is not to apply to the Imperial Exchequer for help and he has therefore gone cadging all round, to the Lord Mayor of London, to the President of the United States, to the German Emperor, and even to the Sultan of Turkey. But all that can be got in the way of private charity is a mere drop in the bucket in comparison with the help that could be given from the Imperial Exchequer to India. I wish to thank Mr. Nash for the admirable paper he has read this morning. I had the privilege of making his acquaintance when he first went to India, and I must say I think that Mr. Scott made a most happy selection when he invited Mr. Nash to go out there. I am glad he has written those letters from India. (Hear, hear.) We know what it is to be a journalist in India or anywhere else in these days when there is so much censorship over the free expression of opinion. The great merit of Mr. Nash is that he has kept himself free from those social wiles and political influences which destroy the independence of journalism. He has spoken with absolute fearlessness and with high intelligence and he has taught the people of this country a lesson which I hope they will take to heart. (Cheers.)

The Chairman: It has been suggested that gentlemen present might like to put questions to Mr. Nash—now is the opportunity.

Mr. Harold Cox: Did I understand Mr. Nash to say that there had been famine in Behar or Berar?

Mr. Nash: Berar.

Dr. Clark, M.P.: I should like to enquire whether there are any bullocks left to do the ploughing after the monsoon. If not is it not probable that the next crop will be very small indeed? I should like further to ask if in going through British India and the Native States, Mr. Nash was able to form any relative idea as to the state of

affairs. Was there a higher standard of comfort in British India than in the Native States and were the relief arrangements better or worse?

Mr. NASH: With regard to the first question I can only say that to the best of my impression the number of surviving plough cattle in a condition to work is so limited as to make the prospects of ploughing without help almost inappreciable. Very little work can be done with the cattle that remain. We gather from a recent telegram that in consequence of the lack of fodder the new cattle supplied by the Government are rapidly dying, and there is a danger that we shall have another year of severe famine. As to the second question, I am afraid I could hardly answer that in the course of a few brief sentences. From my rapid survey it seemed to me that the relief system was on the whole done exceedingly well in the Native States; possibly something was gained by the absence of centralised intervention and I can only say that I saw nothing in the Native States in the shape of suffering or mortality which anything like approached what was to be witnessed in Bombay. It was in the course of my rapid tour through India impossible for me to form anything like a fair idea of the normal standard of comfort of the people, and I think it would be useless for me to attempt to compare the standard in the Native States with that in the British provinces.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON, M.P.: I merely rise to put into formal shape what is in all your minds, and that is a vote of thanks to Mr. Nash for the information he has given us to-day. Mr. Winston Churchill, writing from South Africa some months ago, described it as a "land of lies." I think one might say the same of India. ("No, no.") Well, there are plenty of lies about at any rate, and we must be very thankful indeed to Mr. Nash or to anyone who will tell us the truth. As far as I can tell, Mr. Nash has told us a plain unvarnished tale. He has told us a very horrible tale, which must sink into all our hearts. If we take it to heart it must do some good. I do not know whether we can hope to get much good from the House of Commons. Sir William Wedderburn has tried, but has not met with much success at present; for there we are now devoting ourselves not to matters useful and beneficial to mankind but to devising means for the destruction of our fellow-creatures. The House of Commons is rapidly becoming, as Mr. Birrell puts it, "A branch of the Army and Navy Stores." (Laughter.) I have only to repeat that I am thankful to Mr. Nash for telling us the truth about India, because I believe that the telling of the truth is one of the noblest things anybody can do in the short life we have in this world. (Applause.)

Mr. DADABHAI NAOROJI: I need not say how deeply grateful I feel to Mr. Nash and to Mr. Scott and the Editors of other papers who have sent correspondents to India in order that the truth as to the state of affairs in that country may be made known to the people of Great Britain. Had it not been for their action a good deal would have been suppressed which has now been published. Mr. Nash has, I believe, not merely done a service to India. He has done good service also to Great Britain itself by making the British people aware of their responsibility. That people has been kept in ignorance and even worse than ignorance. False ideas have been created in the public mind which Mr. Nash has done much to expose. After all, India is the British Empire, and never were truer words spoken than those uttered by Lord Curzon when he said that Great Britain might lose her Colonies and survive, but if she lost India the sun of the British Empire would be set. These words must carry to the heart of every Englishman the responsibility falling upon this country for the welfare of 300,000,000 of humanity, and it is because I wish the people to fully realise that responsibility that I am thankful to Mr. Scott for sending Mr. Nash to India. (Applause.)

