

India

FOR THE

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No. 120. NEW SERIES.
No. 223. OLD SERIES.

Notes and News	109	The Proposed National Grant—	
“Conscience Money”	112	Vigorous Articles in the British	
England’s Imperial Mission	113	Press	115
Our London Letter	114	Sir W. Wedderburn’s Retirement	
Notes from Bombay	115	from Parliament	118
The Famine in India:		Indian Medical Reform and the	
5,294,000 on Relief	115	British Medical Association	118
The Mansion House Fund	115	Advertisements	120
The Investors’ Review Fund	115		

NOTES AND NEWS.

THE Viceroy’s weekly telegram announces a diminution of the famine-stricken people on relief by about a million. The figure of the week is 5,294,000—still very large. The most hopeful point otherwise is the statement that “crop prospects are excellent in nearly all the affected tracts,” although naturally the acreage under cultivation would be below normal, and the harvest is pretty sure to be late. Happily, “good rain continues.” Still, the distribution might have been more satisfactory. The plain of the Ganges, though “materially benefited,” could have done with less than “heavy” rain, while the west coast and central districts would have been all the better for more than “comparatively light” rain. However, one must be heartily thankful for such rainfall as has come. The telegram from the Governor of Bombay still reports a serious mortality from cholera; in the famine-stricken districts, 4,206 cases, of which 3,025 (three in four) were fatal; in Native States, 5,800 cases, of which 3,873 (a somewhat smaller proportion) were fatal. The deaths on relief in British districts are given at 4,964 or three and three-fifths per thousand. It is when one runs up the totals over many weeks that the real magnitude of the calamity emerges.

In the last issue of INDIA attention was called to the important letter, signed “J.,” on revenue collections in the famine districts, which appeared in the *Times of India*. In a second letter, “J.,” gives three reasons why the orders of the Government on the subject, made to meet a temporary conspiracy to avoid payment of land revenue after the last famine, are unsuitable to a normal scheme of relief. (1) They are inconsistent with the principle that “no one should be forced to borrow in order to pay the assessment” in a season of distress. (2) They do not, except in the case of absolute want of means, recognise the failure of the crops as giving the ryat a claim to relief. (3) They involve an examination of individual cases before relief is granted, and therefore necessitate reliance on the judgment of subordinate village officials. In each of these three points the orders violate the recommendations of the Famine Commission.

The *Morning Post*, which has lately shown remarkable liberality and independence in its treatment of Indian subjects, warns its readers (August 25) that though the numbers on relief are decreasing, “the situation in India is none the less one of the utmost gravity.” Accordingly, it considers the remedies suggested against a recurrence of famine, and “particularly the remedy of the extension of irrigation urged by some evidently sincere and well-informed writers.” It admits the value of irrigation, in a general sense, as of course; but it points out justly that “it is impracticable to construct irrigation works all over the country,” and that “such works have to be provided by the taxpayer—that is to say, in India by the needy agriculturist—and it behoves the Government not to construct at his expense any canals, lakes, or tanks which will not yield a fair return on the money

sunk.” After looking at successful works and “signal failures,” and allowing for the utility of irrigation works apart from famine, the *Morning Post* concludes—

The subject is by no means so simple as it appears at first sight, and financial, physical, economic, and engineering considerations must be carefully considered before the public money is spent on irrigation schemes. . . . Plainly, there is room for such schemes, but the field is not unlimited, for not everywhere can works be constructed, not everywhere are they wanted, and not everywhere will they pay. It is not a little singular how much the position is misunderstood. . . . It is the fact, however, that most of the great schemes had been exhausted, and we must sorrowfully conclude that, no matter how useful and desirable the extension of irrigation, we cannot look to it for famine in the future.

The article is thoroughly well-balanced, and we hope that our contemporary will review, with equal insight and judgment, the other main remedies suggested.

The *Friend of India* has also been discussing this important question. It says:—

We have been lately told on high authority that the field for the extension of economic irrigation has been almost exhausted. If by economic irrigation is meant irrigation the pecuniary returns from which will cover the cost of the works and their upkeep from year to year, or on an average of years, this is possibly, though by no means certainly, true. But, though this may be a sound test of the desirability of a particular scheme of irrigation from a purely financial point of view, it is questionable whether it is a sound test from an economic standpoint.

Our contemporary proposes to work out this thesis another day. Meantime it addresses itself to “a much more important question,” and that is—

Whether, as regards prevention of famine, irrigation by canals is commonly the most effective mode of providing a supply of water for agricultural purposes; still more, whether it is the most economic means of providing such a supply, where it is required only occasionally, to meet the failure of the rains. For such a purpose, it strikes us, what is indicated is rather the storage of water; and to this may be added the fuller utilisation, if possible, of natural stores of water of a perennial character.

For storage of water we need reservoirs; for utilisation of natural stores we need wells and shafts with pumping-machinery. It can scarcely be open to doubt that a very great deal may be done in these ways.

The *Friend of India* “welcomes the recent outspoken condemnation by the *Times* of the attitude of the Home Government in the matter of an Imperial grant in aid of the famine relief operations as a sign of the awakening of the people of the United Kingdom to the consciousness of a sacred obligation.” From our columns this week it will be seen that the *Times* has just returned to the charge with renewed vigour. Our Calcutta contemporary does not scruple to affirm that “the verdict of the impartial critic” must be that while the Indian Government “have done their duty nobly, the English Government have failed lamentably to realise theirs.” The justification of refusal has been that the Government of India could bear the entire burden. That, the *Friend of India* admits, “is up to the present moment literally true”; but then, it points out, the Home Government “deliberately ignore the cost at which the result has been accomplished”—deliberately, because they cannot but know. The cost is “the more or less complete exclusion of the progressive element from its administrative programme.” Our contemporary says:—

Reforms, however necessary, must be rigidly eschewed if they cost money; public works, however important, must be renounced or curtailed; even the work of ordinary administration must be starved. All this, though it may be borne once or twice with comparative impunity, cannot be continued indefinitely without attending disastrous consequences. Lord George Hamilton’s scheme of the financial position of the Indian Government would have worn a different complexion if it had been accompanied by a plain statement of the extent to which the public works programme of the Government has been cut down and the provincial balances have been

are more "self-sacrificing Indian patriots" than our humorous contemporary appears to wot of.

Lord Curzon has launched another bolt from the blue over the heads of the Native Indian chiefs—"his colleagues and partners." It will be remembered how he fulminated indefinitely at Gwalior (November 27, 1899) in warning to these "integral factors in the Imperial organisation of India." True, his menace was directed only against the "frivolous and irresponsible despot"—for whom nobody of any sense has the least sympathy. Now he has issued a circular letter to the local administrations, says the Simla correspondent of the *Times* (August 24), "directing that all applications for leave to visit Europe by Native Chiefs shall be submitted to the Government of India, who will exercise unfettered discretion whether to comply with or refuse them." It is a strangely round and verbose document; but the essential matter of it is quite unimpeachable. The protection and support of the supreme Government requires the Native Chiefs not merely to abstain from "gross misconduct," but to concentrate their best energies to the administration of their territories. With this high duty the frequent absence of Native Chiefs in Western climes, even for the best of objects, is obviously incompatible, and may be justly "regarded as a dereliction, not as a discharge, of public duty." The Government is rightly entitled to decide on the propriety of such absences.

It is much to be regretted that the *Times* Simla correspondent adds that "the publication of this letter should have a good effect on chiefs such as the Gaikwar of Baroda and the Maharaja of Kapurthala, who have acquired the habit of constantly visiting Europe and leaving their States in charge of the Dewans," with a very extravagant statement of results, and with a contrast of other potentates that is at least very doubtful. We do not know the facts of the visit of the Maharaja of Kapurthala, but they very likely bear adequate explanation. In any case, he has certainly obtained the sanction of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, and must therefore be held blameless personally. As for the Gaikwar of Baroda, Mr. E. Kenneth Campbell, M.B., F.R.C.S., of Wimpole Street, presents ample justification in the *Times* of August 28. He writes:—

Perhaps you will allow me permission to say that the occasion of His Highness's presence in this country now arises from the fact that the Maharana had to come to London for the purpose of having a most serious operation performed.

I may, moreover, incidentally remark that Sir Andrew Clark, Dr. Charcot of Paris, and Dr. Leyden of Berlin (to mention but a few of many authorities consulted), strongly urged upon His Highness the imperative necessity of coming to Europe annually for the benefit of his health. In conclusion, I should like to bring before your notice the fact that the last visit of His Highness the Gaikwar of Baroda to Europe was in the year 1894.

This authoritative statement speaks for itself, and ought to neutralise the injurious suggestion of the *Times* correspondent. Besides, the Gaikwar must have obtained the direct sanction of the Viceroy, who, in that case, could not possibly fulminate at him, even promiscuously. The meaning of the circular letter seems to be a direct warning to minor Chiefs not to apply to the local governments without adequate grounds, and an indirect snub to the local governments for having granted sanctions too inconsiderately.

