India

FOR THE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

THERE is better news this week from the famine districts. Lord Curzon's telegram of Tuesday last reported a very decided improvement during the preceeding ten days "through sudden opportune renewed advance of the monsoon." The Viceroy adds that if the present favourable conditions continue considerable autumn crops will be secured and the tension will relax. Nevertheless the number of persons in receipt of relief is given as 6,356,000, and that, too, though the Bombay returns are incomplete. Lord Northcote's telegram of Monday again records an appalling number of deaths. For the the week ending July 28, there were 8,100 cases of cholera, and 5,132 deaths, in the famine-stricken districts. In the Native States for the same period the cases of cholera were 7,800, of which 5,553 were fatal. The total number of deaths during the week among those employed on relief works or in receipt of gratuitous relief in the British districts were 6,968.

The *Times* has published during the past few days interesting telegrams from Baroda camp and Ahmedabad with reference to Lord Curzon's visit to some of the famine districts. Leaving Simla on July 30, Lord Curzon arrived at Dohad on August 1 and inspected an enormous lake that is being constructed by 12,000 Bhil labourers, who "have endeared themselves to the British officials by their pluck and cheeriness." The Viceroy, we are told, "heard many cases of brave and unostentatious self-sacrifice on the part of British and Native officials and of single-hearted missionaries." The testimony to the work of Indians is valuable especially in view of certain reflections recently made upon them, as to which we have something to say elsewhere. The charitable public must not suppose that the fall of rain removes the need of relief. On the contrary, "the rain, though bringing hope and confidence, causes discomfort and adds to the difficulties of famine administration. Clothing, thanks to the Famine Relief Fund, has been liberally distributed to the half-clad Bhils, and agricultural advances have been freely made." On August 2 Lord Curzon inspected the large reservoir which is being constructed as a famine work at Broach. "The collector of Broach, the engineer, and the civil surgeon, all Natives, have done well," the correspondent of the *Times* says, "in the great crisis." Next the Viceroy visited a poorhouse "maintained by private charity and managed excellently by a native resident of Broach, Mr. Dalal, a Parsee." The *Times* says :—

> This gentleman devotes much time to the supervision of ambulances, which patrol the country around Broach, and bring in the weak and starving to the poor-house, where they are restored to strength by suitable food. The people are drafted on to relief work afterwards.

Leaving Baroda on Friday, Lord Curzon went to Nadiad, in the Kaira district, and inspected a large poorhouse where, we read, "he commented upon the inadequacy of the medical staff." From Nadiad he went to Ahmedabad, where he inspected a large poorhouse containing over 3,000 persons. We quote again from the correspondent of the *Times* :—

> Here a splendid and noble work is carried on under the control of Colonel Bartholomeusz, of the Indian Medical Service, and an excellent Parsee doctor, Mr. Kalyanwala, and in spite of the cholera and the daily arrival of exhausted people the death-rate is diminishing and the hospital is cleanly and orderly. On Saturday morning the Viceroy visited Chandola relief works where, with 10,000 workers, the organisation is admirable and economical, and Messrs. Furdonjee and Cooverjee, the Parsee executive engineers, received high praise.

Amid the too general censures which have in some quarters been passed upon the work of Indians in dealing with the famine, evidence like this serves to show the need of discrimination. As for Lord Curzon's zeal it cannot be too cordially recognised. Our Bombay correspondent, in the letter we print to-day, shows what an impression his admirable qualities have made upon the Indian people.

There was a curiously perverse article in the *Saturday Review* upon the recent debate on the Indian Parliamentary Committee's proposal for a national grant to the famine relief funds. The general attitude of the writer may be gathered from this passage :—

> The attack was sufficiently serious to call up the leader of the House and the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The blunt refusal of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach might have been tempered by more sympathy and a wider consideration of its effect outside the House. From his conclusion it is impossible to dissent though the whole of his reasons, or even of his facts, cannot command unqualified support. His view of the relations of the British Government to the Native States was wanting in broadth and goncrosity, his estimate of the services India is now rendering to the Empire lacked cordiality, while his demonstration of the relative wealth of India and of England was an arithmetical exercise which belied the obvious and recognised general truth concerning the two countries.

That is not on the whole unsympathetic. Yet the writer must needs go out of his way to sneer at the authors of the proposal as "the little group of self-appointed friends of India." The sneer is the less intelligent because the writer goes on to plead for "a recognition of the just claims of India for permanent relief on a far larger scale than the beggarly £250,000 to which the Secretary of State has already whittled down the grudging suggestions of Lord Welby's Commission." The suggestions of the Majority Report are undoubtedly grudging. But if the *Saturday* reviewer will take the trouble to look at the Blue-book he will find far more ample, because equitable, suggestions in the Minority Report. And this Report is the work of "the little group of self-appointed friends of India" for whom he has nothing but contempt.

The opponents of a Parliamentary grant for famine relief are endeavouring to make capital out of the allegation that "the only Indian Native on the Viceroy's Council who touched the subject repudiated the suggestion of a public grant." This, we suppose, is a reference to the speech of the Hon. P. M. Mehta. But a more unjust use of his contention it would be difficult to conceive. Here is the passage from Mr. Mehta's speech (Calcutta, March 28 last) :—

> Gloomy as the situation thus is, I confess, my lord, I feel some difficulty in reconciling myself to the suggestion that there might be a grant to India from the British Treasury. The exchange of private charity between the subjects of her Majesty in England and India can be open to no objection; on the contrary, it draws hearts closer together. India has gratefully appreciated the generosity of the British people in coming to the help of the afflicted by their liberal subscriptions during the famine of 1896-7 and during the present famine. But a public dole stands on a different footing and cannot fail to carry with it a sense of humiliation. *In that way, India would fain appeal to England's sense of justice rather than of generosity. I never cease regretting that the Government of India had lost to the country a contribution to the British Exchequer on account of the late frontier war. It was a work of joint Imperial concern and a division of the cost would only have been just.*

Mr. Mehta's point obviously is that India would not need generosity from England if she could but obtain justice. But justice has been denied her. It is to be noted, too, that Mr. Mehta spoke in March. Since that time the intensity of the famine has exceeded all expectations and the immediate necessities of India, which cannot wait for a departmental adjustment of claims, have come to be overwhelming.

In this connexion it may be well to recall a passage from the leading article in the *Standard*—the chief Minis-

terial organ—upon the recent debate in the House of Lords on the report of Lord Welby's Commission. The *Standard* said:—

It is natural and intelligible that the complication of grievous calamities which have for some time afflicted so large a portion of the Dependency should suggest the idea of coming to the aid of the Calcutta Exchequer with a substantial grant from the Imperial Revenue. Notice has already been given of a number of Parliamentary resolutions which tend in this direction. Admirable and sometimes obligatory as benevolence may be, justice stands first, and before we can address ourselves with a good conscience to the question whether we are to be munificent to India, it is as well to consider whether we have paid the debts that are absolutely due. Lord Northbrook had very firm ground to go on when he enquired whether the Government were prepared to refund a sum of two and a-half millions which an examination of military accounts between the two countries shows to have been, during the last eight years, expended by India in excess of her proper portion of the charge. A Royal Commission has reported definitely in favour of the view on which Lord Northbrook desires the Imperial authorities to take action. Though the members took a good many years to arrive at their conclusions on this and cognate matters, it is not quite an adequate answer to plead that the Cabinet have had only a few months to study the Blue-book.

All this is perfectly sound. Yet the *Standard* concluded with the just reflection that "if only as a practical sign of national sympathy Parliament ought to supplement from State funds what the munificence of the English public has contributed for famine relief."

In the magnificent speech in which, on August 1, Sir William Harcourt dissected what may be called the finances of Imperialism, there was an important reference to India. Towards the close of his speech he said:—

What Lord Rosebery calls frantic eagerness for acquisition of territory and what Lord Salisbury rebuked as the desire to fight everybody and take everything—a desire which, he said, was the ruin of great Empires—seems to be growing upon the nations of Europe. What is the consequence? Their resources are strained to the uttermost, they leave no margin for dealing with the duties which belong to their dominion, the great possessions they already have are starved and mortgaged for further acquisitions. Every nation seems to regard that which its neighbour requires as wrong and evil in itself, and the consequence is that state of active malevolence which is referred to in the passage which I have read. The interests of what, after all, is but a small and distant fraction of our vast Empire have absorbed all our resources in men; they have increased our taxation; they have accumulated our debt. What have they done for us? They have left us but a very narrow margin for dealing with the great possibilities of danger in China; they have compelled us to refuse, what in my opinion we desired and ought to have given, assistance to our Indian subjects. (Cheers.) These are the results—I am not speaking of the present war, I am speaking of this land hunger, this craving for acquisition when you have not settled, developed, or done justice to the territories you already possess, and you are not able to do justice to the people to whom you are responsible at home.

Can it be doubted that, if war had not been provoked in South Africa, very much more would have been done towards the relief of famine in India?

The correspondent of the *Times of India* signing himself "Gujerati," whose letter produced the declaration from Mr. Monteath that the authorities would take no notice of anonymous complaints, returns to the charge in a second letter full of detailed cases of the harsh collection of revenue in famine-stricken Gujerat. At Koodsad, to take one instance, defaulters, whose names are given in two cases, were beaten. One man, name also given, who had paid the first instalment, had to sell his only remaining plough bullock in order to pay the second. In two other villages mentioned in the former letter the villagers were called to the Mamlatdar's Kutcherry and pressed to sign a statement denying that oppressive measures had been resorted to, but they refused. Finally, it is asserted that in many cases the dues have been paid out of *taccavi* advances. The *Times of India* makes this comment:—

We hope that the Government of Bombay will see their way, in view of the letter from "Gujerati" which we publish to-day, to reconsider their recently announced refusal to consider complaints which are made in so-called anonymous communications. . . . . We have here no vague and general accusation, but a series of very specific charges. If they are true the good intentions of Government have been thwarted, and a serious wrong has been done to Government themselves, as well as to the people who are said to be oppressed.