The vote of thanks having been unanimously agreed to, Mr. NASH replied. He said that the vote ought properly to be acknowledged by Mr. Scott to whom they were indebted for sending him to India, and for the results of his visit, whatever they might be worth. He was extremely obliged to them however for the kind words and sentiments to which expression had been given.

Serjeant HEMPHILL, M.P.: I have to ask permission to move a vote of thanks to our host. I myself have no particular connection with India but as an Irishman I have a sympathetic heart, and I listened with the deepest feeling to the eloquent, pathetic, and interesting address delivered by Mr. Nash. I have often in the House of Commons heard our Chairman lift up his voice under great difficulties on behalf of India, and I have sometimes been almost tempted to try and give expression to the feelings which have been excited by the narratives he has given. I am glad to see so many Members of Parliament present to-day, and I trust that they will make it their business to assist him next week when he endeavours to impress upon the Legislature the common justice of coming forward with a liberal hand to afford sustenance to starving India. At a time when with profuse hands millions are raised without a murmur from every part of the British Empire in order to further the expansion of that Empire surely we can spare some few millions for those over whom we have taken responsibility by depriving them of their own self-government. It is the first duty of the Empire to come to the relief of a famine which may be attributable in part to administrative neglect in not providing a proper irrigation system which might have averted the drought.

Dr. SARAT MULLICK: I should like to second the motion. I think it would be very ungrateful indeed on our part if we were to separate without a word being said on behalf of the many Indians present to-day, who I can assure you are deeply grateful for the efforts made by Sir William and our other friends on behalf of India. Gatherings like this do much to relieve Indian sadness, and we therefore owe a deep debt of gratitude to Sir William for the opportunity he has afforded all of studying the claims of India.

The vote was unanimously adopted and Sir William Wedderburn in reply said that Mr. Nash's address had been well described as a plain, unvarnished, moving tale. They had been performing that morning but a small portion of their duty towards India, in regard to which they had taken upon themselves responsibilities which they must do their best to fulfil. He thanked them for their attendance and also for the vote of thanks they had so kindly accorded him.

The proceedings then terminated.

Imperial Parliament.

Tuesday, July 10.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE HONNIBAL SHOOTING CASE.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND asked the Secretary of State for India, whether his attention had been called to the Honnibal shooting case, when Captain Wood, accompanied by other officers, fired into a sugar cane plantation and hit an old man; whether he was aware that a villager named Kenguri detained the officers and was afterwards sentenced to four months' imprisonment on a charge of assault; whether enquiries had been made as to the injuries sustained by the old man at the hands of the officers, and whether he would lay a statement of the whole case upon the Table of the House.

Lord G. HAMILTON: From information received from India, I understand that an officer, while out shooting, accidentally wounded a native with small shot. Subsequently a crowd of villagers collected, and certain of them acted in such a manner as to induce the officers to bring an action for assault and wrongful restraint. I should add that the first acts of the officers after their release were to send a doctor to attend to the wounded man, and to inform the Collector of what had occurred. The result of the action at law was that a Native was condemned to three months rigorous imprisonment and one month's simple imprisonment. An appeal has been lodged against this sentence, but has not yet been heard.

ARTILLERY IN INDIA.

Sir CHARLES DILKE asked the Secretary of State for India, whether the reorganisation of the heavy field batteries in India diminished either peace strength or war strength in guns and men.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The whole question of the organisation of artillery in India is now under consideration. Until a final decision has been reached I cannot give information upon matters of detail.

Thursday, July 12.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE INDIAN TELEGRAPH TARIFF.

Sir EDWARD SASSOON asked the Secretary of State for India if he would state to the House when the reduction in the Indian telegraph tariff, as promised by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, would be announced:

And, whether any difficulty had arisen in the negotiations to account for the delay.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I cannot as yet state when the proposed reduction in the telegraph rate to India will take place. The consent of various parties has to be obtained, and for this time is required; but I am not aware that any difficulty has arisen in the negotiations.

NO LOAN BILL.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked the Secretary of State for India whether he intended to introduce an Indian Loan Bill; and, if so, for what amount:

And would it be in whole or in part for the purposes of famine relief.

Lord G. HAMILTON: There is no intention of introducing an Indian Loan Bill.

THE INDIAN CONTINGENT FOR CHINA.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked the Secretary of State for India what provision was being made to recoup the Indian Exchequer for the initial expenditure on transport and similar purposes connected with the despatch of the Indian contingent to China.

Lord G. HAMILTON: An approximate estimate of the initial cost of the force that is being sent from India to China has been obtained from the Government of India and forwarded to the War Office. When a vote has been passed by the House, application for the amount will be made to the War Office.

