

India

FOR THE

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Notes and News	121	The Investors' Review Fund	127
To Exterminate Famine: Water and		The Proposed National Grant	127
Grain Storage	124	Revenue Collections in the Famine	
The Treatment of Subject Races ...	125	Districts	128
Notes from Bombay	125	Mr. G. P. Pillai on the Causes of	
Order and Progress in India	125	Famine	130
The Famine in India:	125	Susking the Indian Orange	130
4,891,000 of Relief	127	The Lower Burma Chief Court	131
The Mansion House Fund	127	Advertisements	132

NOTES AND NEWS.

LORD CURZON and Lord Northcote again send some-
what reassuring telegrams this week as to the pro-
gress of famine and cholera, but the public should be on
its guard against rushing, as too many journalists are
doing, to the conclusion that no serious trouble now
remains. The Viceroy, telegraphing on Tuesday, said
that the rainfall had been comparatively light during the
preceding week and that more rain was wanted in various
large tracts. He added that the general prospects con-
tinued to be on the whole favourable, especially in the
Central Provinces, Rajputana and Gujerat. The total
number of persons in receipt of relief is given at 4,891,000.
Lord Curzon mentioned that the mortality was much
reduced in the Bombay Presidency, including Sind. Yet
it is appalling enough, as Lord Northcote's telegram
shows. For the week ending August 25 there were 3,024
cases of cholera in the famine-stricken districts of Bombay,
of which 2,337 were fatal, while in the Native States of
the Bombay Presidency there were 4,431 cases, with 2,985
deaths. The total number of deaths on relief works and
gratuitous relief in British districts in Bombay was during
the week no less than 4,984. Lord Northcote reported
that there had been "moderate to slight" rain, and that
agricultural prospects continued favourable, except in
Bijapur, where the crops were suffering from want of
rain.

It is odd that nothing further has been heard of the
Canadian offer of a Parliamentary grant to the famine
relief fund. On April 19 last, it will be remembered, the
Ottawa correspondent of the *Times* telegraphed that "in
the House of Commons to-day several members urged the
Government to make a substantial grant to the famine
fund. The Premier announced that the Government was
in communication with the home authorities on the
subject." Observe the words "was in communication"—
so long ago as the middle of April. Yet, when Sir
William Wedderburn put a question upon the matter in
the House of Commons on July 24, Mr. Chamberlain
stated that he had not received any communication regard-
ing it from the Dominion Government. Here are the
question and the answer:—

Sir William Wedderburn: I beg to ask the Secretary of State
for India whether he is aware that in April last several members of
the Canadian House of Commons urged the Colonial Government to
make a substantial grant to the Indian famine fund; and that the
Premier, in reply, announced that the Government was in communi-
cation with the home authorities on the subject; and whether he can
state what was the result of this communication.

Mr. J. Chamberlain: Yes; I have seen the report of the discussion
to which the hon. member refers. I have not yet, however, received
any communication from the Dominion Government on the subject.

The question, it will be seen, was put to Lord George
Hamilton but answered by Mr. Chamberlain. Has neither
the India Office nor the Colonial Office yet received any
communication from Canada? Of course it is easy to see
that the offer of the Canadian Parliament raises an
awkward dilemma for the home authorities. In view of
the distress in India, how can they decline it? And, in
view of their own refusal to make a Parliamentary grant,
how can they accept it?

The *Friend of India* finds the 'Indian Budget debate this
year "specially gratifying." For one thing, "the
attitude of Sir Henry Fowler and the Opposition gener-
No. 10. VOL. XIV.

ally"—and, it might have been added, of several dis-
tinctive Conservatives—"on a question of a grant to India
shows that the sympathy expressed in England for India's
present misfortunes is not mere wordy talk." Again,
"the debate has also had the advantage of bringing out
the real obstacle to an Imperial grant."