We regret to record the death of General Sir John Miller Ayle, G.C.B., which took place on August 26 when the aged veteran was on a visit to Lord Armstrong at Cragside, Rothbury, in Northumberland. He was in his 82nd year. He was gazetted in 1836 (at the age of 17) to the Royal Artillery, in which corps members of his family had served continuously since 1762. He served in the Crimea, where he was present at the battles of the Alma, Balaklava, and Inkerman, and at the siege of Sebastopol. He also went through the Indian Mutiny with distinction, and later on he was engaged on the Afghan frontier and in the Bhootan campaign. In 1870 he was appointed Director of Artillery at the War Office, and in this capacity he had an effective hand in the reforms that distinguished the administration of Mr. (afterwards Lord) Cardwell—reforms on which the army organisation is mainly based. After various official experiences, he again took the field in 1882 as second in command, under Sir Garnet (now Lord) Wolesey, in the Egyptian campaign.

Thereafter he served a term as Governor of Gibraltar. He made an unsuccessful attempt to get into Parliament as member for Bath in 1892. Sir John wrote accounts of several of his campaigns, as well as a general volume of "Recollections," and a valuable work on Indian Frontier Policy. It stands to his credit that he strenuously opposed the Forward Policy and maintained the wise policy associated with the name of Lord Lawrence.

The *Friend of India*, without pledging itself to the truth of all its contents, draws attention to the memorial lately presented by the inhabitants of the village of Kallar Saydan in the Rawalpindi District, and referred to in our issue of last week. According to the memorial, a punitive police force, costing Rs. 1,100 a year, has been stationed there since April. The memorialists point out that during the past three years no crimes committed elsewhere by inhabitants of the village have been brought home to them. On the other hand numerous burglaries and thefts have been committed in the village; but it seems improbable that the criminals, even if they belong to the village, are of the class that will have to bear the chief burden of the punitive police, the more so as that class hired as many as fifteen watchmen for their protection. The only other possible cause of offence was the opposition offered to the appointment of a certain individual as village watchman, whose cause was championed by the Deputy-Inspector of Police, but who was alleged by his opponents to be a notoriously bad character. This opposition was of a perfectly legal and constitutional kind except in the one case of a *fracas* between a local shopkeeper and the police, in which the latter are alleged to have been the aggressors.

Now if these are the facts of the case it seems evident that there has been a gross abuse of the Police Act. The power conferred on the Local Government by Section 15 of that Act is to provide a remedy "for places where crime against life or property is very rife and cannot be suppressed by the ordinary means at the disposal of the Government," and not in the words of the *Friend of India*: to enable the authorities to visit ordinary crime on a village the inhabitants of which may be in no way responsible for it, merely because the offenders cannot be discovered; still less to punish the offences, grave or trivial, of known offenders against authority.

Yet these reasons alone fit the case of Kallar Saydan.

The *Tribune* of Thursday, August 2, deals at even greater length with the case of the unfortunate inhabitants of Kallar Saydan (or Sayadan) and says that it reads "more like a story of the old days of predatory rulers than of the enlightened régime of the British Government." One very important fact is mentioned by the *Tribune*—that since the private watchmen were hired on September 1, 1899, not a single case of theft or burglary has occurred. But this seems to have only increased the animosity of the police.

Mrs. F. E. Lemon, the Hon. Secretary to the Society for the Protection of Birds, makes an appeal for the preservation of those insectivorous birds of India which are so largely slaughtered for the sake of their plumage. It certainly concerns India, as Sir Charles Lawson has said, "to prevent a state of things that causes a deplorable sacrifice of human food, and the materials for human raiment, besides inflicting penury on individuals and great loss on the State." The difficulty is, how to take practical action. The Protection of Wild Birds and Game Act, XX of 1887, does not seem to be much more effective than a dead letter, because, according to Mrs. Lemon, "it cannot be put in force to any extent worth mentioning, as the birds are mostly killed by wandering gangs whom the Government have really no means of watching." There seems to be some force in the suggestion of Mr. Robert H. Elliot in favour of the prohibition of the export of the feathers and skins of useful birds. In any case, it is vastly more important that the rayat's crops of grain and cotton should be protected from the ravages of insect pests than that Arrie's hat should be adorned with the plumage of these useful birds, exterminators of insects. We wish Mrs. Lemon and her Society every success in their endeavour to establish an Indian Society for the protection of birds; and we hope that some sensible legislator in India will spontaneously take up the case for the amendment and extension of the Act of 1887.

"CONSCIENCE MONEY."

THE House of Commons, taking its cue from the Secretary of State for India, rejected Mr. Robinson Souttar's amendment in favour of a National Famine Grant by a majority of 112 to 65. But this vote, in spite of its decisive appearance, was not based on facts and arguments capable of carrying permanent conviction; and, as Lord George Hamilton frankly recognised, the question was merely postponed a little. The general uneasiness might have been read in the account of public meetings under the auspices of the British Committee which we published last week, and in the striking array of Press opinion which we set forth in several columns a fortnight ago (Aug. 17). It is also vividly reflected in a remarkable leading article in the *Times* of last Monday (Aug. 27)—an article from which we have the pleasure of quoting on another page of our current issue. The amendment, it may be recalled, was grounded on the following propositions:—

That, looking to the needs of the famine-stricken people of India, funds are urgently needed to feed, clothe and house the cultivators in their villages until their crops are ripe, to provide them with plough cattle, seed, and other requisites of cultivation, and to restore them to their normal economic condition;

That these requirements cannot be adequately met from Indian revenues raised from the suffering Indian people and within the necessarily restricted field of ordinary relief operations; and

That the funds subscribed by charity are altogether insufficient for these purposes.

The *Times* admits that "the propositions here advanced are, unhappily, quite indisputable." Necessarily so; for, as our contemporary points out, the first two contain substantially the facts on which the Secretary of State based the Mansion House Fund appeal, and the last has been only emphasised by the result of that appeal, and by the further appeal of the Viceroy of India. "In these circumstances," the *Times* acknowledges, "it is not easy to gainsay the conclusion of the amendment"—namely, that "a large and generous free grant" should be provided out of Imperial funds "to assist in meeting this unprecedented calamity." It would not be easy to over-estimate the value of this plain endorsement of the British Committee's contention, after deliberate consideration, by so powerful an organ of public opinion.

The *Times* reproduces the official argument only to pulverise it. Everybody admits that it would be impolitic, and even dangerous, to weaken the obligation of the Government of India to make its own ends meet; and that it would be most unfortunate if, as Mr. Balfour argued, an Indian famine should come to mean in the future "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." But, as the *Times* indicates, the argument, if "cogent from the point of view of financial purism," yet "surely ignores the exceptional peculiarities of the case, nor is it altogether relevant to the terms of the amendment to which it was addressed." The *Times* draws firmly the distinction that we have always insisted on, and that Lord George Hamilton assiduously ignored. The proposed grant, it points out, "was not intended to relieve the Indian Government of the duties it has undertaken," but to assist in the discharge of "another range of duties, outside the sphere of Government action, and largely independent of it, which is imposed not so much on the Indian Government as on the people of this country in particular, and more generally on the subjects of the Queen at large"—duties that fall to private charity. The *Times* goes on to say:—

Private charity has, however, on the present occasion, been exhausted to a very large extent, as the state of the Mansion House Fund shows, by other and exceptional claims, prior in point of time and not inferior in point of urgency. Is the duty which the Indian famine imposes on the people of this country exhausted with the exhaustion of its charitable resources? Are we as a nation to let our Indian fellow-subjects starve for lack of timely succour because as individuals we have no more money to give? Our national wealth is great, greater by far than that of the people of India; our national credit is unrivalled and well-nigh inexhaustible. Why, as we have already asked, and as we now ask again, "should not Parliament vote a sum, not in aid of the finances of India, but for the same

purposes as those for which Lord George Hamilton has asked the public to contribute to the Mansion House Fund?"

"So long as people in India are dying whom we could save," adds the *Times*, "our national duty is not exhausted, and we know no way in which it can be discharged except from the national resources." Such a frank and emphatic declaration, in the face of the perverse policy of the Government, does conspicuous honour to the *Times* as spokesman of an influential section of the British people.

Attention has been forcibly arrested by "the truly pathetic words" of Mr. Monteah, spoken in the Bombay Legislative Council a week ago (August 24):—

For several years now we have been accustomed to poverty; but such dire grinding destitution as now overwhelms us has seldom befallen a well-ordered Government. There is only one all-important question before us—how to keep our unfortunate fellow-subjects alive and how to help them to regain their former condition of prosperity. In performing this duty—nay, even in maintaining the ordinary administration—we are at present wholly dependent on the liberality of the Imperial Government.

These painful words contrast strangely with the airy optimism of Lord George Hamilton over his little artificial surpluses, and they drive home the intensity of significance in the recent appeal from Lord Curzon. Not merely, as the *Times* restrainedly puts it, do they "seem to imply," they plainly do imply, "that the emergency has arisen which the Secretary of State, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the First Lord of the Treasury expressed the readiness of the Imperial Parliament to meet." Nor is the argument weakened if, as seems probable, Mr. Monteah's words, "the Imperial Government," referred not to the British Government but to the Government of India. More than that, the passage shows that the emergency has long been pressing. Nor can anyone that has followed the course of events entertain the least doubt that the earlier grant of a worthy national contribution would have obviated a vast deal of misery and saved many lives and the wreck of many constitutions. This view, of course, "immeasurably strengthens" the argument of the *Times*, though our contemporary refrains from pressing the point, and relies on the ground of sympathetic charity. The *Times* says:—

We would urge that the case for a public grant in aid of the purposes subserved by the Mansion House Fund is already complete: It was only met in the House of Commons on purely financial grounds. But actions do not live by finance alone; great enterprises are not knit together by a cash-nexus only. We owe a debt to India not of money only, nor of succour, but of gratitude, of sentiment, of Imperial sympathy and affection. Let us discharge it at the proper moment, at the moment of India's direst need, and we shall reap the reward a thousandfold, even if no penny of the gold we give ever returns in kind.