It is generally admitted that the extinction of village industries and the consequent dependence of almost the whole population on agriculture is one of the causes of Indian famine. Even the Government, which insists that famine is due solely to the action of a beneficent Providence, and which scouts the suggestion that over-assessment of the drain of wealth to Europe can have any effect in producing famine, is inclined to favour a revival of industry. The enlightened Anglo-Indian sees in such a revival the best hope for India, and, oblivious of the strong support given to the movement by the Congress, is inclined to attack the Congress leaders for their supposed lack of warmth in the cause, only because they do not make this their sole aim. It may, therefore, be hoped that the paper submitted by Messrs. J. Tellery and Co. on the subject of village industries will evoke universal interest.

Mr. Tellery has been struck by the large amounts spent in relief works, and suggests that the money might be used for prevention instead. He points out that the village artisans suffer in times of famine, as well as the purely agricultural population; but he also shows on the other hand how several village industries, notably carpet weaving, have been revived by enterprising firms like his own. Thus he believes that with a little technical training, Indian potters could keep out imported flooring-tiles, that carvers in stone and wood, with guidance as to what foreign markets need, could export their work, and that the women of Rajputana could gain enough by their embroideries to provide against any failure of the crops. Many other trades could be developed. Messrs. Tellery and Co. have submitted a scheme by which with the assistance of the Government this revival could, they believe, be brought about.

After an interview with Sir Edward Law, Mr. Tollery, according to the *Englishman*, submitted a proposal for the revival of Indian industries, conjointly with the Government. The industries to be chosen at first are those giving the most immediate prospect of success, silk-weaving, matmaking (both fibre and straw), basket and fan-making, embroidery, the making of lacquered toys, and cotton-weaving, in cases where machinery is not in use. The Government are to erect central factories for technical instruction, supply the staff, and give out work to the artisans when they are trained and have returned home to their villages. Messrs. Tellery and Co. are to supply samples and designs, give orders up to a certain amount, and take up all goods made to their order. Whether this scheme is practicable or not, it is satisfactory to have so definite a scheme placed before the public for discussion.

The *Englishman* has already protested in vain against the withdrawal of European troops from India for service in Africa. Now a further depletion of the British garrison is threatened in view of the Chinese crisis. The *Englishman* is naturally very wrath:—

Now this is simply playing into the hands of the Congress party, who have contended for years that the number of British troops permanently stationed in India is excessive. The authorities have hitherto maintained that it is not, and in this they have been warmly and unanimously supported by non-official Anglo-Indian opinion.

But the Government have now thrown their supporters over; for, as our contemporary says, if the garrison can be reduced by one-seventh for an indefinite time, there is no answer to the argument of the Congress party that the reduction should be made permanent, a view with which we thoroughly agree.

"I can hold out no hope whatever of a reduction in military expenditure," said the Secretary for India on Budget night. No, indeed, not until the British Treasury has to pay the three or four millions, or say half thereof, for Pension and Furlough Charges that are disbursed here as part of Indian military expenditure. But that is another and larger matter than a certain big question of detail which needs urgent attention. This is whether, in place of those regiments or other portions of the Indian Native Armies that are, it seems, to be regularly stationed at the Mauritius, on the African Continent, at the Straits, Hong Kong, and just now in Ceylon, there are to be new regiments and squadrons enlisted and organised, thereby adding largely to permanent Indian military establishments. Various questions intended to elicit departmental plans of this sort have been put during the Session by Mr. Buchanan and others, but without evoking a definite reply. All this time the "military expenditure" wheels were grinding away; and we now have an authoritative assurance that under this plan more of the Indian taxpayers' grist is being drawn into the mill that yields neither meal nor bread. This far-reaching scheme is

announced much as if it were a matter of ordinary routine in a recent Simla telegram to the *Times* which, by its terms, indicates that it comes from the centre of the bureau :—

Sanction has been received from home for the raising of three new regiments of native infantry to provide for the garrisoning of colonial stations such as Mauritius and Singapore. The best plan would be to add these to the permanent strength of the army, not to make them local battalions serving in fixed stations abroad. If this course is adopted then the ordinary regiments can take turns for colonial service.

Observe the eagerness with which the demand for permanence—confirming Lord George's "no hope of reduction"—is pressed forward, so far as to rope in the "ordinary regiments," so that all the native Indian armies may be utilised at call anywhere, according to the designs or necessities of our blundering or aggressive British Ministries of the day. Happily the principle that any and all troops on the "Indian establishment" when serving outside of India shall be paid from Imperial funds is firmly settled, as the Indian Secretary has several times during the last few weeks clearly stated. For this saving relief India is indebted, not only to years of effort by her own special friends, but to the earnest determination—when the whole subject was reviewed in connexion with the Suakin expedition—that was exhibited by Mr. John Morley, Sir William Harcourt, and some other members who as true Imperialists cherish the principle of financial equity as between India and its dominant partner in empire. Nevertheless, though this primary financial safeguard is secured, we must not forget that this new scheme of very liberally imperialising our Indian native troops will, unless checked or strictly regulated, have far-reaching effects on Indian finance. Incidentally it involves more pay and patronage in respect of the British officers on the staff of the native Indian armies; but, above all, it will render more difficult than ever the fixing of any limit to Indian Army Charges as a whole. Here we have fresh confirmation of Lord George Hamilton's very frank forecast: "No hope whatever of reduction in military expenditure." But for all that, our friends in India need not cast away hope. Let them persevere on their own line of demanding equitable financial apportionment as between the two Exchequers. They know that they can count on steady discriminating support from this side.

The *Times of India*, dealing with the suggested contribution of the Home Government to the expenses of the India Office, very trenchantly answers some of the arguments that have been urged by the supporters of the present arrangement. The contention that India should go on paying the whole cost because the East India Company did so, is shown to be false history as well as false analogy, not to speak of the absurdity of defending an alleged financial injustice on the ground that the payments had been of long duration. It is false history, because as a matter of fact for the first eleven years of its existence the members of the Board of Control were unpaid, and therefore no charge to India. And it is a false analogy, because the East India Company was a trading company, which of course paid for its home establishment.

Moreover, the *Times of India* sees no reason, because the Colonial Office costs only £50,000 a year, that therefore only that sum should be paid by the Treasury of the United Kingdom towards the expenses of the India Office. It thinks that as the whole cost of the one is defrayed by the Mother country, so should the whole cost of the other. It is no doubt true, as is contended, that a part of the expenditure of the India Office is of a directly administrative nature, but the same is true of the Colonial Office. It is interesting to find that our Anglo-Indian contemporary finds an additional reason for England's undertaking the burden in the fact that the money is all spent in England. One question which the Commission did not deal with is the cost of the India Office building—"an exclusive possession of the Metropolis, adding in a perceptible degree to the dignity and splendour of Whitehall" :—

Certainly it is no part of the equitable obligation of the Indian taxpayer to minister to the architectural embellishment of the Metropolis, and we hope that someone will press very strongly, when the question comes before Parliament, for a fair consideration of the claims of India to a refund of at all events a large part of the cost of this stately edifice.

It was to be expected that the despatch, and, in some quarters, the permanent stationing of Indian troops abroad—to the number of about fifteen thousand, according to the latest estimates—would lead to the filling up of vacant places. This temporary necessity is, it seems, being utilised in aid of some new plan of increasing the regular reserves, as appears from the following Simla telegram :—

Sanction has been accorded for passing a full complement of sepoys into the reserves in the Bengal and Punjab commands, their places in the ranks being filled by the enlistment of recruits. There are generally more applications for the reserves than places available. This extension will in time materially increase the strength [and cost] of the Native army. Good recruits are readily obtainable now.

That is because famine is sore in the land. Well, we may hear of this recruiting being spoken of as a relief measure!

The *Pioneer* estimates that the deaths from plague in the Bombay Presidency during the last four years amount to 300,000, a sufficiently alarming total, even though, as we are reminded, more were lost by fever in the North-West Provinces during the autumn of 1879 "without the world hearing much about it." The Bombay Report for the first three years of plague, compiled by Captain J. K. Condon, Under-Secretary in the Plague Department, is praised by our contemporary for its thoroughness and conspicuous candour, but it necessarily consists rather of observations and statistics than of accepted inferences drawn therefrom. Most of the questions raised by plague administration still remain subject to debate. The *Pioneer* is inclined to think the efficacy of the total abandonment of an infected area may now be considered proven; but it is so obvious as scarcely to need proof. The difficulty, as the *Pioneer* points out, is that this policy is often impracticable. It can only be carried out in small villages, and even there it is not easy to prevent the people revisiting their homes in secret.

On one point the *Pioneer* expresses a view that not so very long ago was held to be a dangerous medico-political heresy. Inoculation was the great remedy for plague, and he who expressed any doubts was branded as an obstacle in the path of an enlightened Government battling with the terrible scourge. As INDIA has always maintained a strict impartiality on this question, refusing to condemn inoculation on *a priori* grounds, but demanding proof from its supporters and a fair hearing for its opponents, we are the more pleased to record the opinion to which the *Pioneer* has arrived after perusing the evidence on the subject contained in the Report :—

Case after case is certainly given in which those who had undergone the process are shown to have suffered considerably less than those who remained unprotected; but the figures are far too much in the rough to serve a scientific enquirer. In each case the baro statement suggests a number of other questions which must be answered before we can form any idea of the value of the figures, and there is no means of answering them.

After adducing some evidence in favour of inoculation, it goes on to say: "As a means of combating the disease the results, it must be confessed, are disappointing."

The Bengal and North-Western Railway, which serves the districts to the north of the Ganges, having no independent access to Calcutta, nor hope of any under present circumstances, finds its traffic blocked by the inability of the lines on the south side of the river to forward the produce brought from the north, and has made arrangements for the use of steamboats. On this the *Pioneer* remarks :—

With railways having to fall back on boat carriage, with colliery owners compelled to buy coal to fulfil their contracts, it might be a good step if an agreement could be taken from the Government that no public official should mention the words "private enterprise" or "industrial development" until the present state of things in Bengal has passed away—on the ground that in the circumstances such expressions constitute provocation of an exasperated community.

Raghoo Ladkaya, who buried his two children alive in a *nullah* at Bassein, will be tried for murder at Thana on August 16. The prisoner, who admits that the act was his, is supposed to have been driven to desperation by the death of his wife and the difficulty of obtaining food for his children and himself. Readers of INDIA will remember that this is not the first case in which a parent has acted thus under the goad of famine; and it throws a lurid light on the sufferings of the people. One of Raghoo Ladkaya's children was taken out still living.