Friday, July 13.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether he was in a position to state when the Indian Budget would be taken.

Mr. BALFOUR: It will not be possible to take it next week, as all the days are allocated, but I hope to take it the week after.

Monday, July 16.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE INDIAN FAMINE.

ADVANCES OF CULTIVATORS.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked the Secretary of State for India what were the conditions laid down by the Government of India under which advances were made to the cultivators in the famine districts for re-stocking their farms:

And, whether such advances were by gift or by loan, and, if by loan, what were the conditions of repayment, and what was the total amount hitherto advanced or promised by the Government of India for that purpose.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The general conditions of Government advances to cultivators, for the re-stocking of their farms are: (1) that they are to be free of interest; (2) that the first instalment of repayment will not be demanded for at least twelve months; (3) that the Local Governments may hereafter grant remissions in respect of

these advances, thus converting them into gifts, according to the circumstances of the recipents.

According to the last advices, the sum allotted by Government for these advances was £820,000. The hon. member is of course aware that a large part of the charitable fund raised by subscription has been devoted to this same purpose.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

Mr. MACLEAN asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether he could now fix the date for the discussion of the Indian Budget.

Mr. BALFOUR: It will certainly be next week.

Tuesday, July 17.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION IN INDIA.

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE asked the Secretary of State for India what was the present number of technical, industrial, and art schools or classes in India; what was the annual expenditure incurred by Government in maintaining the same; and what proportion such number and expenditure bear to those of colleges and schools of general education.

Lord G. HAMILTON: My honourable friend will find such figures as can be given, with a very full discussion of their bearing and effect in pages 248 to 281 of Mr. J. S. Cotton's report on the Progress of Education in India, 1892-93 to 1896-97, which was presented to Parliament in 1898. There may have been some progress since 1897, but I apprehend that the pressure of famine and plague in a large part of India has not admitted of increased expenditure on this object as a whole.

My honourable friend will see from Mr. Cotton's remarks that it is not possible on the figures available to give separately the number and cost even of wholly technical institutions, inasmuch as many of the technical schools are grouped in the returns with other schools under the head of "Special Schools." As regards classes, the report shows that in every Province attention is paid to the teaching of practical subjects, which may be described as preparatory technical instruction, in both primary and secondary schools. It is not however possible to show separately the expenditure in teaching these subjects, or the number of pupils attending the classes.

INDIAN TROOPS WITHDRAWN FROM INDIA.

Mr. MACLEAN asked the Secretary of State for India whether the force of British and Native troops under orders for China had been again increased:

What was now the total strength of the withdrawals from the Indian establishment for service abroad, and whether the Viceroy was satisfied that all these troops could be spared:

And, whether the present acting Commander-in-Chief in India was a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, which issues orders for the despatch of troops on foreign service.

Lord G. HAMILTON: Since I last replied to the hon. member's enquiries on the subject (June 21, and 26,) it has been decided to increase the strength of the force proceeding from India to China by about 6,000 men, which with the exception of two batteries of artillery, is entirely drawn from the Native army.

This raises the total number of troops withdrawn from the Indian establishment for service in China and elsewhere to about 22,000.

The movements have the full concurrence of the Viceroy.

The provisional Commander-in-Chief in India is not a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, but he is the adviser of the Viceroy on military questions.

Mr. BUCHANAN asked the Secretary of State for India, whether it was intended to despatch from India additional British and Native regiments for service in China, and what steps were being taken to supply the place of these and the other forces now serving out of India.

Lord G. HAMILTON: In reply to the first part of the hon. member's question I may refer him to the answer I have given to-day to a similar question put to me by the hon. member for Cardiff.

With regard to the second part, I can add nothing to the reply which I gave to the same hon. member on June 21.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

In reply to Sir H. Fowler,

Mr. BALFOUR said that the Indian Budget would be taken on Thursday of next week.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

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

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN,—East India (Famine),—That, looking to the special needs of the famine-stricken people in India on the approach of the monsoon, this House recognises that funds are urgently required to feed, clothe, and house the cultivators in their villages until their crops are ripe; to provide them with plough cattle, seed, and other requisites of cultivation; and to restore them to their normal economic condition; that these requirements cannot be adequately met from Indian revenues raised from the suffering Indian people, and within the necessarily restricted field of ordinary relief operations; that the funds subscribed by charity are altogether insufficient for these purposes: and this House is therefore of opinion that an Imperial free grant of not less than five millions sterling should be provided to assist in meeting this unprecedented calamity. [An early day.]