The *Times* touches the right chord. To sympathy India is promptly and infallibly responsive; and without sympathy, as the Government of India has been compelled to acknowledge in the case of the plague administration, our most vigorous and persistent efforts for the benefit of India and the Indians must come to naught. Can it be credible that statesmen and administrators, claiming to be practical business men, will persistently and expressly neglect such a potent factor in the government of men—a factor exceptionally potent in the government of India?

We have already referred (August 10) to the peculiar twist that opponents of a national grant have given to certain remarks of the Hon. P. M. Mehta, and we have pointed out that Mr. Mehta's object was to impress the point that India would not need generosity from Britain if she could but obtain justice. If such speakers and writers had but taken the simple precaution of quoting Mr. Mehta's words, as we ourselves did, they would not have represented—misrepresented—to the British public that "the only Indian native on the Viceroy's Council who touched the subject repudiated the suggestion of a public grant." They might also have noted that Mr. Mehta spoke so far back as March, when the state of things was extremely different from what it has since become. But even supposing that certain Indians were sensitive about "a public dole," and could not but regard it with a sense of humiliation, two things have to be considered. In the first place, it is not a public dole that has been proposed; it is a return demonstration of Imperial sympathy. In the second place, even though Indians might hesitate to accept it, we have a duty to ourselves, which we ought to discharge for our own soul's health, and that in such a manner as not to wound the nicest susceptibilities of our Indian brethren. We recognise fully the claim of India on the ground of charitable sym-

path. At the same time we entirely agree with Mr. Mehta that "India would fain appeal to England's sense of justice rather than of generosity." Often and again we have put into distinct prominence the prior and stronger claims of India on the ground of simple justice.

There is no question at all—there can be no question—that there ought to be an equitable distribution of the payment of expenditure incurred for British and Indian purposes in common, and that the heavy expenditure on the North-West frontier, though incurred in large part on Imperial grounds, has all been paid out of the Indian Exchequer, with the conspicuous exception of Mr. Gladstone's contribution of five millions in respect of the second Afghan War. Here, not to mention other points, is matter for grave reflection. But if we limit our outlook to the re-imbursment of the quarter of a million a year recommended in the Majority Report of the Indian Expenditure Commission, we cannot but recognise that equity will not be satisfied by the mere payment of this sum for the future. The state of things constituting the basis of the recommendation has existed for many years in the past, and without any option whatever on the part of India. If we were to pay up for say twenty years back, this would mean a sum of £5,000,000—the amount of the national grant suggested in the draft of Mr. Souttar's amendment. We do not, of course, accept the recommendation of the Majority Report on this point except for the purpose of the present argument; on the contrary, we hold, with Mr. Smeaton, that Great Britain and Ireland owe to the Indian peasant "a debt of millions upon millions." Nor do we now insist upon the equity of paying India for the use of the troops she has despatched to South Africa and China, in partial re-imbursment of her outlay on their training, equipment, keep, and so forth. We simply point out that, even on twenty years' payment of arrears on the very restricted scale adopted by the Majority of the Expenditure Commission, we should send to India a contribution of £5,000,000 based on grounds of simple justice. Will not the United Kingdom rise to the occasion and cheerfully pay down that sum as frank "conscience money"?

ENGLAND'S IMPERIAL MISSION.

THE true tyrant, whether he has one or many heads, loves the sayer of smooth things. Kings and nations alike are pleased to be told of their greatness and their virtues, and to accuse those who speak disagreeable truths of want of loyalty or want of patriotism. But though mankind is tender to the abuses of its own time, it has little mercy for the tyrannies that have passed away; and those that have withstood the tyrant face to face receive justice at last in the judgment of the after ages. The Jewish prophets are now esteemed the very flower of patriotic fervour, though in their own day their countrymen received their reproaches with insult and impatience.

In this respect the world has changed but little. Those who venture to point out the errors of their country are still charged with unpatriotic conduct, for it is held to be better for a nation to go on in the way of destruction than to have its faults exposed, though such exposure is the necessary prelude to amendment. The superiority of the British nation over all others has long been an axiom—a harmless and comforting axiom—of British politics. But it has lately received a most dangerous extension. It is now held that the rule of Great Britain is the best possible in all times and all circumstances; that for a nation to prefer self-government is a proof of national infatuation and besotted ignorance; that it is the mission of Great Britain to spread civilisation over the world; and that in pursuit of so beneficent a purpose it does not become the citizen to enquire too curiously into the means employed. The end justifies the means, and chicanery, plunder, and violence are only the necessary preliminaries to the extension of the British Empire or the advancement of its civilising influence.

The triumph of the Allies in China lends a certain immediate interest to the spirit of this new crusade; and

as in China the glory and the blame have to be shared by all the great Powers of the West, the subject may perhaps be approached with a more open mind than if one nation alone were concerned. It is not our intention, however, to enquire into the effect of recent proceedings in Peking on the civilisation of Europe, nor do we propose to ask whether they were morally justifiable or likely to bring about a good understanding between the Powers and the Chinese. Still less do we intend to weigh the advantages and the evils which would attend the overthrow of the ancient and enduring social structure under which so many millions have for ages lived in peace and prosperity; for that is still far off. Our object is a much simpler one. It is to enquire into the effect of recent events in China on the work and position of the British Empire in India. The great blessings which our rule has conferred on that country are at once a source of pride and an excuse for the extension of our Empire to other lands. But if this extension be purchased at a price which renders insecure what has been already accomplished, if the methods taken to advance civilisation brutalise those who are already civilised, the gain is turned to loss, and the pursuit of our Imperial Mission in China only serves to undermine the proud achievement of our civilising sway in India.

That India is deeply interested in all that happens during the present Chinese crisis, and must be profoundly affected by the events that are there occurring, is hardly open to doubt. The contribution of Great Britain to the Army of the Allies is much more Indian than English; the officers in command report to Lord George Hamilton and the India Office. The war in its outward appearance seems more Indian than English. And the lessons of the war, be they good or evil, will sink deep into the Indian mind. The Indian troops were borrowed in a season of national emergency to effect a work of rescue. Europe lay in dread suspense, awaiting tidings of life or death from Peking. And England, already fully occupied elsewhere, turned to India to save her conqueror from the shame of being almost unrepresented in the expedition that was to save the Ministers from death. It was a proud position for India. The contumely of generations seemed to be laid aside as she took her place not second but first in the great work of salvation. But how soon has the honourable service of those first days been besmirched and degraded. The rescue has been effected, and the army of the Allies has turned to plunder. The expedition has become, not one of rescue, but of loot. We read in the telegrams that "indiscriminate loot is proceeding." Can this be the spread of civilisation? Is this the way to indoctrinate the stubborn and ignorant Chinese with the love of progress? Can British soldiers—the instruments of our glorious mission—be thus engaged, or is it only the semi-barbarian Russians and Japanese, whom fortune has made our companions in arms? However that may be, it is to be feared that the effect on the Indian troops will not be very different, and that they will not return from these orgies of plunder untainted by the sordid licence of the sack of Peking.

But there have been vague rumours of still worse crimes than the robbery from which innocent and guilty have suffered alike. It has been asserted that in the battos that have taken place no quarter has been given, and that the wounded Chinese, far from receiving the care of the ambulances, have been killed as they lay. It is to be hoped that there is no truth in these ugly stories. But the very fact of their being propagated and believed shows how fast demoralisation has been treading on the heels of victory, and how pestilential is the moral atmosphere which a large section of our Indian troops have now to breathe.

But it is not alone the life and property of the Chinese that we attack. The iron is to enter into their souls. It is one of the cardinal maxims of our Indian policy that in religion the State is neutral, and that, wherever they do not flagrantly conflict with the most elementary human morality, the religious opinions and practices of the people are to be held in respect. The rulers may look on them as only the outcome of prejudice and superstition. It matters not. They are entitled to the full protection of the State. Nor is there any part of our policy in India which has been more conducive to the happiness and contentment of the people, and the permanence and security of the Empire. But in China all this is altered. We glory, it would seem, in the desecration of holy places. We think

A high policy to outrage the religious feelings of the Chinese. In India religious feeling runs high. Rival sects are sometimes with difficulty restrained from violence. The lesson which the best Anglo-Indian officials, supported by all those Indians who wish to form a united public opinion in India, have endeavoured to inculcate is mutual toleration and respect. But to this teaching the objection in China gives the lie.