SIGNS OF ADVANCE.

THE India Office itself, after all, does move. The casual observer would suppose it to be rigid as cast iron, and go away with the feeling that no impression can be made upon it. This, however, is a very great mistake. True, the Indian authorities in Whitehall, as elsewhere, take care not to appear to be influenced from outside, and when they yield to the inevitable they make a well-practised demonstration of immovable firmness. One must suppose that there is wisdom in the strategy, and all the advantage of being popularly held to be infallible. The Front Opposition Bench also actually does move. The movement indeed is rather apt to be an alternation of forward and backward; but so move the tides of ocean, and the judicious waiter on the tides takes the current when it serves. The Government of India too is far from being altogether stagnant. The spirit of popular opinion, when it breathes strongly upon the waters, infallibly stirs them; and in fact there is nothing else that has potency enough to ruffle the placid surface. In every department of Indian policy and administration the principle of wise and salutary action is sufficiently plain. It always and everywhere depends upon the force and direction of sober and well-considered public opinion, to which in the long run the most stubborn official perversity must inevitably bend. It may be sooner, it may be later; but the power of accurate facts and just reasonings cannot but eventually prevail.

There could be no more marked example of this process than the history of the recent Indian Expenditure Commission. It is a very long story, and often it has seemed a very hopeless enterprise—seemed, to the uninstructed or unobservant eye, or to the man in a hurry who neglects to make allowance for obstacles in the path. Yet see what has been achieved by quiet and unrelaxing persistence. After many efforts to clear up the true position of the finances of India, and various ineffectual official Committees on detached matters, Mr. Samuel Smith, by grace of the ballot, submitted a motion for full enquiry, which originated with Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and was seconded by him. The motion was put as an amendment on the motion to go into Committee on the East India Revenue Accounts (August 14, 1894), and it was in these terms:—

> That, in the opinion of this House, a full and independent Parliamentary enquiry should take place into the condition and wants of the Indian people, and their ability to bear their existing financial burdens; the nature of the revenue system and the possibility of reductions in the expenditure; also the financial relations between India and the United Kingdom, and generally the system of government in India.

Sir (then Mr.) Henry Fowler, speaking as Secretary of State, passed certain criticisms upon the terms and the object of the amendment, but finally said this:—

> I at once frankly admit that I think it is desirable that the financial expenditure of a great country like India should be subjected to the criticism of the House of Commons more in detail than is possible in the annual Budget. I think, upon the whole, it would be wise from time to time to have an enquiry as to how the revenues of India are spent—spent in England as well as in India. No enquiry of that kind would be entirely futile if you would compress it within reasonable limits. If you made it wide and extensive the whole thing would break down. What I would suggest to my hon. friend—as his motive and that of the Government are the same—namely, to bring about a more efficient and economical administration in India, and to let the people of India know that for every sovereign spent they get the value—what I would suggest would be that he should withdraw his motion, and I will undertake on the part of the Government that at the very commencement of next Session we will propose the appointment of a Select Committee, which will enquire into the financial expenditure of the Indian revenues both in England and in India.

In response, Mr. Smith intimated acceptance, with the proviso that he and his friends held themselves free, when the Secretary of State made his proposal at the beginning of the Session, to ask for an extension of the reference so as to enable them to bring on the question of the taxpaying capacity of India. The whole question was again threshed out on Mr. Dadabhai's amendment to the Address next year (February 12, 1895), and eventually the Secretary of State intimated his intention of appointing, not a Select Committee, but a Royal Commission.

For five long years the Commission took evidence, meditated, it may be procrastinated, but now it has reported. We are well aware that not a few esteemed friends of India, including educated Indians of strenuous purpose, abandoned hope long before the labours of the Commission took final shape, and even now hold the results of the Commission as of little value or importance. Yet we venture to urge that this view greatly misapprehends the actual position. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, as we have seen, did not get what he asked for. But he took careful note of the good old proverb which encourages one that bodes a silk gown with the pretty sure hope that one will get a sleeve of it. Mr. Dadabhai has not got his silk gown, but he has got a sleeve, and the sleeve is well-worth the having. Mr. Dadabhai wanted a full and independent enquiry into both revenue and expenditure, not merely as a matter of figures, but as a vital problem of political economics. We do not enquire now into the validity of the grounds advanced officially for the restriction of the scope of the enquiry, nor do we now enter into the question of the "independence" of the Commissioners; much might be said—and we have already said much—in criticism of both points. But Mr. Dadabhai refused to be discouraged and plodded ahead with undiminished energy and persistence, a conspicuous example to young men on the sunny side of five and twenty. And now there stands the case for Britain and the case for India side by side in that Report, and even Sir Henry Fowler tells us that the Blue-book will be a storehouse of facts and arguments for the future. True enough, the Majority had not the nerve to formulate conclusions to the full measure of the premises, and recommend a refund of only some £293,000, which, it seems, ought to be counted as £257,000. But even a quarter of a million a year is not to be despised, especially in the circumstances of the times. And that is the least of the result: there is the foothold of the future, in the facts of the whole Report, and in the bold conclusion of the Minority. To see only the quarter of a million is to be blind to the main issues patent on the very face of the Report. There could be no more striking proof that there is abundant hope in every genuine and energetic effort.

Again, it is to be observed that Lord Curzon is persevering very quietly, but very strenuously, in his reversal of the Forward Policy on the North-West Frontier. Before he went out as Viceroy, he talked at large about meeting Russia on the banks of the Oxus. To-day it looks as if he had made up his mind to the larger prudence of waiting for Russia on the banks of the Indus. He has heard something about the Tirah campaign from the late General Sir William Lockhart; he has learned something from official reports, private as well as public, on all points of the frontier from Chitral to the Bolan; and he has seen some things with his own eyes. Not only is he concerned with the high issues of Imperialism: he has a wide-open eye to the success of the Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon. It will scarcely be his fault, we venture to anticipate, if there be any more trouble on the frontier in his time. He is withdrawing British soldiers from tribal territory, where their mere presence is so gratuitously irritating. He is building up his strength on his own side of the frontier line. He has resisted the pressure of foolish people to run a railway through the Khaibar Pass to Lundi Kotal, and resolutely fixed the terminus at Jamrud. For many a weary week, and month, and year have we contended persistently, and in the face of much reproach, for a return to the wise policy of Lord Lawrence. That policy was officially condemned, and we dare say is at this moment officially condemned. Yet, all the same, it holds the field, and Lord Curzon and Lord George Hamilton know this and act upon it. After all, the facts are not to be argued down or ignored. And here is another mark of progress in the face of adverse appearances and assertions.

Further, it is advisable to note the concluding strain of Lord George Hamilton's Budget Statement. "The mechanism of Government," he says, "has so improved and developed that, I think, it may be fairly claimed for it that it is the most advanced and scientific system that India has ever possessed." Well, so it ought to be, as a matter of course. Yet there are some rose leaves that disturb the comfort of the Secretary of State. This wonderful scientific system chains the officials to their desks; "they are so overburdened with correspondence, reports, and returns, that they are really imprisoned in their offices for the greater part of the day." By this "advanced and scientific system," they are effectually pre-

vented from mixing freely with the people and getting to know their wants and their ways of thought and feeling, and their powers of initiative are carefully and systematically withered up for lack of practice. So in spite of all fine professions of incomparable development, things are in a bad way, and we are prepared for a fresh step in advance, which is merely a return to old methods that ought never to have been abandoned. The Viceroy—"a remarkable man," "a man of untiring energy and unbounded power of work"—is contemplating "so to free the official that he shall be able to get more time to give to the essentials of administration." Observe: "to the essentials of administration." Very well, here is one thing purposed in the right direction. The other crumpled rose leaf is more troublesome. "Sometimes," says the Secretary of State, "I have doubts whether our popularity has increased." Really his doubts are but too well-grounded. The steadily widening breach between rulers and ruled has caused much anxiety to many of us for several years past, but, while our friends and ourselves have been earnest to narrow the gulf, the Secretary of State has been striving all he knew to force the rift wider still. Now, however, we are glad to observe, he has been brought to see the danger of his policy and to profess a desire for a closer union. The first step of amendment, of course, is to realise that there is a strong party in India whose energies have been, and are, strenuously bent upon conciliation—a party that represents millions, a party that practically represents every thinking person in India who is really competent to advise on the subject. The Viceroy has at last deigned to confer with the President of the National Congress. May we hope, then, at last, that the Secretary of State has opened his eyes to the fact that the leaders of the Congress are just as Imperially-minded as he is, as determined to uphold British rule as he is, fully instructed as to the needs and the opinions of their countrymen, and loyally anxious to place their knowledge and experience at his disposal for the benefit of India, which is also for the benefit of the Empire? If the high authorities would but once adopt the just attitude towards India and the Indians, the lower ranks would soon grasp the cue, and there would be inaugurated a change of incalculable advantage to both countries. The unhappy relations, which now disturb Lord George Hamilton, are, if he would but regard the facts with unprejudiced eye, the inevitable result of the most lamentable and gratuitous misunderstanding. But the very expression of his doubts mark yet another stage of advance.

Once more. The Indian Parliamentary party may well take credit for the favourable view of the proposal of a national free grant which has been manifested throughout the country. In estimating the small minority of dissidents one must take careful note of the proneness of certain journals to follow party lines with unreasoning fidelity. The whole free opinion of the United Kingdom may fairly be claimed for the sympathetic course of action. It is worth noting, too, that the Liberals of their own initiative issued a three-lined official Whip for the division on Mr. Souttar's amendment, that official tellers told in the division, and that several ex-Ministers voted in the minority. The significance of this is that the Liberal party is definitely committed to the policy of the resolution. Yes, after all, things are moving—even things Indian.

THE NATIVE STATES AND THE FAMINE.