That obstacle is not, as at one time seemed possible, the Con-
servatism of the India Council, but the selfishness of the Treasury.
... The traditional policy of the British Treasury is to lay on
India any and every charge that can be conveniently shifted from the
British taxpayer, and to refuse to incur any expenditure or any
liability for the benefit of India that it can possibly avoid. ...
Sir Michael Hicks Beach was able to point out that during the past
two years India has enjoyed two substantial surpluses, whereas in
England last year there was a heavy deficit, which will be followed
by a still heavier deficit in the current year. Of course, that is only
a technical excuse. ... The real question lies, not between the
British and Indian Governments, but between the British Govern-
ment and the British public. ... All persons whose views of life
are not bounded by red-tape will agree that in such a stupendous
calamity as the present a national Government is fully justified in
making a national gift to relieve human suffering. The contrary
proposition cannot, in fact, be seriously defended.

Our contemporary does not forget that an Imperial grant
was made in supplement of Mansion House charity when
the last hurricane swept over the West Indies. "But the
Minister in charge of the Colonies is Mr. Chamberlain, and
the Minister in charge of the India Office is—somebody
else."

On the part of the debate touching the Welby Commis-
sion the *Friend of India* also appreciates the criticisms of
Sir Henry Fowler. It also points out that as the Home
Charges "have increased in the present year alone by just
over a million," the small subsidy of a quarter of a million
"leaves the real evils practically untouched." True; but
still a quarter of a million is a tangible sum, and if, as we
agree, the recommendations of the Commissioners "are
so timid as to be positively ridiculous," there is every
prospect that this sum will be enlarged considerably by
and by. Such criticisms as those of Mr. Buchanan's,
which we cited the other day, cannot but prove effective.
In the same strain our contemporary says:—

What is wanted is a fundamental readjustment of the charges for
military services. Recent events have proved beyond the possibility
of dispute that the Indian army exists not merely for the local defence
of India, but also for the general defence of the Empire. It is, there-
fore, unjust that it should be paid for by India alone.

Of course it is; and the discussion of the point will soon
work into the thoughts of the British electors, who cer-
tainly have not the least inclination to impose an injustice
on India. The New Zealand Premier, as our con-
temporary remarks, proposes to raise in Australasia troops
available for Imperial needs in any part of the Empire, on
the basis of dividing the cost between the mother country
and the colonies. But the colonies do not "make any fair
contribution to the defence of the Empire," while India
pays its own way, and yet obtains no such advantage as
half-expenses of her military force, which is available for
Imperial service.

The *Advocate of India* declares that "nothing practical
was the outcome" of the Indian Budget debate, "save a
string of well-chosen platitudes, which the exigencies of
the present deplorable situation demanded, and an acknow-
ledgment of the welfare of the suffering people—an
acknowledgment without even an ounce of practical
suggestion which might go to rejoice the heart of the
rayat." It complains that "no care was bestowed upon
the immense material losses the famine had already in-
flicted on the rayats," for though Lord George Hamilton
pointed them out in hard arithmetic, "he would not advise
his colleagues in the Cabinet to grant the prayer of Mr.
Souttar." Our contemporary adds:—

But apart from this question of the grant, what practical pro-
posals for the amelioration of the famine-stricken rayat were made by
Lord George Hamilton? What scheme did he formulate to alleviate

his material condition in the future? What had he to say to the remissions of land revenue in Gujerat and the Deccan? What about the future land assessment policy of the Government? What about prevention of famines? On all these topics there was not a word. "The produce of the land," said Mr. Maclean, "had fallen by nearly 50 per cent. since the days of the Moghul Empire, and this in spite of all that had been done by railways and irrigation." Further, he said, "one of the great problems before Indian Statesmen was so to alter the land revenue and the charges upon the cultivators as to give fair play to the Indian agriculturist." But of this nothing was said. Lord George Hamilton's statesmanship, whatever it be, was entirely silent on this most crucial and burning problem of the day. So far, then, the Budget debate has again proved barren.