Thus we see that in every way the campaign in China tends to undo whatever of good has been done in India. Have we made it impossible for men in India to live by plunder? In China loot is fast becoming the most obvious fact in the war. Do we in India preach the sanctity of human life and the duties of civilisation? In China if we do not kill our enemies in cold blood some of us at least seem to think that such a proceeding would be perfectly justifiable. Do we in India proclaim universal toleration and respect for all religious beliefs? In China we outrage all the most sacred feelings of the people. Surely these flagrant contradictions cannot fail to strike the Indian soldiers who are now fighting for us in China. Surely the news of these strange proceedings in the far East cannot fail in time to reach India. And if these gruesome stories find their way to India they must of necessity destroy the effect of much of our best work and teaching in that country. And should it ever happen in the course of time that the curse of war alights on India, and the people of that country are arrayed in hostile camps, some for us and some against us, then indeed may we and our supporters reap in plunder and cruelty the harvest that we have sown in China. Then, indeed, may we have reason to curse the day when we allowed the thirst of plunder, or the desire of revenge, or the gain of some temporary advantage, to lure us from the straight path of mercy and rectitude. Then shall we wish that our hands and the hands of our allies had been clean, and that the work of extending civilisation had been pressed forward in a spirit of humanity and justice.

OUR LONDON LETTER.

WESTMINSTER, Thursday.

POPULAR interest in the war in South Africa is again flickering into life. A hope is entertained that the Boers may give battle on their new rallying-ground to the northeast of Pretoria. They are strongly entrenched and can only be attacked over ground that offers every disadvantage to the operations of a force of cavalry. Hitherto they have almost held their own and accordingly have stood to their guns. But experience warns us not to count too confidently on the willingness of the enemy to abide by the issue of a decisive engagement. It is the practice of the Boers to resist up to a certain point, and then at the very moment when the fruits of victory seem to be within reach of the attacking force they quietly melt away, only to coalesce in some remoter fastness. In other words our adversary generally contrives to avoid doing the thing that we would wish him to do. Should he still remain faithful to this exasperating principle, our sanguine hopes of a conclusive battle will, of course, be disappointed.

Even in this country a feeling of admiration for the pertinacious though despairing bravery of the burghers is beginning to soften the earlier passions of the war-fever. People are sick of the carnage, weary of the daily record of futile skirmishes, humiliated by the reprimands of British generals, and if the truth were admitted, just a little troubled by the first qualms of remorse. If prayers still ascend, or sink, to the God of Battles their burden is now not so much an appeal for triumph as a heartfelt cry for the end. Unfortunately, the policy of the British Government has left no way open to that goal, save by the cleavage of the sword. No terms are offered to the Boers. They must either submit, or suffer extermination. Englishmen in a similar dilemma would choose the latter alternative, and some of us are tardily beginning to realise that the Boers are of the same stock and have inherited like qualities with ourselves.

A decisive battle, in which President Kruger could be beaten once and for all, would not only be a relief to the national mind, but would greatly facilitate the schemes of certain ambitious personages in the political world. Obviously, so long as the Boers have from twenty to thirty thousand armed men in the field, there can be no election at home. The war

must first be completed. But will it be over in time? Mr. Chamberlain has notoriously fixed his heart on an October election; yet we are now at the beginning of September, and still waiting for news of battle, still sending out shiploads of reinforcements, and still counting our daily toll of casualties. Dare the Government force an election under such conditions? Would not the risk of a military reverse, followed by an electoral "landslide", be too great? Weighing the chances and possibilities on one side and the other, many shrewd observers are disposed to predict that the year, after all, will pass without witnessing that "political convulsion" of which Lord Rosebery spoke recently in the House of Lords. Everything depends on the war, which simply shows that the war is regarded by the Government as a party asset. If the war survives the anniversary of the Boer ultimatum there will be no dissolution till January.

Meanwhile, Mr. Chamberlain is compiling party pamphlets in the guise of Parliamentary papers. The Boer correspondence, published the other day by the Colonial Office, was to all intents and purposes a brief for the defence. Every letter, apart from those of Mr. Labouchere, Dr. Clark, and Mr. J. E. Ellis, contained some phrase reflecting on the pig-headed obstinacy of President Kruger. There must have been other letters, and had Parliament been sitting Mr. Chamberlain would have been compelled to produce the whole budget and leave the task of selection and co-ordination to the impartial mind of the public. As Parliament, however, is not sitting, the Colonial Secretary quietly selects from his postbag such material as may be expected to make an effective display on the hoardings from the Ministerial point of view, and says nothing about the remainder. Happily, in his eagerness to prove that President Kruger was denounced as impracticable by his own friends, Mr. Chamberlain has at the same time destroyed the preposterous theory that the British supremacy in South Africa had been threatened by a great Pan-Afrikaner conspiracy.

Only one of the letters from the three members of Parliament implicated in this farcical affair was written after the outbreak of hostilities, and that, as now appears, was actually addressed to a lady living in this country and forwarded by her, not to Bloemfontein or Pretoria, but to an aged Scottish clergyman in Cape Colony. In this letter Mr. John Ellis reminded his correspondent that to raise questions concerning the administration of military law in South Africa it was necessary that he should be supplied with definite and attested facts. To publish this harmless epistle as if it were a Star Chamber matter argued, to say the least of it, a singular lack of humour. But how did Mr. Chamberlain get hold of the document? It was certainly not found at Bloemfontein or Pretoria. An unpleasant inference suggests itself, but one scarcely likes to think that the British postal censorship has become altogether Russianised. Mr. Ellis will doubtless try to unveil the mystery when next he deals with this moral inquisition.

Memories of Spion Kop have been disagreeably revived by Sir Charles Warren's vigorous onslaught on Sir Redvers Buller. The superseded officer declines to suffer in silence, like General Gatacre, Sir Henry Colville, Colonel Long, and other victims of the war. He is made to say that the discredit of the Spion Kop disaster should rest on the shoulders of General Buller, and that the credit of the subsequent victory is due to himself. The incident is chiefly interesting as an illustration of the kind of guidance under which our troops fought and bled during the disastrous days of the Tugela campaign. If there had been a friendly co-operation between the two chief officers we should have been spared one of the most agonising episodes of the war. By way of recompense for that experience we are now, it appears, to be entertained to a renewal of the personal controversy, with the prospect of discovering the existence of similar amenities within the War Office itself.

Khaki candidates are still the electoral fashion. Sir Charles Warren, of all men, has actually been mentioned as a possible champion of Liberalism in some Imperialistic constituency. The suggestion, however, is not likely to be translated into action. In Cumberland, Sir Wilfrid Lawson is to be opposed by a subaltern of the South African army. Another Lambton, with Khaki views, if with no actual experience in the field, has been chosen by the Liberals of Durham to oust the anti-Khaki Unionist member, Mr. Arthur Elliot. The city of London, too, is understood to be on the look-out for a stray soldier or sailor

politician to represent its commercial interests at Westminster in the next Parliament; while, to crown all, the recent speeches of Captain Hedworth Lambton are to be published, like Sir William Harcourt's weighty deliverance, as a Liberal leaflet.

NOTES FROM BOMBAY.

[FROM AN INDIAN CORRESPONDENT.]

BOMBAY, August 11.

The good rain which has fallen over the greater part of the Indian peninsula has now allayed anxiety. In some parts the fall has been of an abnormal character. But even a little overabundance is welcome after the woeful deficiency that afflicted Gujerat and Kathiawar last year. The rayat has now got a breathing-space. He is revived; and with his revival fresh hope has sprung up in his breast. These are all signs of encouragement.

Good rain, however, does not necessarily signify that a change at once for the better has taken place in the material condition of the peasant. He has only escaped the greater calamity which threatened him in the near future. He is at present absolutely worse off as regards his agricultural capital than he was twelve months ago. It is doubtful when he will recover that capital and feel his feet again. The larger question—how to solve the agrarian problem for the future—still remains. Whether the Indian Government will prove equal to the occasion and solve it, or whether it will relapse into its old habit of apathy is yet to be seen. Lord Curzon has now had painful experience of the actual miseries which famine entails on the poorest rayats. He has seen with his own eyes what those miseries are. No other Viceroy has had such an experience as his has been during the last twelve months. Hence, if anybody is in a position to cope with the problem, with full knowledge and experience of the economic condition of the rayat, it is he. Moreover, during his recent visit to Ahmedabad he saw how miserably inadequate were the State resources and how bad was the organisation. He returned to Simla, one may suppose, with the conviction that the Famine Code will have to undergo comprehensive revision in the light of the facts and experience of the recent famine. It looks, therefore, as if Lord Curzon must devote a great portion of his time and energy at Simla during the two remaining months to some broad scheme for the prevention of famine. He should go to the very root of the matter; and if he takes the trouble to understand what it is, he may well take steps for a radical reform of agricultural and economic conditions.

Meanwhile the *Statesman*, as usual, has been offering some excellent and practical suggestions. Of course it puts in the forefront the construction of wells. It has not much faith in large and costly irrigation works. But it thinks with Sir Arthur Cotton that the waters of some of our largest rivers are capable of being impounded for use with the engineering talent and appliances now available in the West. Next (2), well irrigation, so extensively utilised by former rulers of India, who so far understood their duties in the matter of staving off famine better than their successors, is strongly recommended. There is nothing to prevent mapping out the insecure tracts for this purpose. Quite recently the Director-General of Geological Surveys expressed the view that artesian wells could be utilised in many water-bearing strata in western India and elsewhere. Mr. Santo Crimp pronounced against the scheme on a hasty survey. There is reason to believe that the view of the Director-General is not only more hopeful but more sound. Then (3), storage of food in villages during ordinary times is advocated. But on this subject the *Statesman* will have something to say on a future occasion.