NOT so very long ago it was generally believed that the Native States of India were doomed to extinction, and that the direct government of the Crown was destined to spread over the entire country. But with the restoration of Mysore the tide turned. It is now recognised that these States are a permanent feature in modern India. Nor is it difficult to see the great advantages that result from their existence. It is not only that they afford a means by which Indians can show their abilities as statesmen and rise to the highest dignities—can feel that they are not everywhere a subject-race. [illegible] because, free as these States comparati[illegible]hich clogs the heavy machinery [illegible] India, they can initiate reforms [illegible]nd celerity, and still more because reforms in Native hands are viewed with less suspicion. The Mysore Agricultural Banks and the Mysore Act raising the age of marriage are cases in point. It must not, however, be thought that the Native States are entirely free from the advantages and evils of British rule. The Resident exercises a power which is beneficent or the reverse, in great measure according to the character of the man and his conception of his duties. And in two ways the economic position of the Protected States is governed by that of British India. For, in the first place, in one important matter, that of land revenue, the Indian Prince is apt to copy the great power which surrounds and dominates him in every direction. If he indulges in dreams of public beneficence he needs money. If personal luxury is his baser aim, that too demands money. If then he sees on his borders the great Empire that has been from his earliest youth held up to him as the best of polities continually increasing its revenue, the temptation to him to do likewise is often irresistible, and the crushing burdens imposed on the rayats in British territory are made the excuse for those inflicted on their fellows under Native rule. And in the second place the drain on India, owing to the heavy payments which have to be made in Europe without economic return, affects the Native States as well as British territory, for the drain results in India having to pay dearer and sell cheaper throughout her foreign trade, and as the Native States have to trade through ports in our territory they have to share this disadvantage.

It will thus be seen that these States are neither deprived of all the advantages nor freed from all the evils of British rule; and they have one evil in addition. No powerful service is interested in making their administration appear as white as possible; nay, rather, by making it appear as black as possible, the good qualities of our own Government shine all the brighter. Nor to judge by a recent example is the disposition wanting to make the Native States and Native agency generally bear the blame of whatever failures or shortcomings there may have been in the campaign against famine. In spite of Edmund Burke, Anglo-Indians are very ready to draw up an indictment against a nation; nor do they condescend to offer proofs. They prefer to leave to the Indians the impossible task of refuting general and unsupported statements.

The recent example of this on which we have remarked is a telegram from India for which Reuter is responsible and which appeared in the English newspapers for August 7. The following are the sentences referred to:—

> The mortality and suffering in Gujerat have been aggravated, if not largely caused, by the bad arrangements of Baroda and other Native States. There is a general feeling that the Native States of Gujerat have failed in their duty, and should be compelled to set aside money for future famines.
>
> There have been some instances of real energy and benevolence on the part of Natives, but they are regrettably few. The general attitude has been to stand by admiring what seemed a desperate campaign.

Now to deal with the last point first, it is no part of our duty to defend an attitude of fatalism; but still less does it lie with the supporters of the Government to attack it. The Indians are, it is said, inclined to believe the Government have undertaken an impossible task in endeavouring to save the people from the effects of recurring famines. The Government believe that nothing can be done to prevent famines. Which is the less absurd view we shall not stop to decide; but both are fatalistic. Government and people are alike involved in the miasma of fatalism.

But as to the general attack on Native agency, we propose to meet it in the only way it can be met—not by proving a negative, attempting to show that in no case has a Native official failed in his duty—but by giving instances in which that duty has been well fulfilled, and thus proving that the sweeping charges so lightly made will not bear the test of investigation. And since Baroda is the only State mentioned by name, it is fitting that we should begin with that. We are told now of "the bad arrangements in Baroda and other Native States," but as late as the end of May, this is what the *Pioneer* said—the *Pioneer*, one of the great Anglo-Indian newspapers, assuredly none too partial a witness:—

> Thus far the efforts of the Gaekwar's officers in the Amreli Division to save life have been successful. There are about 45,000 persons on relief works out of a population of 180,000, yet there has been no mortality out of the normal, scarcely any deaths from starvation, and the people are in fairly good condition.

Thus the evidence of a witness that is at the very least impartial, if not hostile, goes to show the success in an important and severely stricken district of the very Government which is singled out for special reprobation.

Now let us look at another case, as seen by the special correspondent of the *Times of India*, another great Anglo-Indian organ, one of the firmest supporters of the Government and one of the journals least friendly to the claims and aspirations of educated Indians. The correspondent of the *Times of India* found in Jaipur the poor-house "a model of its kind" and the relief works excellent, and especially admirable in the discipline maintained. Far from being driven to the conclusion that this State was neglecting its duty, he was even led into making comparisons not altogether favourable to our rule:—

In British India one relief work is very much like another. A slight difference between the codes and the method of administration is the only distinction. But in Native States there is more freedom, more elasticity, and a much greater play for the human equation.

Nor did the small State of Morvi receive less praise from the same correspondent. The soil is "far from fertile," but although "the terrible blight has fallen on it just as heavily as on any other portion of the Indian Empire, it is flourishing because it is governed by a Chief whose pride is to secure the happiness and prosperity of the people." Is the ruler of Morvi one of those who have failed in their duty? In this State the Chief visited every village; he saved 13,000 out of the 17,000 cattle, and he succeeded in bringing help even to those who would rather suffer and die in silence than come forth to ask for charity, a task that has over and over again baffled the Government of British India. Thus in the case of three States, differing in size, in situation, and in resources, we find no laxity, but rather strenuous and successful work, and that on the testimony, not of friends and countrymen, but of those inclined by all the prejudices of birth and position to belittle the efforts of the Indians.

Nor is there more foundation for the equally vague aspersions on the general character of the Indians. It is not necessary to recount the many striking testimonies in their favour collected by Mr. Alfred Webb, with which the readers of this journal are already familiar; nor to recall the many acts of devotion performed by the Indian bearers during the present war. It will be sufficient to cite instances taken from the records of this very famine. Take the story of Brahma Nund, famine officer to the Marwar Durbar, as told by the special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*. Brahma Nund

was visiting a camp a short time back when he saw a man fall. Then another and another. Next day 190 people were down with cholera, most of the officials had fled, the camp was in panic, and the sweepers would not touch the bodies. Brahma Nund collected fresh workers around him, told the people that it was a holy service and no defilement to see to the sick and to bury the dead, and in due time fairly beat the cholera out of the camp.

Or again consider the letter from a Gujerat landowner in the District of Ahmedabad, and signed M. Deen, which appeared in the *Times of India*. The letter is not written to cry up the writer's benevolence and energy, but to defend the Government from the charge of harassing the famine-stricken agriculturists in his district; incidentally, however, and in order to prove his case he has to give an account of his own activity. Between them, he and the Government found 9,000 rupees, when the drought first became threatening. With this he sank ten new large wells, thus keeping the people employed till the end of May, losing not one single life and saving two hundred of the cattle. And this was not an official, but only a private landowner, hitherto unnoticed and undistinguished. These it may be said are but two cases, but they are strong cases, and none at all have been put forward on the other side.

So far we have directed our attention to the charge of want of energy. That of want of benevolence is too absurd to need an answer in a country where charity is universal, where men support their kindred even to degrees so distant as to be unrecognised in this country, and where a poor law is unknown, because it is thus rendered unnecessary. The first charge loses what little weight it had when it is found linked to the second. Both charges seem intended to direct to Native States and Indian administrators alone the blame of failures which should be borne by English and Indians alike. It must not be forgotten that the special correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, who found much to praise in the Native States, found much to condemn under the Government of Bombay.

OUR LONDON LETTER.

WESTMINSTER, Thursday.

RETROSPECTS are seldom agreeable, least of all the retrospect political. Students in search of the secret of England's greatness may be trusted to treat the records of the Parliamentary Session of 1900 with cold neglect. It was a period—how pleasant to speak of it in the past tense!—offering no material for a panegyric. Posterity, viewing the fabric with dispassionate eyes, will note the indelible stain of our unnecessary war and will marvel at the enthusiasm with which the liberty-loving people of Britain saw in this year the name of Freedom obliterated for the first time, less by the swords of their soldiers than by the pens of their statesmen. One speaks the more confidently for posterity, because we ourselves are beginning to anticipate the verdict. The glittering panoply of war has long since lost its novel glamour. People now are reflecting with sore and angry hearts on the revolting realities of the military hospitals, on the £80,000,000 bill which remains to be paid, supplemented by a legacy of racial hatred of which the payment may go on for ever, on the passing triumph of the ignoble passions of Highbury over the lofty ideals of Hawarden, and, finally, on the pageantry of horrors which remain in the sequel. The reaction, so fiercely and justly dreaded by the author of the war, has set in already.

To attempt a legislative review of the Session would be a work of supererogation. Apart from the customary dole legislation there have been no measures of first-class importance. The Session has been one of talk rather than of work. Like a huge wen the war in South Africa has sucked up the life-blood of Parliament. Nothing else has been thought of, little else spoken of. Sometimes the Government have ridden triumphantly on the crest of the war-wave; at other times they have wallowed piteously in the trough of a back-wash. At present they scarcely know whether they are on the crest or in the trough. The Session closes with Ministers exhibiting the strangest irritabilities, into which they had evidently been stung by the uncertainties of their position and possibly by the divisions that may have been raging among themselves behind the curtain.

One thing is almost certain, and that is that when Parliament next meets, many familiar faces will be missing from the green benches. "I am making my last dying speech and confession," said Sir Wilfrid Lawson the other night. Mr. Burdett-Coutts afterwards committed the offence, unpardonable in a Conservative, of expressing a hope that Sir Wilfrid was taking too despondent a view of his prospects. Perhaps Sir Wilfrid was. At all events he means to fight and therefore he may return. But there are others, wearied and sick at heart of the unequal struggle of reason against prejudice which a few devoted men have been waging at Westminster, for the last five years, who had decided that whatever happened this Parliament shall be their last. The gaps will not be limited to one side. Many Ministerialists have avowed their intention of resigning, as well as a number of well-known Liberal members. The ballot-boxes will probably make short work of many more. Sir Edward Clarke has already been sacrificed, and Mr. Courtney is marked for doom. It is the distinction of Mr. Chamberlain's war that both in the field and in the senate its victims have been the nation's best—the aristocracy alike of birth, of intellect, and of character.