Sir Lepel Griffin tells an interesting story in the *Times* in support of the proposal to make a national grant to the relief of famine. He says:—

The soldiers of the Indian army, without any prompting, came forward to subscribe a day's pay for the widows and orphans of their English comrades killed in the South African campaign, and they were eager to volunteer for active service. I can name a Punjab regiment, recruited from districts where the famine is severe, and where consequently the men have to largely support their starving relations, which came to their Colonel with the request to be allowed to subscribe to the South African fund. He inquired why the men desired this. They replied that during the last famine their families had been kept alive by the charity of English people, and they desired to show their gratitude. The Colonel asked if they had any other request. The men answered that they begged that, instead of giving one day's pay, they might be allowed to give two.

"This is the spirit," Sir Lepel Griffin adds, "not of mercenaries, but of sons of the Empire, and the Government and the British public should understand that generous assistance given now to India will be repaid tenfold in gratitude and future loyalty."

It was rather a pity that Lord Curzon did not sooner take the decision to make his flying visit to Western India, for according to the Simla correspondent of the *Standard*, "no sooner had he finally decided to make the tour than the weather reports from Western India at once became more favourable." Indeed,

All this was accepted by the superstitious Natives of Western India as the result of personal intervention of the great "mulk-i-lat" in their affairs. Presents and cattle alike are more freely offered for Lord Curzon in hundreds of temples, and the Native Press of the west called down blessings on the Viceroy's head.

The sentimental and religious aspect of the business is no doubt also intensely practical. Well, what did Lord Curzon see? The correspondent says:—

One of his party informed me that what struck them most was the extraordinarily pinched and famine-stricken appearance of every living thing in Gujerat. Peasants and cattle alike are mere bags of bones. The tales of horror, too, of cholera and starvation which they heard made a deep impression. There is no longer any doubt, indeed, that nothing in connexion with famine in Gujerat and the Panch Mahals has been in any way exaggerated.

Well, but surely the official reports ought to have been reliable and not to have required confirmation by personal inspection on the part of the Viceroy. We shall now be eager to see the practical outcome of this personal enlightenment. What of remedy in the present? What of prevention in the future?

The same correspondent appears to reflect the official feeling when he remarks that "the alarming feature" of the relief returns "is the enormous increase in the number of those on gratuitous relief." Thus, in the Central Provinces, out of 2,233,000 people on relief, no fewer than 1,760,000 are stated to be in receipt of gratuitous relief. This does not seem to us to be in the least surprising. But the correspondent draws a different inference. He says:—

Thus it would appear that the pauperisation of the people—the one result of all others which it has been the aim of Lord Curzon and all Indian administrators to avoid—at all hazards is now being effected. There is only too much reason to believe, indeed, that a large number of these people in receipt of gratuities relief can work, but will not work, since they find they are relieved in any case.

It would be hard to beat the perversity of such an inference. The people do not go to the relief works till their means are gone, and their labour on meagre food soon reduces the remnant of their physical strength; and the relief must therefore become gratuitous. Or, if some fragmentary strength still remain, they return to their fields with the coming of the rains and can then exist only on gratuitous relief. This offensive allegation ought not to have been revived without ample and definite proofs. If there be people on relief that "can work, but will not work," what is to be said of the stringent tests that have been so carefully devised?

In the able letter to the *Times* of India, signed "J.," to which we have already drawn attention, and which we reproduce on another page, there is a strong passage showing that, in spite of the roseate official views of the rayat's position, "all available indications would seem to point to the disquieting conclusion that, under the Land Settlements at present in force, his condition is growing from bad to worse and his resources are continually failing." The writer takes the four Deccan districts under the Relief Act, and points out that "a larger and larger breadth of occupied land is here year by year passing from the hands of the rayats into those of the sowkars, by mortgage or sale." For the three years 1896-97 to 1898-99, the mortgages numbered 161,813, the total number of holdings in the districts being 263,637; so that, "assuming that the mortgage period is usually three years, it would appear that full 61 per cent. of the total number of holdings are at this moment in the hands of the sowkars." During the same three years the sales of land in the same districts were 51,918, or about 20 per cent.

So that the two classes of transactions taken together reveal what will be recognised as a most distressing feature of the situation, viz., that over 80 per cent. of the total number of holdings in these four districts has passed during these years by mortgage or sale into the hands of the moneylenders from those of the cultivating rayats, who, as a consequence of such transfer, sink down more or less to a status little removed from that of predaial slaves—a state of things, be it remembered, reached after twenty years' working of a special legislative measure intended for the relief of the agriculturists.