The facts as to cruel practices in the matter of revenue collections, by coercion and other questionable means, are more and more coming to the surface. The correspondent "Cujerati" of the *Times of India* is unearthing case after case which should put to blush any English Administration caring a jot for humanity and generosity. So far Nemesis seems to be doggedly pursuing the revenue authorities of the Bombay Presidency. Meanwhile another competent and impartial correspondent, "J.", is tearing to shreds the sophistries which have been put forth of late, in reference to remissions and suspensions, from "Bombay Castle." These disclosures must have given a bad quarter of an hour to the powers that be, and caused some searchings of heart.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

5,294,000 ON RELIEF.

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

"Good rain continues. Heavy rain in Gangetic plain, which has materially benefited crops. In west coast districts and central tracts, where break now desired, fall has been comparatively light so far. Crop prospects excellent in nearly all affected tracts, though acreage will be below normal, and harvest late. Cholera still prevails in many districts, and season unhealthy. Free kitchen relief in Central Provinces will now rapidly contract, as agricultural labour is in demand elsewhere. Relief operations steadily decreasing. Number on Relief:—Bombay, 1,365,000; Punjab, 124,000; Central Provinces, 2,241,000; Berar, 309,000; Ajmere-Merwara, 75,000; Rajputana States, 226,000; Central India States, 90,000; Bombay Native States, 256,000; Baroda, 77,000; North-Western Provinces, 1,000; Punjab Native States, 31,000; Central Provinces Feudatory States, 44,000; Hyderabad, 429,000; Madras, 6,000; Bengal, 20,000. Total, 5,294,000."

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

"Following are figures for week ended August 18:—Famine-stricken districts, 4,206 cases of cholera, of which 3,025 were fatal. Native States—cases of cholera, 5,800; deaths from cholera, 3,873. Total number of deaths among number on relief works and gratuitous relief, British districts, 4,964, or 3.3-5 per mille. Rainfall good and prospects encouraging in affected area. Numbers relieved are diminishing."

THE MANSION HOUSE FUND.

The Mansion House Fund for the relief of the Indian famine sufferers exceeded on Wednesday night £360,000.

THE "INVESTORS' REVIEW" FUND.

We take the following from the current issue (August 25) 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	£830	9	7
Miss B. J. Reeve (per <i>India</i>) third contribution.	5	0	0
Mrs. Tremereux	1	0	0
E. O.	10	0	0

Total to date £846 9 7

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

THE PROPOSED NATIONAL GRANT.

VIGOROUS ARTICLES IN THE BRITISH PRESS.

The *Times* wrote on Monday last (August 27):—In the recent debate on the Indian Budget in the House of Commons an amendment was proposed inviting the House to recognise "that looking to the needs of the famine-stricken people of India, funds are urgently needed to feed, clothe, and house the cultivators in their villages until their crops are ripe; to provide them with plough cattle, seed, and other requisites of cultivation, and to restore them to their normal economic condition; that these requirements cannot be adequately met from Indian revenues raised from the suffering Indian people and within the necessarily restricted field of ordinary relief operations; and that the funds subscribed by charity are altogether insufficient for these purposes." The propositions here advanced are, unhappily, quite indisputable. With the exception of the last, they are the basis

of the appeal made some months ago by the Secretary of State to the Lord Mayor, which led to the opening of the Mansion House Famine Fund; and, unhappily, the result of that appeal, reinforced as it was at a later date by a further and most touching appeal from the Viceroy, only emphasises the final proposition "that the funds subscribed by charity are altogether insufficient" for the purposes enumerated. . . . The weight of argument in the debate, and still more the weight of sentiment—by which we mean the recognition of a moral duty superior to, and independent of, strict financial considerations—was in our judgment largely in favour of the amendment. But at the close of the Session, especially when so arid a subject as the Indian Budget is under consideration, the attendance of members is never large, while a majority is always at hand to sustain the policy of the Government. That policy was propounded by the Secretary of State for India, by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and by the First Lord of the Treasury. It was a policy of strict financial propriety. Nothing, it was urged, could be so impolitic, nothing so dangerous, as to weaken the obligation of the Indian Government to meet its own financial necessities. It is not unable to do so, and if, under the impulse of a benevolent sentiment, we were to offer it, unsolicited and unmeddled, the assistance proposed, the effect would be, as Mr. Balfour said, that an Indian famine would in future mean "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." The argument is cogent from the point of view of financial prudence; but surely it ignores the exceptional peculiarities of the case, nor is it altogether relevant to the terms of the amendment to which it was addressed. The proposed grant was not intended to relieve the Indian Government of the duties it has undertaken, and, according to the Secretary of State, is not unable to discharge. If the Indian Government were unable to discharge them, the Secretary of State has himself acknowledged that it would be permissible and desirable to make an appeal to the generosity of the Imperial Legislature. But there is another range of duties, outside the sphere of Government action, and largely independent of it, which is imposed not so much on the Indian Government as on the people of this country in particular, and more generally on the subjects of the Queen at large. . . . We owe a debt to India not of money only, nor of succour, but of gratitude, of sentiment, of Imperial sympathy and affection. Let us discharge it at the proper moment, at the moment of India's direst need, and we shall reap the reward a thousandfold, even if no penny of the gold we give ever returns in kind. An excellent example has been set us by those Indian Princes, such as the rulers of Gwalior, Jaipur, and Bikaner, who, as our Simla correspondent pointed out on Saturday, are devoting their full energies in this year of famine to the relief of their suffering subjects, while one of them—Sindhia—has, as Mr. Balfour said in the House of Commons, not only "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," but, "not content with dealing with the subjects within the limits of his own province, has gone to the assistance of other and poorer Princes in India." There are other native rulers who take a less patriotic and less exalted view of their duties and spend much of their time and substance on "the pursuit of pleasure," or on "the cultivation of an absentee interest in amusements." To these the Viceroy has, as we reported on Saturday, addressed a timely admonition, insisting on the duty they owe to the Government which protects them of "devoting their best energies . . . to the welfare of their own subjects and the administration." The admonition is not without its application to the people of this country, who, being necessarily absentee rulers of India, are peculiarly responsible on that account for its welfare and good government, for the relief of its sore tribulation, and the succour of its starving millions. It will not do to say that if charity fails the people must die. The answer is that of Hosea Biglow—"Gov'ment ain't to answer for it, God'll send the bill to you."

The *Morning Leader* wrote on Tuesday last (August 28):—

We are extremely glad to see the *Times* bringing its influence to bear, as it did in an admirable leading article yesterday, in support of the proposal, advocated continuously for many months in these columns, that a national grant should be voted to the relief of famine in India. The text which the *Times* chooses, though it omits to describe its origin, is the amendment drafted by the Indian Parliamentary Committee, and moved by Mr. Robinson Souttar and seconded by Sir William Wedderburn, on the recent motion (July 26) to go into committee on what is inaccurately termed the "Indian Budget." The amendment set forth a series of propositions which the *Times* rightly describes as indisputable:—(1) that funds are urgently required to feed, clothe, and house the cultivators in their villages until their crops are ripe, to provide them with plough cattle, seed, and other requisites of cultivation, and to restore them to their normal economic condition; (2) that these requirements cannot be adequately met from Indian revenues raised from the suffering Indian people, and within the necessarily restricted field of ordinary relief operations;

(3) that the funds subscribed by charity are altogether insufficient for these purposes; and (4) that a large and generous free grant ought therefore to be provided by Parliament to assist in meeting this unprecedented calamity. This proposal, it may be added, really grew out of Sir W. Wedderburn's earlier motion (April 3) for inquiry to discover "the causes which impair the cultivator's power to resist the attacks of famine and plague," and to suggest "the best preventive measures against future famines." In the course of his speech upon that motion, Sir W. Wedderburn said he had no doubt that a national grant would be widely approved throughout the country. He added:—

"In reply to questions on this subject, the noble lord, the Secretary of State for India, has stated that the Indian Exchequer is not in immediate need of help. That may be; but my present suggestion is that a national grant should be given, not in aid of the Indian Exchequer, but for the same purposes as the Mansion House Fund—to help the classes that cannot come upon relief works, to find comforts for the sick, the aged, and the children, and to aid the cultivators in recovering themselves after the famine and replacing the plough cattle which in many parts are almost extinct."

That is the kind of grant which the *Times* now vigorously advocates, and which, in a party division in the House of Commons a month ago, was refused only by forty-seven votes. It was noteworthy on that memorable occasion that the Conservative members who had any special knowledge of India abstained from voting with the Government, and that nearly all the leading Conservative newspapers joined in the unanimous Liberal demand for a grant. The *Standard*, for example, said that "apart from the practical cogency of its claim to succour, India would welcome and value a grant from Imperial funds as a mark of national sympathy"; and the *Times* in a trenchant article remarked the unwisdom of putting forward the Imperial Government "in the character of Mr. Gradgrind." In its article yesterday the *Times* did such justice as brevity permitted to one aspect of the matter—India's claim upon British charity. One has only to consider the respective dimensions of the present famine and of its predecessor, and to contrast the amounts realised by the Mansion House Fund on the two occasions, in order to perceive the strength of the claim. But there is a further aspect of the matter upon which we have always tried to lay stress—we mean India's claim upon British justice. "India," said Mr. P. M. Mehta, in his reference to this very question in the Viceroy's Council on March 28, "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 from 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 have been only just."