If Mr. Balfour could have his heart's desire one of the martyrs would certainly be the member for Westminster. Mr. Burdett-Coutts exercises a fearful power over his nominal leader. Again and again, and apparently without an effort, he has contrived to stir Mr. Balfour into a paroxysm of fury. The Conservative leader is rather proud of his self-control, and doubtless suffers agonies of remorse after each of his bouts with Mr. Burdett-Coutts. But he cannot help himself. Let Mr. Burdett-Coutts raise his voice and the leader of the House of Commons tumbles into a veritable maelstrom of passion. The other night the right hon. gentleman came in from behind the Speaker's chair while Mr. Burdett-Coutts was discoursing on hospital mismanagement. Mr. Balfour smiled superciliously and engaged in conversation with his colleagues. Presently, the conversation [illegible] bore him. He signalled to them [illegible] elf took a modest, casual seat at the [illegible]b. Mr. Burdett-

Coutts was still speaking. A slip of paper was drawn from Mr. Balfour's pocket and some notes were scribbled on the blank sheet. Mr. Burdett-Coutts went on speaking. With an impatient gesture Mr. Balfour rose and advanced to his proper seat, at the Table, and still Mr. Burdett-Coutts continued. Long before he concluded Mr. Balfour's temper had become apparent to the whole House.

And the moment the mild-mannered member for Westminster sat down the crater boiled over. Never was heard such an explosive eruption. The lava flowed in torrents and great was the smoke thereof. Mr. Balfour's friends viewed the spectacle in sad and wondering silence. It was indeed difficult to believe that this shrieking male virago could be the mild, the philosophic, the highminded, the chivalrous Arthur of our occasional day-dreams. Mr. Burdett-Coutts was told that he was unworthy to be a Tory. He was scornfully counselled to rely on his friends, the Radicals. He was informed that Mr. Balfour entertained such a contempt for him that Mr. Balfour would not demean himself by taking notice of him, and after that he was told by Mr. Balfour not once, nor twice, but many times over that Mr. Balfour had no words to express his loathing of his low, inconsiderate conduct. This was not so much a volcano as a penny squib. As for Mr. Burdett-Coutts he seemed somehow to tower over his spluttering adversary with the majesty of an Alpine mountain. The comparison may seem extravagant, but those who witnessed the duel will scarcely deem it so.

India is about to receive a further mark of favour from the Imperial Government. In the course of his speech on China at the end of last week Mr. Brodrick announced that a third brigade of troops had been ordered from India to Shanghai. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has not yet estimated in pounds, shillings and pence the addition made by this movement to India's resources. It will be remembered that speaking a week earlier the Chancellor of the Exchequer was able to show that by our employment of an earlier contingent of Indian troops in the Far East and in South Africa we were making a gift to the Indian Treasury of £3,000,000. The further withdrawal announced by Mr. Brodrick will doubtless be welcomed as a timely addition to the resources of the country—especially by those who even in time of famine can appreciate the quips and paradoxes of a genial Administration. Meanwhile, no reply has been offered to Sir William Harcourt's incontestable argument that if the Indian garrisons are necessary to the safety of India they ought not to be weakened, while if they are unnecessary and only maintained as an Imperial reserve, the cost of maintenance ought to fall on the Imperial Treasury.

Some stormy scenes were witnessed on the closing day of the Session. A group of members, led by Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Swift MacNeill, made a determined onslaught on Mr. Chamberlain by way of protest against that statesman's singular conduct in withholding from publication certain documents on which he had previously founded charges against three innominate members of Parliament of holding improper correspondence with President Kruger. The Colonial Secretary would give no undertaking to publish the letters. "For ought I know," he coolly observed, "they may be forgeries. I must hear what the alleged writers have to say before deciding on the question of publication." Naturally enough, this excuse was met by the retort that charges of treason had already been hinted at, on the strength of paraphrased extracts from the very letters which Mr. Chamberlain now admitted might be forgeries. "We know what yo[illegible]," said Mr. MacNeill with his customary bluntness[illegible]t to win your Khaki election by a process of b[illegible]

In the course [illegible]ain had an excellent opportunit[illegible]ee him. Sir Wilfrid Laws[illegible]tleman was playing [illegible] expert in points of [illegible]ll satirically. "His [illegible]would be imitated by [illegible]se compliments Mr. [illegible] Sir Wilfrid Lawson to the clear [illegible]; his innocence on the platform; [illegible]g Mr. Swift MacNeill on his histri[illegible]y flying into a passion with Mr. Lloyd[illegible]d to associate the name of Chamberlain [illegible] the War Office cordite contracts. Out of [illegible], however, the versatile statesman emerged [illegible]urs. "You may say that I am attacking you by innuendo," said Mr. Lloyd George, adding, as Mr. Chamberlain savagely assented to the challenge, "If so, I am only taking a leaf out of your own book." The retort was justifiable. If personal rancour is more rife in the House of Commons than it used to be, Mr. Chamberlain of all men cannot be held blameless.

People who watched the Colonial Secretary'a face during his ordeal yesterday must have been struck by the inflated egotism of the man. A complacent self-consciousness played on every feature. Anger, scorn, contempt—all the uncharitable emotions were expressed in a succession of grimaces which would have been thought overdone in a transpontine melodrama. Time was when Mr. Chamberlain would have laughed at this kind of play-acting. His friends plead that his nerves may have been shaken by the unprecedented strain of the last ten months. The demeanour of the Minister yesterday was certainly quite inconsistent with the ambition sometimes attributed to him of emulating the sphinx-like immobility of Disraeli.

NOTES FROM BOMBAY.

YET ANOTHER FAMINE?

[From an Indian Correspondent.]

Bombay, July 20.

I have no cheering news this week. During the past fortnight there was a brief spell of monsoon. A few inches of rain fell over the greater part of the country, Gujerat and Kathiawar excepted. But, as I write, the crop prospects in many places in the upper parts of India are far from encouraging. Sowing is general, but more rain is needed. If the rainfall is again deficient there is an absolute certainty of another season of calamity indescribably worse even than what the country is now passing through. Already anxiety prevails in Upper India, in many parts of the Punjab, in Gujerat, and in Kathiawar, as to the straits to which the few remaining cattle and the thousands of the distressed may be reduced. Veritably, it is a case of a lower depth beneath the lowest deep which threatens our sorely afflicted peasantry. People are already shaking their heads. Others are asking what is to be the fate of India if another season of severe drought ensues. The heart sickens at the series of misfortunes which have overtaken a large part of the peninsula. In the Bombay Presidency, according to the latest returns, while there was no material difference in the number of persons employed in the famine relief camps, there were 14,000 more persons on gratuitous relief—a fact which may be taken as the first faint indication of what may happen if unfortunately nature again fails us. Eastern Bengal and Southern India seem at present to be the only parts which have been lucky enough to have their normal quantity of rain. Berar and the Central Provinces are less lucky only so far that little anxiety is felt there. The rest of the country is in the depth of the darkest depression. One cannot but heave a sigh of grief and exclaim, "Alas! for the woes of the Indian peasantry of the parts afflicted with the drought." May Providence be more merciful to them, and may the funereal pall which enshrouds them be soon removed, giving way to general cheerfulness and hope.

The Imperial Government will have a trying time of it in case our worst apprehensions are realised. To no Viceroy will there have fallen a worse lot than to Lord Curzon in the need of coping with manifold calamities. No Viceroy before has had to fight so terrible a famine as that of 1899. But to fight even another more terrible, one immediately on the heels of the first—that would be an event which, if realised, would make Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty a "record" in the famine history of India under British administration. One can fully sympathise with his Lordship and his colleagues in the Government. It will be no child's play, even with the so-called "resources" of the British Government, as Lord George Hamilton tells us from time to time, to combat yet another famine, the first of the new century. But India has the utmost confidence in Lord Curzon's courage under the trying circumstances. This is our consolation. His conduct of the famine of 1899 has shown of what stern stuff he is made, and what a ruler of men he has proved himself to be—one who is not too proud, as his surrounding bureaucracy are, to receive sage practical counsel from the outside world, but who, on the contrary, eagerly seeks for light and suggestions from every quarter. In these circum-

stances there is the greatest hope. India realises that, should it be her cruel fate to be overwhelmed by a second famine, Lord Curzon is at the helm of affairs. Everybody feels that not only will his dutifulness and humanity save the famished population, but that, as a man full of the milk of human kindness, he will see that the unhappy lot of the starving and dying is alleviated up to the limit of the resources of his Government; in short, that he will prove himself a statesman equal to the occasion, and combat the famine with inexhaustible patience, courage, and sympathy. India is thankful that in this, the darkest hour of her calamities, Lord Curzon is at the helm. But it also reflects how much easier the task of the Viceroy might be if another high official, who reigns over us from London, were equally wise, courageous, and sympathetic. Sad to say, Lord George Hamilton has been India's most bitter disappointment at this hour. He has proved himself a failure as statesman. A more resolute and independent Secretary of State would before now have fought hard in the Cabinet and asserted his responsibility for the welfare of the famishing millions. A Salisbury or a Northcote, an Argyll or a Ripon, a Cross or a Fowler would have long ago made his influence felt in the Cabinet and roused his colleagues to the critical nature of the situation and to what is due to India.

I referred recently to the statements of "Gujerati" in the *Times of India* touching the tyrannical mode in which revenue collections were in certain cases exacted by the underlings of the revenue department in some of the talukas of the Surat district. Our Chief Secretary, instead of enquiring into the alleged facts, rushed into the columns of the same journal and vented his spleen on the anonymity of correspondents. The Press generally has condemned that letter of Mr. Monteath's, and, perhaps, by this time he has repented it. Meanwhile "Gujerati," undaunted, has come forward with a second letter, giving fresh instances and quoting chapter and verse in their support. A more severe exposure could not have been made, and it remains to be seen what steps Mr. Monteath will take in the matter of verification. If the facts are ultimately proved to be true a grave stigma will attach to the revenue administration of the Bombay Presidency. The time has come when the Imperial Government should require Bombay to take an entirely new departure in the system of its revenue. The existing system has been tried and found wanting. The sooner it is abolished, and a less exacting, more humane, and more statesmanlike policy is substituted for it, in the light of the sad experience already gained, the better will it be for the general reputation of British administration in this country.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

6,356,000 ON RELIEF.