This is sufficiently serious—serious enough, one may expect, to induce a strategic abandonment of the official theory; and, the writer adds, "matters are not much better in other parts."

The hardship sometimes, and too often, incidental to revenue collection, at all events in Broach, is painfully indicated in the judgment of Mr. S. B. Upasani, the First Class Magistrate at Unkaleswar in Broach District, in a recent case. The Government Resolution No. 1,302, dated February 15, 1889, impliedly laid down that the order for distraint should be reduced to writing, though no particular form was prescribed. But it was easy to wink at an implication. The Magistrate says:—

In the absence of any express provision to require it, the subordinates were left to make distraints as they pleased. . . . They appear to have freely resorted to breaking open locked houses for purposes of distraint, and, where this was not likely to succeed, to shut out the inmates by bolting the houses from outside so as not to allow them any access to them until they managed to pay the assessment. No report of any of these cases was required to be made to any superior officer until it became actually necessary to have the distrainted property sold, in which case the taluka officer's signature was necessary for the proclamation of sale and the Collector's sanction to confirm the sale; but in most cases the shutting out of the defaulter from his house or the mere distraint of his property succeeded in securing the payment of the arrears, and, as these distraints could be made without even notice of demand, there was nothing on record to show that any compulsory process had really been issued for recovery of the arrears.

This illegal process, however effective, of course led to oppressive practices which were certainly not contemplated by the framers of the Revenue Code even under its wide and general provisions.

More than that: it was in evidence "that orders for stopping these practices have recently been issued by the District Deputy Collector in charge of this taluka." Still the bad old habit continued, even in the midst of the horrors of famine. We say the bad old habit, for the magistrate expressly states that such "illegal and oppressive practices have prevailed for years together in this part, by reason of the taluka karkuns and the village officers being allowed too free a hand in the matter of distraints for revenue arrears without any legal warrant issued by a competent authority." The magistrate declared that he "was painfully impressed with the manner in which the poor rayats had silently allowed these illegal and oppressive practices to continue so long without daring to even complain about them." There is the pity of it—that the poor people endure such heartless and unjust treatment for years upon years, and the people of this country are left to imagine that all is well with them when in fact all is very seriously wrong with them. Upon this finding, the magistrate went so far as to suggest that the law and rules referring to distraint must be changed before these malpractices could be effectively stopped. One might have supposed that the orders of the District Deputy Collector

would have been attended to. It is plain that efficient orders need to be issued by somebody, and not only issued but carefully enforced.

In an article in *Britannia*, Mr. J. W. Root discusses with moderation and insight some of the social and economic causes of famine in India. He explains the nature of the chief taxes, and refers to the Finance Minister's opinion, in the last statement, that "the country must, on the whole, be wonderfully prosperous because, notwithstanding the exceptional and unexpected outlays caused by the famine, the revenue so increased as to leave the anticipated surplus of the year scarcely impaired," while at the same time the Minister's "sanguine hopes for the future caused him to frame a budget which, despite the continuation of a large famine expenditure, again exhibits a surplus, which may or may not be justified by events." But, says Mr. Root pointedly, "so far as can be ascertained, this result has not arisen from any improvement in the condition of the bulk of the people, even outside the famine area." He goes on to say:—

The principal cause was the great increase in railway earnings, betokening an activity in trade common just then to nearly the whole world. But there is scarcely another country where commercial prosperity may exercise so little influence on the general well-being. The community engaged in foreign trade is a separate, and largely an alien one. Its profits are remitted abroad, or, at the best, invested in enterprises which do little to benefit the people of the country as a whole. At home, trade activity means an increased demand upon almost every form of production. In India, the numbers participating in it are so comparatively limited that their wants make no appreciable difference to the masses, if indeed they are not nearly all supplied from outside.