It is not only on account of wars beyond the North-West frontier that England is in India's debt. The fact that India is compelled by us to maintain so large a reserve of troops that she is able to lend them for purposes, not Indian, in South Africa, for example, and in China, suggests another head of indebtedness. A further point was well put in a letter from the Government of India, dated March 25, 1890, (when Lord Lansdowne was Viceroy, and Lord Roberts Commander-in-Chief):

"Millions of money have been spent on increasing the army of India, on armaments, and on fortifications to provide for the security of the warlike people of adjoining countries, but to maintain the supremacy of British power in the East. . . . It is imperative, in our opinion, that the long-standing question should be settled, and that the people of India, who have no voice in the matter, should not be able to complain that an excessive military tribute is demanded from the revenues of their country."

But this "long-standing question," which has not yet been settled, is only one out of many. "Great Britain and Ireland," as Mr. Donald Smeaton, a member of the Viceroy's Council, said on April 7, "owe a debt to the Indian peasant, a debt of millions upon millions." The Majority Report of the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure, with characteristic timidity, recommended a refund of something over a quarter of a million a year to India from this country. Repayment of this excessive charge for the past twenty years, without interest, would involve a grant of five millions. Can we offer less?

The *Morning Leader* wrote on Wednesday (August 29):—

It has struck many people as odd that the request for a national grant towards the relief of famine in India has not been vigorously backed up by Lord George Hamilton and by Anglo-Indian officials. But the reason for their indifference or hostility is not far to seek. They dread the increased British interest, and possibly the increased British interference, in Indian affairs which would be likely to follow any such vote of public money. Colonel Milward, M.P., a blameless Tory, blurted out the truth when, on April 30 last, he asked Mr. Balfour in the House of Commons "whether, seeing that the objections hitherto raised by the Indian Government to such grants in aid had arisen largely from the fear of the creation of a claim for financial

interference, he would consider the advisability of placing the proposed grant under the unfettered control of the Viceroy in Council." That is what the Germans call "emptying out the baby with the bath." But the *locus classicus* upon the matter is a passage which occurred in the quasi-official *Pioneer* of Allahabad at the end of 1897, when public meetings in this country were unanimously adopting resolutions in favour of a British contribution to the cost of the war then being waged beyond the North-West frontier of India. The *Pioneer* said: "The mischief of Parliamentary interference with Indian affairs has been conspicuous and serious in the past; but it would be exaggerated a hundredfold if the British workman came to think that as he was paying for the Indian concern he had an indefeasible right to control its working."

Brought up to date the argument comes to this:—Let Indians starve rather than that British electors, through helping them, should come to be more curious as to how they are governed. Could any argument in favour of a national famine grant be more powerful than the argument which is suggested by antagonism based upon such grounds?

The *Manchester Guardian* (August 28) said:—

The situation in India has greatly improved owing to the heavy rains which have fallen throughout the worst of the famine districts, and no one we imagine will be more delighted than Lord Curzon himself to find that his predictions of last month have, in part at least, been falsified. It was on July 25 that the Viceroy telegraphed to the Secretary for India that since the 20th conditions had changed decidedly for the worse. No rain had fallen since that date in the Punjab, Sind, and Gujarat, only insignificant rain in the North-West Provinces, the Bombay Deccan, and Rajputana. "It is therefore not impossible," he added, "that we may be faced, at any rate in Gujarat, Kathiawar, Baroda, and South-West Rajputana, with a far more serious situation than has yet arisen, while should the monsoon continue to hold off, a large part of India may be in for a second consecutive year of famine." A week or so later the rain was falling in torrents over the tracts of country that had been given up for lost, and the reports that are coming to hand speak of the sowing as being actively carried on. This is good news indeed, and over and above the brightening outlook for the crops there is the further fact, the importance of which can hardly be over-estimated, that the water-famine which pressed so cruelly upon the people is at an end. The rivers, tanks, and wells are once more full, and for the first time for twelve months it can be said that there is water enough in India for man and beast. But whilst we must all rejoice at the relief that has come at the eleventh hour, it is, we are afraid, by no means certain that the people are at the end, or even at the beginning of the end of their troubles. In one of his telegrams the Viceroy was stated that no food crops could be sown after August 1, and it was after this date that the rains began in earnest. This disquieting fact may, and we hope will, turn out to be less serious than it looks. Possibly the rains came in time to save the situation, or it may be, as Lord Northcote seems to suggest in one of his telegrams, that other crops than the staple ones can be sown with some hopes of success after August 1. In any case there has been time enough for sowing the cotton crop before the middle of the month, and the same from Kabiswar, Khandesh, and British Gujrat, so that the cultivators have been doing what they could to make a start. Another point about which we are left in the dark concerns the plough cattle. It is only a few weeks ago that the official messages reported that the surviving cattle, including the bullocks granted to the cultivators out of the Famine Fund, were dying of starvation, and fodder was not to be had for love or money. In the face of these gloomy statements it is unwise, we are afraid, to look for any general transformation or to expect that the raiyats should be driving their furrows and scattering seed as though no famine had desolated the land. The irregularity of the monsoon is another cause of anxiety, for it is not so much the amount of the rainfall as its even distribution that is of importance. In the year of the terrible Orissa famine there was a rainfall of 60 inches. That the suffering is still intense and widespread and the call for relief no less urgent than it was is evident enough from the weekly reports of the Viceroy. The numbers "on relief" are five and a half millions, and in the famine camps in the Bombay Presidency alone there are a thousand deaths a day.

India is, in truth, a very sick Empire, and it will take more than a hundred or two, and more than the best language of our Imperialists, who bid her pay her way and not be troublesome, to set her on the road to recovery. The economic ruin that this famine has wrought leaves her, indeed, more sick and more impoverished than the Western mind can well conceive. The Viceroy's latest telegram states that "prices are very high everywhere still," and these high prices, which more than double the cost of living for the poor throughout India, are certain to continue, at the earliest, till October, when the crops, such as they are, will be harvested. For the trader and the farmer the news is good, but for the cultivator who has lost his working capital by the death of his cattle, whose money, if he has any, has been cut down by half owing to famine prices, whose savings (once more, if he has any) have been heavily depreciated by the measures adopted for studding exchange—for the cultivator the times are assuredly hard. If he looks to England for relief, the Chancellor of the Exchequer assures him that we are in a still worse case owing to the way that our Debt is being piled up, and that the Secretary for India congratulated him on the economic effects of the removal of troops to South Africa and China, and bids him hope for some remission of taxation if prices keep up. The troops, however, will return to India in due course, and the raiyat knows to his cost that, up to the present at any rate, high prices have been one argument that has been consistently adduced in support of increased taxes. So that we hardly seem to have arrived at an anti-famine policy if we are to

accept as gospel what the Treasury and the India Office tell us. Even on the immediate and urgent question of the remission of revenue arrears due to famine, a careful study of official statements fails to convince us that a generous policy is to be adopted. It is true that Lord George Hamilton in his Budget speech spoke of "remissions" of revenue amounting to £3,473,600, but a reference to the official papers shows that what he must have intended to say was "suspensions"—a very different thing. The practice of the various Governments with whom the decision rests is, we believe, to decide how much of the arrears shall be remitted, not sooner, at any rate, than the harvest that follows the famine. The country is surely entitled to some guarantee that the lamentable mistakes that have been made in the past by seizing the raiyats' crops for arrears before the people had time to get upon their feet will not be repeated. The Blue-book on the moral and material progress of India which has just been issued records with apparent satisfaction the fact that "some part of the increase of the year was due to recovery of revenues, the payment of which was suspended during the famine, which were to a large extent paid off during the year." It is precisely this inordinate haste to prevent the raiyat from reaping the fruits of his labour that strikes us as making neither for the moral nor the material progress of India, and after a period of famine the enforcement of such a policy is iniquitous. The people who paid off their arrears in 1898 and 1899 have had to be kept alive on the relief works in the Deccan and the Punjab during the seasons of famine, and we trust that the Government of India has no intention of repeating these disastrous tactics. If India cannot pay her way without the famine arrears, then India must out her coat according to her cloth or come to us for assistance. A course of bleeding will certainly not enable the people to make a good recovery, and this, we take it, is the immediate object of our statesmanship. India is bleeding internally, and our policy towards her must be one of sustained solicitude, carried out, if necessary, at some national sacrifice.

The same Blue-book which informs us of the safe recovery of famine arrears and the enhancement of the land-tax throughout the Bombay Presidency by 30 per cent., or an annual sum of £238,000, reminds us that, besides famine and cholera and a rising land assessment, there is the plague to be reckoned with. And the plague has unfortunately established itself firmly in Calcutta during the year under review, without weakening its base at Bombay, on the other side of the peninsula. There were 3,288 deaths from plague in 1899 throughout the whole of Bengal. During the first four months of the present year the death-roll had risen to 26,222, whilst in the month of March there were 3,500 deaths in Calcutta, a rate of mortality on a scale that of Bombay during the months of February, March, and April, when the plague was at its height. Up to the end of April the reported plague deaths in Bombay city since the beginning of the scourge were 55,450, or nearly 7 per cent. of the population. Outside the Presidency the plague was spreading more widely than in previous years, and there seem to be no signs that this awful malady is wearing itself out. India is a splendid heritage, but just now a very sombre one too.