The Secretary of State for India has received the following telegram from the Viceroy, dated August 7, 1900:—

"Very decided improvement in last ten days through sudden opportune renewed advance of the monsoon. The rain which has fallen is ample for present agricultural requirements in Gujerat, also in the greater part of Rajputana and Central India. Sowings being actively prosecuted so far as scarcity of plough bullocks permits. If present favourable conditions continue, considerable autumn crops will be secured and tension will relax.

"Numbers of persons in receipt of relief:—Bombay, 1,626,000; Punjab, 179,000; Central Provinces, 2,234,000; Berar, 517,000; Ajmere-Merwara, 106,000; Rajputana States, 384,000; Central India States, 122,000; Bombay Native States, 470,000; Baroda, 112,000; North-Western Provinces, 1,000; Punjab Native States, 46,000; Central Provinces Feudatory States, 52,000; Hyderabad, 476,000; Madras, 12,000; Bengal, 19,000. Total, 6,356,000. Bombay returns of number on relief works incomplete."

The Secretary of State for India has received the following telegram from the Governor of Bombay, dated August 6, 1900:—

"Following are figures for week ending July 28:—Famine-stricken districts, 8,100 cases of cholera, of which there were fatal 5,132. Native States—cases of cholera, 7,800; deaths from cholera, 5,553. Total number of deaths among numbers on relief works and gratuitous relief, British districts, 6,968, or 4·10 per mille. Rainfall continuous in affected area. Agricultural operations are progressing satisfactorily in Gujerat, Panch Mahals, Kathiawar. Elsewhere agricultural prospects are encouraging. Numbers on relief works and gratuitous relief increased."

(THROUGH REUTER'S AGENCY.)

Bombay, August 5.

The Viceroy's tour in the worst famine centres of Gujerat is most timely, and is bound to prove instructive, as these centres are now at their worst, and the organisation is being sorely tried by heavy rain. Yet the condition of the people on the whole is much better than had been anticipated. Emaciation is the exception, and where European supervision is available, as at Ahmedabad and Madiad, there is little to be desired.

At outlying places, visited only at intervals by Europeans, however, want of local care and sympathy are very visible. The staff, which is temporary and hurriedly collected, is unequal to the crisis.

The mortality and suffering in Gujerat have been aggravated, if not largely caused, by the bad arrangements of Baroda and other Native States. There is a general feeling that the Native States in Gujerat have failed in their duty, and should be compelled to set aside money for future famines.

The Viceroy inspects very carefully and speaks plainly. He is delighted with the universal testimony of zeal and self-sacrifice on the part of the officials, whose one pre-occupation is to save life, large sums spent from the private incomes of officials never appearing in the Famine Fund. There have been some instances of real energy and benevolence on the part of Natives, but they are regrettably few. The general attitude has been to stand by, admiring what seemed a desperate campaign.

At Ahmedabad the Viceroy held a conference with Lord Northcote, the Governor, concerning future operations; but if there are well-distributed rainfalls these people will soon be back on the fields.

THE MANSION HOUSE FUND.

The Mansion House Fund for the relief of the Indian famine sufferers amounted on Wednesday night to £347,500.

THE "INVESTORS' REVIEW" FUND.

We take the following from the last issue (July 28) of the *Investors' Review*:—

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

LIST OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Amount acknowledged last week	£723	3	6
Paddington Women's Liberal Association, per Edith Hodge, Hon. Treasurer	10	0	8
Inquirer	1	5	0
Messrs. Mason Bro[illegible]bury	3	3	0
Messrs. E. Breffit[illegible]d, and Workpeople, Castlefo[illegible]	5	8	10
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Amount ackno[illegible]			
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Imperial Parliament.

Thursday, July 26.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE "INDIAN BUDGET" DEBATE.

(Concluded from page 71.)

Mr. J. WALTON supported the proposal to give a grant of five millions to India out of the Imperial Exchequer, and considered that, in view of the Report of Lord Welby's Commission, it would be nothing more than an act of restitution. With regard to the measures to be taken for grappling with the famine difficulty, his own view was that what was needed was a vigorous policy of opening up and developing India by the laying down of more railways and the construction of irrigation works. He instanced cases where works had to stop in consequence of being unable to obtain, by rail, an adequate supply of coal.

The SPEAKER said the question whether merchants could or could not send an adequate supply of coal had nothing to do with the amendment.

Mr. J. WALTON said he should deal with the matter at another point in the discussion. He urged on the Government to deal with this question of railway construction and irrigation works upon its merits.

On the return of the Speaker after the usual interval, and after an unsuccessful attempt to "count out" the House,

SIR M. M. BHOWNAGGREE.

Sir M. M. BHOWNAGGREE said it was a wise step on the part of the Government to arrange an earlier date for the discussion of the Indian Budget than the last night of the Session, and he hoped the precedent would be followed in future years. The motions on the order paper of the House relating to measures for the relief of the famine in India showed that the sympathies of hon. members and the nation were with India in the hour of her need. With regard to the incidence of taxation as affecting land there was need for the consideration of the question of assessment and the introduction of modifications in it, and protective measures against the undue and uncertain enhancement of land which took place at certain intervals in India. There should be remissions of taxation on a large scale, especially when India was stricken with famine. He was glad to find that a crore of rupees was to be devoted to the extension of irrigation. As to the reduction of the burden of the military expenses of India he welcomed the assurance which had been given. They had the definite promise of a quarter of a million being allowed to India at once upon the report of the Royal Commission. He trusted the appeal of the right hon. member for Wolverhampton for a greater measure of justice to India would have the serious consideration of the Government, and that the adjustment of taxation under this head in future would be based on the consideration of the great Imperial uses to which the Army in India was frequently put and for which it was always ready. The determination of the Government to accept the recommendation of the Commission as to refering to arbitration questions in dispute that might arise between the Imperial and the Indian Governments he gladly welcomed. The interests of India, safeguarded as they were, no doubt, by the Secretary of State and the Viceroy, were apt to be brushed aside if submitted to the final determination of the Cabinet alone. Opinions widely differed as to stopping the drain that went on from the resources of India. It was chiefly due to the importation of foreign manufactured articles. This amounted to 50 millions of tens of rupees, or 33 millions of pounds. No country which allowed this enormous drain year after year could advance in the paths of prosperity. Opinions he had expressed on the subject had grown into beliefs. The educated people of India, who thought there was something underhand in what he contended for, had been converted into the belief that one of the principal means by which the welfare and prosperity of India could be promoted was the encouragement of the skilled industries of the country. If they had been encouraged, they would have been followed by many of those now engaged in the less profitable employment of agriculture, and supported many of those who were now famishing for want of employment. The mission of the British Government in India was absolutely paternal. The Government had placed on them the obligation of guiding the people of India towards industrial occupations. The schools in the villages and towns, and the larger schools in the Residencies, should have annexed to them workshops and science laboratories. By those agencies alone could the minds of the rising generation in India be impressed with the advisability and the necessity of pursuing industries of a remunerative character. The present system of education proceeded altogether on the lines of making India a nation of scholars. But if India was ever to progress, this mad rush for literary education must be stopped, and the bulk of the nation must be taught skilled industries. If the people of India could be induced to make even a fifth of the articles entering into their daily lives which were now imported from abroad famine would practically disappear. He had heard with the greatest disappointment the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. (Hear, hear.) He had expected from the right hon. gentleman a speech of greater sympathy with India in the terrible calamity from which she was now suffering. It was not for charity for India that he pleaded. He appealed to that high Imperial instinct of the British nation, which had shown itself in various ways recently, to show to India that its relationship with England was not one of pounds, shillings, and pence, but that England would stand by India in her present trouble, as India had ever been ready to give help to England in times of Imperial need. (Hear, hear.) If a grant were made it would be the sort of charity that covered many sins. He feared that the people of this country had not grasped the magnitude of the evil which prevailed in India. The other day he wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury suggesting the appointment of a day of intercession and prayer when collections might be made in aid of the people in the famine stricken districts. The reply he received was that it would quite suffice if intending subscribers sent their donations to the Mansion House Fund. Such a reply from the highest dignitary of the Church showed unmistakably that the heart and conscience of the nation had not been awakened. On that ground he urged that it was the clear duty of the Government to make a grant whenever it should become necessary. He did not think, however, that it would be in the interests of India to carry the motion to a division, for the result would be to confirm and stereotype the unfortunate declaration which had been made on behalf of the Government.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS regretted the grounds on which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had opposed the motion, and believed the comparison he had drawn between the exchequers of the two countries was entirely fallacious. In regard to the famine no words were too strong to express their admiration of the way in which the officials had discharged their duties. Many of them had performed deeds which, if they had been done on the field of battle, would have been made known throughout the world. The famine was the greatest of the century. In many districts the people had scarcely recovered from the effects of the famine of three years ago, when this second blow fell upon them. Turning to the remedies which were essential before India could be placed in a position to satisfactorily resist the awful consequences of famine, he said it was a commonplace that the immediate cause of all the famines was a failure of rainfall. No possible remedy could affect that immediate cause, but all hon. members would agree with him that it was possible to make such changes in regard to the position of the great masses of the Indian population, as would make the people stronger to resist the effects of famine. The need of extended irrigation works was generally admitted. We had spent £250,000,000 upon railways, and only £32,000,000 upon irrigation works. That was a disproportion which ought not to exist. Then, if it was possible to construct storage camps in the Central Provinces, why could they not be constructed elsewhere. There were, too, in Northern India a large number of wells. Wells could, he thought, be multiplied to any extent. He trusted that the noble lord would be able to see his way to carry out the recommendation of the Famine Commission of 1898 in regard to irrigation works, and that he would also give the House some information respecting his own and the Government's attitude towards the Madras Irrigation Bill. The root of the question of famine was the land question. It was of the utmost importance that as far as possible the industrial resources of India should be developed, but it would take decades before India, from an industrial point of view, could hope to compete with the skill and capital and science of Europe. And even when they could thus compete the great masses of India would depend primarily upon agriculture. In Northern India the landlord and tenant made their own arrangement, and then the State came in and took 50 per cent. of the rental for governmental purposes. That was understood to be from 8 to 10 per cent. of the gross produce of the soil. That system of land assessment had worked well, and he suggested that it was most desirable it should be extended to other provinces of India. An examination of the facts showed that it was in those districts where the land assessment was very high that the famines were always most severe. He suggested that an equitable limit should be fixed to the land revenue demanded by Government, and that reasonable security should be given to the tenants to hold the land. It was obvious if land assessment were to be moderated that money would be required, and in this connexion he argued that the military charges now imposed on the Indian Exchequer should be reduced. He thought the remark of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the Indian troops serving elsewhere were paid in full for such services, and therefore that the Government of this country ought not to be asked for any donation for India on that account, was unsound. It should be remembered that large sums of money were paid to those troops permanently for Indian purposes. He deeply regretted that the Government had not acquiesced in the request made in the Motion.