Coming to particulars, Mr. Root sets out the net yield of "general taxes" and land revenue, and looking at the former, asks:—

Can it be maintained that a country whose population is increasing can be really prosperous in view of the fact that taxes based largely on consumption produce little, if anything, more now than they did five years ago? A similar state of things in Great Britain could only be attended by bad trade, want of employment, and general depression, and we have regarded as the surest sign of the prosperity of the last few years the almost marvellous expansion of the national revenue.

"The land revenue," Mr. Root points out, "shows somewhat better; but we must not be misled by appearances." "There has not, in fact," he concludes, "been the improvement in the condition of the people we were led to suppose." Then he turns to the figures of salt-consumption, which, he finds, "tell exactly the same story as the revenue returns":—

Though not available for quite so late a period (1897-98 is the latest year he cites), there is an evident set-back going on; that is, the population of India has of late been gradually diminishing its consumption of salt per head, which means much the same thing as saying that the people of these islands were reducing their consumption of bread.

The prosperity of the commercial and industrial classes, and of others more or less directly dependent on them, does not relieve the gloom of the general situation. "The submerged section, whatever its size and wherever it is to be found, is apparently rapidly slipping down the hill, and the present methods of our government of the country are scarcely adapted to check the decline."

We are glad to observe the growing interest in Indian affairs on the other side of the Atlantic. Recently the *New York Sun* gave space to a correspondence on the possibility of a general rising against foreigners in India, after the pattern of the Boxer movement in China. Sir William Wedderburn has also addressed a letter to the *Sun* on the subject, which we reproduce elsewhere. Of course, he points out the utter fallacy of an "Anglo-Indian's" view that the principal safeguard against any such rising is to be found in the religious antipathies between Hindus and Mahometans, and shows that "these religious dissensions are a source of danger, not of safety." Sir William goes on to say:—

Our safety lies in quite a different direction. It lies in making the people of India contented and prosperous by peaceful industry and educational progress, and in convincing them that their welfare is bound up with the maintenance of British rule. Fortunately, in following this simple and beneficent policy, we have as eager allies a class of ever-increasing numbers and influence, the class who have accepted Western education, who have identified themselves with our methods, and who desire to give our rule the stability and permanence of a national government.

Sir William illustrates the great progress in the develop-

ment of the Indian people during recent years, points out the impossibility of their dismissing us in order to accept the Russian rule or anarchy, shows how the National Congress anxiously labours to cure the great defect of our bureaucratic Government by interpreting between rulers and ruled, and concludes with emphasising the point that "the great problem in India is an economic one—How to improve the condition of the masses." Nothing but good can come of well-informed criticisms from our American cousins, and Sir William has concisely and effectively pointed them to the right lines of investigation.

Lord Amthill, who has been appointed Governor of Madras in succession to Sir Arthur Havelock, is the son of the first Baron by Lady Emily Theresa Villiers, daughter of the fourth Earl of Clarendon. He was born at Rome in 1869, and was educated at Eton and New College, Oxford, where he was stroke of the Varsity Eight and President of the O.U.B.C. He succeeded to the title in 1884, and in 1894 married Lady Margaret Lygon daughter of the sixth Earl Beauchamp. Since 1896 he has been private secretary to Mr. Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, and was British delegate at the International Conference on the Sugar Question, held at Brussels in 1898. A Reuter telegram from Simla states that Lord Amthill will succeed Sir Arthur Havelock in December next.

From some belated Natal papers we learn that the British Indians were unwontedly to the front in the celebration of Mafeking Day at Durban. They were carefully excluded, not so very long ago, from the proceedings on the unveiling of a statue of the Queen, but something has happened in the interval. So the Indian school children were allowed to celebrate Mafeking—the first public ceremony that Indians have been permitted to show their dusky faces at—"the scholars presenting a radiant appearance in coloured sashes over their European clothing." A large number of Indian cyclists, too, members of the Durban and Greyville Indian Amateur Cycling Clubs, appeared on the scene. We quote the *Natal Advertiser* (May 23):—

They were dressed in national costumes depicting every conceivable personage from the stretcher-bearer to the gorgeously-decked Maharaja. The decoration of a few of these machines was far above those of the Europeans, while their costumes, although not so attractive, were of a lavish description. This was the first time that Indians have taken part in public celebrations, and after this display it is only to be expected that they would be seen more frequently.