The following letter from Lord Radstock appeared in the *Times* of Wednesday last (August 29):—

SIR,—In common with many others I am most thankful for your article on the famine in India. Many deeply regret that, in bowing down to the idol of financial purism, the India Office has not only indirectly contributed to the loss of many thousands of lives, but has lost an unique opportunity of winning the admiration of our Indian fellow-countrymen by great-hearted benevolence which it was not only our duty, but our policy, to manifest. The accounts which I have seen from many occupied in famine relief are simply appalling.

One who had just been for a tour in the famine districts said they were dying by thousands a day. Pundita Ramabhai, who has 1,500 girls in her care, writes:—

"Many of the starving people wandering in jungles have eaten up all the fruit of the cactus and sycamore and wild berries found in the land, and are now eating leaves, barks, and small twigs of the trees. Vast numbers of children and famished old people can be seen picking a few grains from the dusty roads over which carts of grain have passed. They are found gathering and winnowing manure and dust in the bazaars and on highways in hopes of finding a few particles of grain for satisfying their hunger. They are filling their empty stomachs with sand and small stones in order to escape the pangs of hunger. They are drinking filthy and muddy water wherever they can find it. They cry out continuously for food and water, and strike the stones and the roads in great agony. Many who have no strength left in them try to say even a word to express their suffering lie down on the roadsides and in the poor-houses and suffer silently. Some of them simply stare at you when you see them—their poor lifeless eyes so deeply sunk in their sockets through which their death agonies are expressed haunt you day and night. They are so silent and still that their very silence speaks louder of how very great sufferings they have gone through. Numberless such skeletons are lying on every side, and they are all waiting for the day when they will have no strength even for that! Who will understand signs of these poor people must have suffered and are suffering? Filthiness caused by want of water to wash bodies and clothes is added to starvation. The sores on the bodies and heads of children and grown up people are fearful. Their rags and hair and skin are full of insects and sores. Dirt and filth seem to have become a part of their lives, and their dreadful smells are unbearable. Some people have a few rags, but they are no protection to their bodies. As these wretched people protect their bodies from cold or heat, and die from cold in cold months. The able-bodied men and women who can work in relief camps, and are able to hold their own, will live through this famine; but the poor defenceless widows, deserted wives, orphans, and old infirm people are, alas! dead, and dying by the thousands."

The Famine Commissioner, an extract from whose report I enclose, says:—"In hundreds of thousands of cases the sturdy raiyats have

lest their plough bullocks which constitute their sole means of preparing their ground for seed time." Surely there are tens of thousands in England who, if they knew the appalling calamity, would come to the rescue of the suffering millions. In response to a circular issued, headed "Christian Offering to India," several thousand pounds were sent to funds of missionary societies, and nearly £8,000 has been sent to the treasurers, Messrs. Barclay and Co., 54, Lombard Street, which has been transmitted immediately to the Famine Fund at Calcutta.

But I am convinced that if it was realised that there were hundreds of thousands whose ghastly sufferings might be alleviated, the contributions would have been tenfold in amount.

Will you, Sir, continue to call your tens of thousands of readers to listen to the cries of agony till adequate help is sent?

Yours obediently,

RADSTOCK.

STR W. WEDDERBURN'S RETIREMENT FROM PARLIAMENT.

[FROM THE CALCUTTA "STATESMAN."]

The announcement of the approaching withdrawal of Sir William Wedderburn from Parliamentary life is one which, in any case, would have been received with sorrow by all who have the interests of the people of this country at heart. But the circumstances that have influenced him in deciding on this step invest it with a more mournful interest than would have otherwise attached to it. When a man of Sir William Wedderburn's insight and experience tells the world that, in the present temper of the British public, he sees no early prospect of forwarding the purposes for which he desired a seat in the House of Commons, the people of India, whose cause has always been his chief concern, and one for which he has fought so long and staunchly, may well feel that they have fallen upon evil days indeed; and it is but poor consolation to them to know that it is not their special interests alone, but with them the interests of peace, economy, and reform, that are temporarily submerged in the public regard by that wave of militarism to which he refers. While, however, there is only too good reason for feeling that Sir William Wedderburn's view of the situation is justified by the facts, we may rest assured that truth and justice will prevail in the end; and the excellent work which Sir William Wedderburn has done, especially for India, so far from having been thrown away, will sooner or later bear abundant fruit. Much good fruit, indeed, it has already borne. The appointment of the recent Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure, and, what is far more important, the largely increased interest which the British public have lately been led to take in Indian affairs, are traceable in no small measure to his untiring efforts both in the House of Commons and outside it. Sir William Wedderburn has sometimes been accused of want of tact; and it is conceivable that he might have effected more had he been contented to demand less, and that in tones less loud. The worst, however, that can be urged against him in this respect is that he has been righteous overmuch. No man was ever less influenced by love of notoriety or any other form of self-seeking. There is, we are happy to say, but little cause for fear that Sir William Wedderburn's retirement from Parliamentary life implies any relaxation of his efforts on behalf of the people of India in the future. On the contrary, we may confidently hope that what they will lose by it will be largely made up by the increased leisure it will give him to devote to their affairs in other ways.

INDIAN MEDICAL REFORM AND THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.

DR. MULICK'S RESOLUTION CARRIED.

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT.]

The Annual Congress of the British Medical Association was held this year at Ipswich. There was a large attendance of delegates from such distant places as Australia, Canada, South Africa, China, East and West Indies, besides those representing the branches in the United Kingdom. As will be seen from the proceedings, the two motions standing in the name of Dr. Mullick were carried. This marks a considerable advance since the late Dr. Bahadurjee initiated the agitation in 1895 at the Carlisle Conference. The proposal was practically shelved by being referred to the Indian branches. Last year it was defeated by a narrow majority. This year Dr. Mullick has by a clever tactical move brought the subject within the sphere of practical legislation. The Carlisle Conference was called upon to express a pious opinion. The Conference at Ipswich was by referring the matter to the Parliamentary Bills Committee done something practical. The Parliamentary Bills Committee is presided over by an eminent M.P., and is supported by a large and influential Committee of M.P.'s representing all

shades of opinion in the House. It watches all medical Parliamentary questions and shapes all subjects which require legislation. If this Committee is satisfied with the evidence to be brought before it, the gain to Indian Medical Reform will be immense. The character and composition of the British Medical Association are beyond suspicion, and its support is one to be zealously cultivated, for its influence with the Government is great. Dr. Mullick and his friends should see that this tactical advantage is not lost through want of weighty evidence.

The first resolution standing in Dr. Mullick's name was:—

"The present system of filling professorial chairs in the medical colleges in India more by virtue of grade rank in the Indian (Military) Medical Service than by special professional ability of the candidates in that particular branch, and of pitchforking them, as they very often have been, from one chair to another, is prejudicial to the interest of medical education and sanitation, and is a sinister bar to the advancement of original research in India. This meeting is of opinion that some change is necessary, and hereby appoints a sub-committee to consider the matter and report to the council for such action as it may think it proper to take."

Dr. MULICK, who was received with cheers, in moving this resolution said that he wished to delete the part which contained the idea of "pitchforking," as he had been advised it might possibly offend some over-sensitive people. His object, like that of all present, was not to abuse anybody, but to improve the status and prestige of medical science wherever they thought it required judicious pruning. (Cheers.) He paid a high tribute to the past work of the Indian Medical Service. He extolled their labours in organising the profession when everything medical was in its infancy in India. The lessons of history and the dictates of justice demanded such statements. That, however, did not detract by one jot or tittle from the merits of the resolution. Affairs in India were at the parting of the ways. The old order was crumbling to dust and decay, and unless new structures were placed in their stead the consequences would be beyond the ken of men. The British Medical Association had done much to advance the proper and systematic study of tropical diseases. It had established scholarships, fitted out expeditions, and published papers on these subjects. What was the good of these, at best but sporadic, efforts, when the main source of improvement remained untapped? India was pre-eminently the field of research. There they had, unfortunately, the diseases of the tropics flourishing in rank luxuriance. At one time the Indian Medical Service was the only line of defence against these. Thanks to the growth, slow though it was, of the medical profession, there were now hundreds of practitioners qualified to do battle against these invading hordes. They were men of the finest intellect, who for powers of keen perception and accurate observation would be the peers of any set of scientists. They must remember that India was not a country of yesterday. Her civilisation extended into dim and distant ages. Her people had an intellectual horizon which was the wonder of the world, for her philosophy had not yet been rivalled. Such were the people on whose behalf he made the present appeal, and such were the people who, through the impertinence of ignorance, were styled semi-savages, fit only to be the hewers of wood and drawers of water. ("Shame.") They ought to consider the composition of the Indian Medical Service. It was purely a military service. Its members were lent to the civil authorities when "off duty," as it were. From the highest to the lowest they were at any moment liable to be called to serve with the colours. Men who had risen in the service were transferred to capitals of the Provinces. There they were appointed to various chairs. They occupied these chairs so long as they held a certain rank in the military service. As soon as they rose in their grade they were either transferred to other places or appointed to better paid chairs and were thus suddenly called upon to teach quite a different subject. By this arrangement the efficiency of teaching was undermined and smattering encouraged. A candidate, asked to trace the circulation of the blood, said that "it came down one leg and went up the other." Confronted with the difficulty of its passing from one leg to the other, he promptly corrected himself and said, "Oh, it went, up one leg and came down the other." (Laughter.) As for original research, which it was the duty of the medical colleges in the various capitals to foster, there was none or next to none. How could one expect such a thing? The apologists of the present régime declared that the system did not interfere with the teaching of medicine. He maintained that teaching meant something more than reading from pages out of standard text books pasted on the lecturer's note-book. The student held such lectures with just contempt. It took one some years to master the elements of the subject. It took many more years to do anything in the way of original research. An immense amount of labour was wasted when teachers who had just mastered their subject, and were perhaps contemplating original work, were transferred to other duties. There could neither be sufficient incentive nor the required opportunity under such circumstances to improve the science of medicine. The