SIR E. VINCENT.

Sir E. VINCENT asked two questions: Was India in a position to pay, and was it to the permanent advantage of India that England should pay this free grant? With regard to the first question, he did not see that any real attempt had been made to prove that the finances of India were in such a condition that they were incapable of standing the strain of the present taxes. If they looked at recent surpluses and at the commerce, he saw no sign of diminution of resources. One great danger to Indian commerce and Indian administration had proceeded from the fluctuation of exchange, but he thought that question had been solved, and that they had attained a position of sure equilibrium. As to the second point, leaving aside the question of dignity, he had no doubt that the task of the Financial Minister at Calcutta would be rendered more difficult if this assistance were given. It would be regarded, rightly or wrongly, as a precedent, and he was certain, if this grant was made, that circumstances generally similar to the present ones would recur, and recur very shortly, while the power of resistance would diminish. Military men had always a great number of reforms to carry out, and they would say: "If Indian resources are insufficient, you have only to turn to Downing Street and from the Treasury you will receive that assistance which you require." It was essential that India should maintain its financial independence—that it should, in a word, remain upon its own bottom. He was inclined to think that the present distress was in some measure due to the fact that provision had not been made for those years of famine which must inevitably come. Although he differed from the hon. and right hon. gentlemen who had spoken in favour of a vote from England, he agreed with them to some extent in this, that he did not consider the present system of administration of famine relief and insurance to be altogether satisfactory. He was convinced that the only satisfactory plan of meeting these recurring famines in India was to constitute such

a reserve either from surpluses or from an annual vote as should place the Government of India in a position of assured independence and as should enable them to deal with famine in a more free and decided manner than would be now either justifiable or possible. Under the plan which he ventured to advocate this annual sum or sums would be placed to the credit of an extraordinary fund, which would be invested in well-known non-Indian securities and available to meet unforeseen emergencies without recurrence to English support. He had a clear opinion regarding the financial soundness and the possibilities of India. He differed, by the whole breadth of the heavens, from those who thought that India was either overtaxed or misgoverned, and he differed no less strongly from those who thought it good policy to make India appear poor, so as to diminish the financial burdens which might be cast upon her. His conviction was that the only right course was for the Government to make the finances strong and to let them appear strong. He would constitute such a reserve as would put this question beyond doubt and enable the Government to deal with famine or war in a thoroughly efficient and satisfactory manner. The Secretary of State had had the rare privilege of having relieved India of one grave financial danger—that of the fluctuation of exchange. He hoped the noble lord would crown that considerable achievement by establishing in India a reserve which would place the Government in a position of assured financial security. He believed that this was the way in which future famines could be dealt with, and that the remedy he proposed was one of a permanent character and not merely one of temporary relief, like a grant-in-aid. He hoped that the noble lord would adopt the courageous policy of constituting a material, an effective, bold public reserve. He was convinced that, if this course was adopted, the financial clouds which now observed the finances of our great Indian dependency would roll apart, and that the peace, prosperity and happiness of the inhabitants of that great Empire would be notably enhanced and confirmed. (Cheers.)

Mr. E. H. Pickersgill.

Mr. E. H. Pickersgill reminded the hon. member that the mode of creating a famine fund just sketched out was in substance the plan upon which the Famine Fund was originally established, and that successive Governments of India had for reasons good or bad diverted that fund from its original application. He expressed disappointment with the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he thought that the people of the country would feel humiliated when they read the arguments of the right hon. gentleman. The war in South Africa should not be permitted to relieve this country of its obligations to India. He fully recognised the self-sacrificing efforts of the Civil servants to cope with the plague and famine, but he thought it must be admitted that the Government had not taken adequate measures, especially in the matter of medical service, to save the Natives.

Colonel Milward.

Colonel Milward pleaded for assistance, not for the Exchequer of India, but for a grant of a million to be placed at the free disposal of the Viceroy to supplement the inadequate subscription which had been made in England. He did not, he added, blame the people of England for the smallness of the subscription, as very heavy calls had lately been made upon the philanthropic in this country. He would not go into the lobby against the Government, he would not be a party to putting pressure upon the Government for this purpose, for unless the thing was done freely it would lose the aspect it should have. It was for the Government to say on their responsibility if they would accede to the feeling he knew was prevalent throughout the country. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Alfred Emmott.

Mr. Alfred Emmott said the views he had to express were those prevailing among his constituents. The interest Lancashire had in India was by no means a selfish one. They had subscribed liberally to assist the Indian people in their dire necessity, and had the rest of the population contributed in equal proportion the famine fund would have reached three times its present amount. The people of this country hardly realised the extent of the calamity. It affected ninety millions of people, and a population larger than that of London were dependent on Government relief, large tracts of country had become desert, there had been immense destruction of cattle, and comparatively well-to-do people had lost all their property. Added to the miseries of famine and the pestilence accompanying it was a visitation of cholera. The loss of life in this famine might have been less than usual, but the exhaustion must be greater, and Lord Curzon had issued an appeal *orbi et urbi*. The response was miserably inadequate, and money must be found somewhere, or a permanent injury might be done to India. Money could only be raised either by a loan in India or by a gift from England. He did not think loans in India could go much further than they had, and, therefore, that it was a case for a gift from England. It was desirable, if only for the sake of our trade with that country, that India should return to her normal condition, and he also attached importance to the moral effect such a gift would have on India. But his main argument was a financial one. The import duties were practically a famine tax, and therefore India had already been taxed to the tune of R. 5,000,000 in the famine account, and she had already paid too much indirectly. If the amendment were carried to a division he should support it, and he was certain that no vote he could ever give would be more satisfactory to his conscience as an Englishman and a citizen of the British Empire. (Cheers.)

Mr. Balfour.

Mr. Balfour: No one can have heard the concluding words of the hon. member's speech without feeling that they came from his heart. The hon. member is absolutely sincere; but, if he will forgive me for saying so, I think he is absolutely wrong; and if he treats the matter in a thoroughly impartial spirit he will come to the conclusion, I think, to which I have been driven—that not only the interests of India, but the interests of England and of sound finance throughout the Empire are really involved in the House coming to a sober and rational decision on the issue presented to-night. But there is one smaller matter on which I must first touch almost parenthetically. My hon. friend the member for Cardiff made an attack on one of the great Princes of India—a gratuitous and wholly unmerited attack. (Cheers.) The Sindhia has made a most generous offer of assistance in connexion with the trouble which we have to face with all the rest of the world in China. I should have thought that that offer would provoke the gratitude and thanks of every man in the House and of every citizen of the Empire. (Cheers.) But that is not the way the matter has presented itself to my hon. friend. He says: "Why did not the Government appeal to the Sindhia to devote the money which he has offered so generously to the alleviation of the sufferings of his own countrymen?" My hon. friend spoke hastily and without adequate knowledge of the fact. This Prince is still young; but he has had time to show himself one of the most energetic, public-spirited, and patriotic Princes reigning under our suzerainty in India. (Cheers.) He has not confined his efforts, as my hon. friend thinks, to extraneous charity or outside the boundary of our possessions. His own subjects, some of whom have been touched by the famine, have received from him the most generous assistance; and, not content with dealing with the subjects within the limits of his own province he has gone to the assistance of other and poorer princes in India. (Cheers.) And, after all, for whom is this hospital intended? It is in the main intended for that Indian contingent which has gone from India to China to fight the battles of the Empire—(cheers)—and I cannot imagine a cause which would more naturally and more properly appeal to the generous instincts of an Indian Prince than that cause to which this Prince has so nobly and generously subscribed. (Cheers.) Every one must feel that the amendment of the hon. member for Dumfries has been prompted by generous sentiment. But in this House we have to ask ourselves, not whether the sentiments which prompted a particular resolution were generous and praiseworthy or not, but whether its results are likely to be beneficial not merely to the relatively narrow interests of the United Kingdom, but the larger interests of which the United Kingdom is the principal guardian. I venture to submit that the arguments of my noble friend, reinforced as they have been by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, have not been replied to. The amendment is avowedly an attempt to substitute Parliamentary charity for private charity, extracted *pro rata* from the pockets of the taxpayers, for the spontaneous gifts of those anxious to relieve distress in India or any other part of the world. No doubt there are occasions when the vote of the House might be invoked in favour of a cause for which charity has been invoked. But the inevitable result of the House accepting the amendment can only be that never again will any appeal of this kind be responded to by the public. It will be felt that Parliament itself has declared solemnly that it is a matter for the taxpayer and not for charity. Charity will be dried up at its source, and in every case in which hitherto charity has been invoked you will have gentlemen coming here and saying, "You have set a precedent which should be followed. It is not a case in which private benevolence should be appealed to. The proper course is to propose a vote in Committee of Supply or ask for a loan from the investing public." That is a precedent which, if set at all, should only be set with the utmost caution and in cases of the extremest necessity. Is this a case of the extremest necessity? It would be if the refusal of the House to accept the amendment were likely to produce any additional loss of life from this famine. But my noble friend has told us repeatedly that, if India should be unable to meet the necessities of the case, she has behind her the British Exchequer. It is not pretended that the finances of India are in such a condition that she is unable so far as the preservation of life is concerned in the afflicted districts to deal with such a crisis of unprecedented magnitude as that with which she has to contend. Under these circumstances any charitable donation made by the House at the expense of the British taxpayer—for that is the proposition—would be made to India without India requiring it, without India pretending she required it, and in advance of any necessity. All we say is that sound principle requires that the financial responsibility of the different parts of the Empire should be kept separate, and it is only when the financial resources of any particular part of the Empire absolutely fail that it is legitimate to call upon the rest of the Empire for assistance. The precedent of the West Indies quoted by an hon. friend of mine is in favour of the Government, and not against it. For the precedent is this—that it was only when a dependency of the Crown was practically in financial extremities, when it had not at its command the resources which would enable it to meet the strokes of evil fortune by which it was overwhelmed, that this Parliament and people came to its assistance. If ever India is in the condition of the Leeward Islands, this country will come to the assistance of India as it did to the West Indies. I would venture to suggest that even the action we took in the case of those islands, used as it has been by my hon. friend, shows how careful we should be in starting new precedents of this character. The late Secretary of State for India, who made so excellent a speech, I remember, two years ago divided the House in favour of a grant to India to meet a famine which was then raging in another portion of that Empire, although at that moment she had a large surplus at her disposal. Now, supposing the right hon. gentleman had succeeded in his endeavour on that occasion, followed as that case would have been by the present famine, would it not be clear that an Indian famine meant a vote of this House towards Indian needs as regularly as in the past an Irish famine has meant an appeal to this House for Irish needs? (Hear, hear.) Is that a precedent which this House would readily set? Do they desire so to mix up the Indian and British Exchequers as to make it a matter of course that whenever a famine exists in India, even though Indian finance may be in a high state of prosperity, that is a just cause for coming to this country for financial assistance? That would be, as has been pointed out by my noble friend, the most certain method of introducing disorder into Indian finance. I am one of those who believe, and indeed it will be accepted as a commonplace, that the most fruitful parent of social