Well, we shall see. In the meantime, we have not heard that the British Empire, or even the Colony of Natal, has suffered materially from their presence on the occasion. We observe also that "the fireworks were manufactured by Indians under the personal supervision of Mr. H. Paul, one of the Durban Court Interpreters."

Though it will be rather old news now, we cannot but notice a letter written by Mr. Edwin T. Brunsell from the Durban Club to the *Natal Mercury* (April 3), and headed "A Deserving Band." It suggests that funds should be raised to help the Indian stretcher-bearers "by adding a small sum of money to their pay to enable them to buy extras, e.g., ghee, dhal, attar, meat, etc., which they can eat, according to their caste habits." Among much more Mr. Brunsell says this:—

These men—muleteers, dhoolie-bearers, bhisteas (water-carriers), medical orderlies, and others—have left their homes, wives, and families in far-off India, and followed the white sahib to this country. In simple trusting faith in the power of the British nation and out of that curious love and attachment which only the Natives of India can show, they have accompanied their masters gladly, proudly, and unhesitatingly into the front ranks of every battle we have fought.

Everyone praised the conduct of the bhisteas—carrying water into the firing line even—at Talana Hill, Elandslaagte, and actions around Ladysmith: surprise as well as admiration was expressed on all sides at the cool and plucky behaviour of the bearers of the green-covered dhoolies at these and other engagements: nothing short of that curious love and attachment which only the Natives of India these same men stuck to their "sahibs"; and surely not an officer nor a man who passed into their hands at Intombi but is grateful for the attention shown him by the Indian hospital followers.

The Editor of the *Natal Mercury* appends to the letter this very creditable note: "We shall be pleased to receive donations for these deserving men, who are doing a noble service in connexion with the war." We hope their "noble service" has been, and will be, adequately appreciated, not only in contributions to the fund, but in the after-treatment of British Indians in Natal.

TO EXTIRPATE FAMINE : WATER AND GRAIN STORAGE.

EARLY in the present year we dealt with the grave question of famine from the point of view of remedy (January 26) and of prevention (February 2). We reviewed with some care the Report of the Indian Famine Commission of 1878, the second part of which is devoted to "measures of protection and prevention," and we supplemented the timid strictures and suggestions of the Commission by indicating a variety of fresh expedients, most of which we have commented upon before and since. Thus we wrote (January 26: INDIA, Vol. XIII, p. 42) summarily:—

Every improvement in agriculture, every movement for the encouragement of industries, every step towards the diffusion of technical knowledge and training, is something to the good. The misfortune is that in all such attempts there is too little disposition to take the Natives into counsel, and hence a step forward has too often been inevitably traced. A little humility of mind would go a long way in the right direction; for the Natives too have had their practical experiences. The Congress has just urged more irrigation in preference to more railways, and by all means let us have more irrigation where it is physically possible on reasonable financial terms. Much may be done by the reversal of the "improvident denudation" of the country of its forests. But the first thing of all must be relief of the rayat from over-assessment, and the general relief that must come to him from a rigid restriction of the national expenditure. At the same time a series of village enquiries would bring out more effectively than anything else the precise facts that are most important for us to know.

This last point we urged for the fiftieth time a week later (February 2, INDIA, Vol. XIII, p. 52), anxious as we were, and are, that a solid basis should be definitively provided for a comprehensive measure of relief and prevention. "The village community," as Sir William Wedderburn has said, "is the microcosm of all India"; and his proposal that certain selected villages should be subjected to an exhaustive examination by a mixed Commission, partly official, partly non-official, partly European, partly Indian, we then insisted—and we now insist—"is at once practical, economical, and easy to work," "is specially adapted to India," "is on the lines of the most successful investigations elsewhere," and could not fail to throw most valuable light on the ways of reform. The crushing over-assessment of the rayat has been painfully demonstrated by Mr. Romesh Dutt. And now the *Friend of India*, as we pointed out last week, has taken up the general question of relief and prevention with praiseworthy energy.