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS,—Distress in India,—That, in view of the frequent and widespread famines which have occurred in India in recent years, it is desirable, in the opinion of this House, to afford some permanent relief and protection to the people in the future; firstly, by a more rapid extension of irrigation canals, storage tanks, and wells; secondly, by reducing the land tax in those provinces or districts where it is excessive; and thirdly, by relieving India of a portion of the cost of the Indian army, which should equitably be borne by the Imperial Exchequer. [An early day.]

Mr. MACLEAN,—To move, That this House deeply deplores the appalling loss of life in India due to the inability of the Government of India, for want of sufficient means and staff, to control the famine in that country; and this House records its conviction that, to insure the Indian peasantry against future famines, a complete revision of the land revenue systems of India is essential. [On going into Committee on East India Revenue Accounts.]

Mr. BUCHANAN,—To move, That, in view of the important military aid rendered by India to the Empire in Africa, China, and elsewhere outside the boundaries of India, this House is of opinion that the apportionment of charge between the Home and Indian Exchequers should be revised and the contribution paid by India substantially reduced. [On going into Committee on East India Revenue Accounts.]

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

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

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS.

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN,—To ask the Secretary of State for India, whether he is now in a position to specify the amounts advanced by the Government of India to the several Native States by way of famine loans:

Whether, when making each loan, the Government of India ascertained that the State was exercising economy in its general administration, with a view both to the relief of the famine-stricken and the repayment of the loan:

And, whether the Bhaunagar State in Kathiawar applied for a famine loan of 30 lakhs, what is the reason why Bhaunagar, recently prosperous, is now in financial straits, and has the Government of India satisfied it-elf that this State has reduced all unnecessary expenditure both in India and in England. [*Thursday, July* 19.]

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN,—To ask the Secretary of State for India, whether he is aware that in the famine of 1896-97 the Government of the North-West Provinces remitted land revenue to the extent of Rs. 6,000,000, while the Government of Bombay remitted Rs. 15,000:

And, whether, looking to the remarks of the Famine Commissioners of 1898, who approved the liberal remissions in the North-West Provinces as mitigating distress, while taking exception to the course followed in Bombay, he will urge upon the Bombay Government a more liberal policy than that followed by them in 1896-97. [*Thursday, July* 19.]

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN,—To ask the Secretary of State for India, whether he will grant a Return showing the amount yielded by new taxation imposed in India in or since the year 1886, and stating in each case the purpose for which such taxation was at the time said to be imposed. [*Thursday, July* 19.]

Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN,—To ask the Secretary of State for India, whether, looking to the loyalty and patience manifested by the Indian people while suffering from grievous calamities, and looking to the benefit to Imperial interests from such manifestation at the present time, he will consider whether, by withdrawing recent penal legislation, this loyalty may be recognised, and the Indian people assured of the confidence and appreciation of her Majesty's Government. [*Thursday, July* 19.]

Mr. BUCHANAN,—To ask the Secretary of State for India, how long has the office of the Commander-in-Chief in India been vacant, and when is an appointment to be made. [*Thursday, July* 19.]

Mr. SCOTT,—To ask the Secretary of State for India if he can state what, approximately, are the percentages of deaths among the cattle in the famine districts, and what funds are available for the supply of fodder and seed grain to the cultivators in these districts:

And what steps are being taken to secure a supply of fodder for the surviving cattle, and what proportion of the cattle recently supplied to make good previous losses have died from want of fodder. [*Thursday, July* 19.]

Mr. SCOTT,—To ask the Secretary of State for India, whether, in view of the outbreak of cholera in the famine districts of India, any, and, if so, what addition has been made to the famine medical service:

And, whether he can state number of deaths from cholera in the famine districts. [*Thursday, July* 19.]

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE,—To ask the Secretary of State for India, whether he has official information to the effect of the telegraphic news received since yesterday of satisfactory rainfalls having taken place in the areas affected by the famine; if so, can he give the total of the rainfall since the monsoon set in up to date in the several affected districts, and state if it is regarded as decidedly improving the prospects of the ensuing crops in those parts. [*Thursday, July* 19.]

Mr. MACNEILL,—To ask the Secretary of State for India, whether the expenses of the 22,000 troops withdrawn from the Indian establishment to serve in China will fall on the Imperial or on the Indian Exchequer:

And, whether provision will be made, having regard to the fact that no fewer than 90,000,000 persons in India are affected by the famine now devastating that dependency of the Crown, that the maintenance of the regiments, native or otherwise, now serving out of India be not charged directly or indirectly on the Indian Revenue. [*Thursday, July* 19.]

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