troubles is financial irregularity and extravagance, and that the country which is reckless of its resources is a country which is rapidly approaching the greatest social and political difficulties. (Opposition cheers.) Can that danger be more certainly produced in India than by that kind of charity which has met with so much favour on both sides? Can you conceive a temptation which would be more impossible for any Indian financier to resist than the temptation of appealing to a House, to whose action he was not responsible, to taxpayers whose interests it was not his business to guard, for resources which would enable him to meet difficulties occurring many thousand miles away? My noble friend certainly did not go beyond the truth when he said that to come forward to Indian assistance when India is not in financial straits would be to infuse into the veins of the Indian financial system a principle of corruption from which it would never recover. I hope the House will never consent to that proceeding. I do not mean to base the main stress of my argument upon the position of the British taxpayer or the burden thrown upon him, but I must say I listened with some surprise to an observation that fell from an hon. friend behind me. He said that when we were spending 40 or 50 millions upon the South African war, could not we spare one million for the Indian famine? (Opposition cheers.) Apparently the argument of my hon. friend meets with approval on the other side. (Hear, hear.) Let us translate it into simpler language. So translated it comes to this—that the heavier the burdens and the greater the expenditure which Imperial necessities throw upon the British taxpayer, so much more ought the subscriptions of the British taxpayer to be for the financial needs of other parts of the Empire. Surely that is a financial paradox—(cheers)—which could hardly be accepted by the sober reflection of the House. Let it be remembered that this Empire of ours is at present run on a plan never tried in the world before. The Empire is of unprecedented extent in mere area, and portions of it are to be found in every quarter of the globe. It is all paid for as an Empire by these islands.

Mr. MACLEAN: Not India.

Mr. BALFOUR: The hon. gentleman is quite right. India pays her fair share.

Mr. J. WALTON: And more, according to Lord Welby's report.

Mr. BALFOUR: The hon. gentleman is probably not aware that as soon as Lord Welby's report was made public the Government announced their intention of paying their quota. I may therefore assume that, according to Lord Welby's report, the balance of payment between these islands and India is equitable. But the Empire as a whole is run by these islands, and if you are going, in addition to that responsibility, to say that whenever a calamity occurs in any part of that Empire the responsibility is also to fall upon the taxpayer of these islands you are rushing into financial responsibilities of which you may have in a very few years great reason to repent. I am one of those who watch with considerable alarm the growth of expenditure we have to view already. (Hear, hear.) But if to that expenditure, great and growing, and, I fear, likely to grow as it is, you are going to add these further burdens, then, indeed, even the wealth, the enterprise, and the patriotism of this country may feel itself at last overburdened. (Cheers.) I feel most strongly that the resolution which the House has got to take to-night is one of the deepest import for the future of the Empire. What we ask the House to affirm is that financial responsibility for the various portions of the Empire rests primarily upon those portions of the Empire, and that in particular the financial responsibilities of India are Indian responsibilities and not British responsibilities. We admit, and ask the House to affirm, that in cases where Indian resources are not equal to Indian needs this House may well be asked to come to its assistance. But at the same time we also ask the House to affirm that, until these needs do become greater than Indian resources can bear, it is not only not true charity, it is not only not sound policy, but it is absolutely suicidal for us, in a mood of sentiment with which everybody must sympathise, prematurely and unnecessarily to burden the already heavily burdened finances of this country. (Cheers.)

MR. SAMUEL SMITH.

Mr. S. SMITH contended that the point of extreme necessity had been reached. (Mr. Balfour: "It is not financial necessity.") It was financial necessity because it was quite beyond the power of India to feed the 20 millions of people who were famine-stricken. The great majority of the members of the House had no real conception of the poverty of India. India was one of the poorest countries in the world, and at the same time the taxation of the people was as heavy as it could be. Personally he should heartily vote with his hon. friend.

MR. F. MADDISON.

Mr. MADDISON maintained that the sympathies with India of the Secretary of State for India and the First Lord of the Treasury, the sincerity of which no one could doubt, did not go far enough. He believed that British rule had been on the whole good for the Indian people, but we did not hold India primarily for the sake of the Indian people, but for Imperial purposes.

The House divided, when there voted:—

For the amendment	65
Against	112
Majority against	47

The House then went into Committee, Mr. J. W. Lowther in the chair, when the financial resolution was agreed to as follows:—

Resolved,—That it appears, by the Accounts laid before this House, that the Total Revenue of India for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1899, was £67,595,815; that the Total Expenditure in India and in England charged against Revenue was £64,954,942; that there was a Surplus of Revenue over Expenditure of £2,640,873; and that the Capital Outlay on Railway and Irrigation Works not charged against Revenue was £3,279,316.

Thursday, August 2.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

POPPY CULTIVATION IN BENGAL.

Mr. HENRY J. WILSON asked the Secretary of State for India whether he was aware that in the reports of the Bengal Opium Department it appeared that the area under poppy cultivation increased from 770,000 bighas in 1889-90 to 890,000 bighas in 1896-7; that the increased area obtained was doubtless largely attributable to the necessitous condition of the cultivators; and that, in the Report for 1897-8, it was stated that food grains were selling at so high a price that the cultivators were expecting to gain more by sowing wheat, etc., than by sowing poppy:

And, whether he would call the attention of the Indian Government to the undesirability of tempting cultivators by the offer of Government advances to sow poppy instead of more profitable food crops.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I am aware that the area of poppy cultivation in Bengal has increased, nearly as stated in the hon. member's question, between the years 1890 and 1898. The area in 1898 appears to have been considerably below that of 1897. The cultivators are perfectly free to sow food or other crops as they may prefer: and, if food crops are more profitable, as stated in the question, they will no doubt sow them. The present system is the result of long experience and much enquiry and consideration, in which full weight was given to the importance of controlling the traffic in opium and keeping it within bounds, and I should be reluctant to interfere with the rules and regulations of a system which has worked well.

Friday, August 3.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE BENGAL UNCOVENANTED SERVICE PENSION FUND.

The Earl of NORTHBROOK called attention to the reduction of interest on the capital of the Bengal Uncovenanted Service Pension Fund, proposed in the despatch of the Secretary of State for India of February last, and to the hardships that this reduction would inflict upon subscribers to the fund. He had been unable to find any reason or justification for this action of the Secretary of State. He held that the Government were committed to 6 per cent. interest, and the reduction to 4 per cent. would, in point of fact, kill this fund, which had been established for sixty years, depriving relatives of members of the support relied on. He urged that the Secretary of State should reconsider the equity of the case with sympathy for those who would suffer, and restore the fund to the solvent condition it occupied before his unfortunate despatch was sent, or that the Government would take over the fund, relieve those who had claims on fair conditions, and let the uncovenanted servants start another fund for themselves. He moved for copies of the letters from the Government of India to the Secretary of State for India on the subject in 1896 and 1899.

The Earl of ONSLOW said he would have been glad to have had somewhat longer notice of the intention of the noble earl to raise this question, for the reason that the Secretary of State for India had for some time been in communication with the Government of India with a view to reconsideration of the matter. A telegram was addressed to the Viceroy on June 22, in reply to which the Secretary of State was informed that the managers of the fund—the official representatives of beneficiaries—were waiting receipt from the actuaries of the report they were preparing to be laid before the Government of India. But since the noble earl had placed his notice on the paper a communication had been made by two members of the fund who had produced an actuarial report. The figures showed a startling position as a result of the change in the percentage; and the Secretary of State was the last person in the world to withhold his sympathy from those who had done such good work in India as the members of the Uncovenanted Civil Service both in Bengal and Bombay. He could not now say what would be the ultimate decision of the Secretary of State; but, while he must adhere to his right to fix the rate of interest at what he thought the right point for the time being, he would not wish to inflict hardship on individuals or on a whole service by reducing unduly the amount of interest paid in the case of those who had already subscribed to the fund. But as to those who had not yet entered, it would be fair to fix the rate as might seem right for the time. After the papers had been received and considered the Secretary of State hoped to leave the present subscribers to the fund in their present position, and so avoid any hardship. He regretted that he could not comply with the request for papers, as the matter was still far from being settled, and it would be unwise to lay the papers in an incomplete condition.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY said that he hoped that no reliance would be placed on some technical power. It had always been customary not to regard merely technical right, but to see that no injury was done. As to those who joined the fund later, of course the Secretary of State had the right to do what he thought best. But it could not be the intention of the Indian Government to treat harshly those who had deserved very favourable consideration.

The Earl of NORTHBROOK said that he should not press his motion.

The motion was, by leave, withdrawn.

(The remainder of our report of Indian affairs in Parliament, up to the prorogation, is unavoidably held over to next week.)

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