"Two important lessons," says our Calcutta contemporary, drastically enough, "are conveyed by these visitations and their consequences, which he who runs may read." They are:—

(1) "That the preventive measures adopted by the Government are utterly inadequate."

(2) "That the accepted system of famine relief, with however much care, forethought and liberality it may be carried out, affords but an imperfect safeguard against even the death of the people from starvation, while, as far as large sections of the population are concerned, it hardly touches the fringe of the distress."

"It becomes consequently a question of pressing and vital moment," the *Friend of India* naturally concludes, "whether some more effective means both of prevention and of relief than have yet been adopted cannot be found." Leaving the Government then to sound the trumpet of its own incomparable efficiency, our contemporary proceeds to consider the possibilities of irrigation as a means of prevention. Both too much and too little have been expected from irrigation. It has often been put forward as practically the one specific; it has also been put aside as a process that has been practically exhausted. Some advocates of it have omitted to study the physical character of particular districts; others have omitted to consider its potentialities otherwise than on the large scale of enterprise and expenditure, which alone has interest for the aspirants of officialdom. The *Friend of India*, to our thinking, does excellent service when it looks beyond irrigation by canals to irrigation by humbler means: (1) to storage of water, and (2) to "fuller utilisation, if possible, of natural stores of water of a perennial character." The storage of water requires reservoirs—"a method largely pursued by the rulers of India in past times, but now almost wholly neglected"—surely a grave reflection upon the administration. It may not be possible to construct reservoirs everywhere, or to get flowing water to fill them; but there cannot be the least doubt that there is room for very wide utilisation of this mode of keeping up a local

supply of water that would help indefinitely in seasons of distress. The stores of underground water, again, may be taken to be inexhaustible at every point, and "there are two methods of tapping this supply":—

One of these is the time-honoured method of wells from which the water can be drawn by hand or cattle power, and which could certainly be largely multiplied in most parts of the country with advantage. The other is the method of tubes or shafts, with powerful pumping machinery, which could be used either to increase the delivery possible in a given time where the water is near the surface, or to tap depths not readily accessible by ordinary wells and their appliances.

At all events, it is well worth investigation how far the latter method is practicable; and the other suggestions appear to carry conviction on their face.

The *Friend of India* further advocates a scheme of grain storage. Sir William Wedderburn has stated that in his time the rayat used to store up grain enough to serve his family needs for two or three years. The late Mr. Robert Knight, whose name will ever be memorable in the history of our contemporary, and who will ever be held in honour as a friend of India, persistently urged on the Government the creation of great central granaries as a provision against famine. Thus, writing in the *Statesman* (London) of November, 1880, he says (p. 536):—

Methods of preserving grain for fifty years together were, we are told, not uncommon under Native rule. Until some step of this kind is taken, or at all events its impossibility or un wisdom demonstrated, we refuse to believe that, as rulers of India, we have discharged our responsibilities either to its people, to civilisation, or to humanity.

Public granaries were a regular institution under Native rule in India, and the system was worked, we are told, somewhat as follows: "There were forts near most of the large towns in every district. These forts (represented by our Thaseels) were the residences of the officials, and a portion of each was set apart for the reception of grain, which was stacked underground. A certain portion of the revenue was collected in kind, and part of this was stacked for the use of the officials, the army, and dependents of the Durbar, besides a surplus for sale in times of crop failure and general distress, which was much more frequent than now. When the market price rose the granaries were thrown open to the public for sale by retail, the general restriction being from eight annas to one rupee per man per diem. The distribution, or sale, was checked and supervised by the Subahs, who, being Natives, and generally landlords in the neighbourhood, knew exactly the circumstances which surrounded them." We can see no "lion in the way" of our doing the same, but many and striking advantages.