natural result was that men devoting themselves to original work were like angels' visits, few and far between. The effort on the students was disastrous. For them there was no higher pattern held up beyond the profits and losses of the daily account. There was no appeal to their better instincts to devote their time and energies to discover means which would materially lessen human sorrow and suffering. Human nature had enough to endure. Were they going to intensify that by original neglect of cultivating the highest and best that was in them? (Cheers.) In Europe all the great advances in science were made by those who had specialised. Pasteur would not have placed humanity in his debt had he shifted from subject to subject. James Young Simpson would not have abolished pain by the introduction of chloroform had he wobbled from chair to chair; and Lister would not have restored life to the million had he frittered away his transcendental genius in varied pursuits. (Cheers.) Concentration and specialisation were the ruling factors of science. He found these among the European medical men who were content to spend years and years in the comparative obscurity of the laboratory devoting their energies to qualifying them for some professional chairs. Even then they had to compete with others like themselves before they were finally chosen. There was thus that spirit of research abroad which redounded to the profession as a whole. Nowhere was that spirit of research more necessary than in India, where the tropical diseases presented a virgin vista for the energies of the original enquirer. There was abundant material in India which required proper training. They felt in India the necessity of reform. These professorial chairs ought to be thrown open to the profession at large. There would be no injustice done to the Indian Medical Service officers, for they would be allowed the same right to compete as others, and if they carried the day no one would grudge them their honours. He was confident that men who had devoted special attention to the various subjects would be found to compete, and when appointed would reflect lustre on the subjects they taught. The argument was that at present the chairs were filled by "open competition" inasmuch as anyone who wished to go out to India and qualify for these chairs could do so by entering the Indian Medical Service. This he considered an unnecessary hardship. The military nature of the Indian Medical Service imposed certain conditions and limitations which were not necessary for civil employment. For instance, the age was limited to twenty-eight. No one could say that that gave sufficient time to develop and mature the scientific faculties to the required degree. Then again the stature and physical proportion of the candidates, though very necessary for military requirements, were not in that stringent degree necessary for civil duties. A further disqualification, which was of no mean importance, was that the present system practically disqualified Indians from competition, inasmuch as they were compelled to come to England on the off-chance of being successful. They would readily appreciate the sacrifices entailed if they were to reverse the picture and imagine their sons and brothers having to go to India to compete for some home appointments. He did not wish to minimise the good that results from travel in Europe. He for one would insist on everyone who could afford it seeing as much of the world as possible, for then they would be greater patriots, more useful citizens, and more enlightened leaders of their communities; for "He knows his country not who knows his country only." It was the present speculative part of the scheme which deterred many from competing in England. In this respect the English candidate enjoyed an almost exclusive monopoly. Some people imagined that the ordinary laws of human nature did not apply to the Indian people. They seemed to forget that the flame of laudable ambition burned just as brightly in an Indian breast, and the sweets of real success and fame were just as palatable to him as ever they were to any European. For their own sake they would take every means to improve themselves. He could assure them that the finer instincts of humanity and the desire for the betterment of the race were not the exclusive property of the white faces. (Laughter.) In concluding his remarks, he considered the question of the resolution being an attack on the Government of India. Nothing was further from his mind than censure of the Government. They (the audience) were men of science, and to them the world was a republic which knew no boundaries or barriers, caste or creed, man or manners. Their single object was to promote science. Therefore as a scientific body they were called upon to express an opinion upon a question which very deeply involved the furtherance of science. He asked them to vote as the jealous guardians of that scientific spirit which should animate all scientific men, and to send up to the Government their opinion as the best friends of the Government for the remedy which was at hand for the sake of their own reputation. (Hear, hear.) Dr. Mullick enumerated many instances where teachers had been repeatedly changed, occupying one chair after another. He carried the meeting with him in his vigorous denunciation of such a policy, and elicited loud applause and laughter when he mentioned the case of a gentleman who had held the post of Chemical Examiner at the Government, Professor of Chemistry, Professor of Physics, had been a surgeon, a physician, had occupied the Chair of Hygiene, then was the Superintendent of the Ophthalmic Hospital, Professor of Jurisprudence, Lecturer of Ophthalmic Medicine and Surgery, etc., and "still the wonder grew that one small head could carry all he knew."

(Laughter and cheers.) He mentioned several other instances, and assured them it was no laughing matter, for it had grown into a serious evil in India and required effective treatment. No one could complain of hysterical or extravagant assertions on his side. Such eminent men as Sir William Broadbent, Sir William MacCormac, the President of the Royal College of Surgeons, had written to him on the subject. He read a letter from the President of the Royal College of Physicians, the head of the profession in England, in which he said: "My knowledge is not sufficient to express an opinion on the subject you propose. It seems to me that it cannot be right that teachers should be changed from chair to chair if the subject they teach is difficult." That probably was the position in which most of them found themselves. Their very detachment made them impartial judges, and he asked for a committee to thrash out this question. He wished to be as moderate as possible. His appeal was for the improvement and addition to that department of human knowledge which was most intimately and practically in touch with affairs of men. When everyone fled from the ravages of cholera, the epidemic of plague, or the loathsomeness of leprosy, it was the physician, true to himself and his duty, who knelt by the sufferer, ministered to his need, alleviated his sufferings, and softened and soothed the last agonies of mortal dissolution. He asked them to equip that friend of mankind with all that was in their scientific treasury. He did not see what this Association had to do with Indian colleges, which were in Government hands. He was fully in sympathy with Dr. Mullick's countrymen, many of whom were his old students. The resolution was a reflection on the Government. The question of rank had nothing to do with the selection of these officers; it was a question of ability. If they abolished these professional appointments they deprived the service of some of its best attractions. He did not think that because a man had held one chair he was disqualified from teaching another subject. He was sorry for the Government. Were they to go to India and appoint before them various Government officers, he would like to get their evidence otherwise? The President of the Royal College of Physicians did not know the merits of the case.

Dr. CROWTHER MURPHY bore out the remarks of Dr. Mullick. Colonel McLeod had gone off on a side issue. There was no slur on the Government. They as a medical body representing the Empire would not be doing their duty if they did not send up for the consideration of the Government such reforms as they thought would benefit the people. What was right in England could not be wrong in India, and he therefore wished that the same principle which obtained in England should hold good in India. In England all the appointments were thrown open to competition and the best qualified were selected, whereas in India it was not so.

An animated discussion followed in which Dr. Groves, Dr. Pope and Surgeon-General Hamilton joined.

The PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL said that he had had no idea of voting for the resolution. He was happy to change his mind after the very lucid, able and moderate speech of his valued friend Dr. Mullick. He had made out a strong *prima facie* case and asked for a committee—what objection could there be to such a moderate request? He strongly supported the resolution. The argument about going to India was very far fetched. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. FRYER (late I. M. S.) thought it was a foolish resolution. It would have as much effect on the Government as the tickling of the dome of St. Paul's would affect the Dean and Chapter. (Laughter.) He protested against the Association making a fool of itself by passing this resolution.

Amid some excitement the resolution was put, and the President declared it carried by such an overwhelming majority that no division was challenged.

The resolution was referred to the Parliamentary Bills Committee. After some further business Dr. MULICK moved his second resolution referring to the prevalence and suppression of quackery in India. He said that at the last annual meeting he had moved the same resolution and it was carried *nem. con.* The Council pledged itself to do all it could to carry the resolution into effect. He moved the resolution this time as the best way of eliciting an answer from the Council. Had the Council taken proper steps during the year?

The PRESIDENT asked Dr. Mullick to withdraw the resolution as there was a great deal of other business to be transacted.

Dr. MULICK said that he could not possibly withdraw his resolution. He had the greatest respect for the Chairman, but not even their private friendship would induce him to do his bidding. He was there on behalf of India, and he would not be true to his country if he consented to show the white feather. India had as much claim on the meeting as any other part of the Empire. (Cheers.)

After some confusion Dr. GARDNER on behalf of the Council stated that they had applied to the Colonial Office and the India Office for information. There was no reason to suppose that it would be withheld. He assured Dr. Mullick that there was no lack of zeal on their part. These things took time. He was glad to make this statement. He hoped Dr. Mullick, whose persistency and courage he greatly admired, would consider this satisfactory. (Hear, hear.)

Dr. MULICK thanked the Council. He wished the matter to be kept in sight. He hoped the Council would urge the Government further. He was satisfied, and withdrew the resolution—till next year. (Laughter and cheers.)

The matter was referred to the Parliamentary Bills Committee.

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