Mr. (afterwards Sir) James Caird and Mr. Sullivan stated in their dissent to the Famine Report of their colleagues that it "might not only be expedient, but absolutely necessary," to establish State granaries as a precaution against famine; and Mr. Knight (*Statesman* (London), October, 1880, p. 445) points out that in the reply of the majority "the experience gained in Behar in 1874, when the Government of Lord Northbrook did actually form such stores under every disadvantage that could attend the haste with which the measure had to be adopted, is entirely ignored." There is very little substance in any of the objections that have been raised to such a plan, but the unlikelihood of inducing the Government to adopt it is objection practically conclusive. So the *Friend of India* tries in a somewhat different direction, and offers "a plan which is exempt from all these drawbacks, alleged or real; which would be thoroughly economical; which would involve no grain transactions or interference of any kind with trade on the part of the Government, and which would afford a complete solution of the problem of distribution"—in short, "a scheme of collective village storage of grain by the people themselves, for themselves."

The proposal of the *Friend of India* amounts to this. In years of ordinary harvests, each cultivator should be invited, or required—and no doubt voluntary action may be fairly anticipated—to contribute a certain proportion of the crop gathered by him (say a seer, or even half a seer, in every mound in the case of grain, or a like proportion in the case of other produce, which would of course be exchanged for grain) to a village store, placed in a special village granary under the control of a committee appointed by the villagers themselves. The grain would accumulate until there was enough to feed the needy portion of the village population for say six (or even twelve) months of severe scarcity; then further contributions would be suspended—the store would be complete and ready in case of need. Meanwhile it would be sealed up, to be opened only from time to time for examination of the grain, for the exchange of old grain for new (an operation which, in the case of rice, would be an important source of increase of the reserve), and for other purposes connected with the proper preservation of the grain. Then, when scarcity

began to press, distribution would be made to those really in need, to such as could not reasonably be expected to attend Government relief-works or as for one reason or another ought to be retained on the spot—absolutely free to all but the able-bodied of the poorer classes, or by way of loan to the more prosperous in temporary need, or by way of payment for services rendered. A just and economical distribution would be ensured by the committee of villagers, who could not but be cognisant of the condition of the applicants. Thus, "it would be entirely the fault of the committee if a single villager perished, or were even subjected to serious privation." At the same time, "not only would the Government be relieved of the most difficult part of its responsibility in the matter of famine relief, but the rest of its responsibility would be materially lightened." Besides, there is all the advantage of local self-help and local co-operation with the Government. The *Friend of India* works out its plan by an example in detail. There can be no question that its proposals merit the most sympathetic consideration on the part of the Government.

THE TREATMENT OF SUBJECT RACES.¹

JUSTICE and humanity have often been retarded by distinguished literary lights, who, when brought face to face with the practice of public affairs, have belied the liberalising tendency of their earlier writings, and have become the worst enemies of enlightenment and progress. Upon the other hand there are numerous instances of authors who have made their name, and have yet shown themselves willing to sacrifice or endanger their popularity at the call of higher duty. Mrs. Marks is one of these. Such as she in their strenuous advocacy of unpopular causes inevitably suffer curtailment of the circulation of their purely literary work; but if they do, the proof they give of their clear-sightedness in following out principles to their legitimate conclusions, and their readiness to suffer loss, if necessary, in doing so, give fourfold weight to principles advocated by them from the first. We have before us the July number of the *Journal of Ethics*, in which we find an admirable article by Mrs. Marks on the treatment of subject races, almost every line of which reflects the thought of those who "have found grace" to regard public affairs from an altruistic and world-wide, not a narrowly imperial, standpoint.

There is no nation in the world so much concerned in this question as the British, for no nation in the world governs so many subject races. But, alas, we forget that we do govern them, or only remember it to reckon up the millions of square miles over which the flag of England floats supreme. . . . There is a startling sentence in one of Hume's essays to the effect that free people make the most oppressive governors of dependencies. . . . The very fact of our being a free people makes it almost impossible for us to believe that we can ever do wrong in matters of government.

Oddly enough this confidence often deserts us, for no sooner are we invited to condemn any action of our countrymen in foreign parts than we profess an edifying humility, very far removed from our usual somewhat aggressive cockiness, and claim that "we do not know enough about it to express an opinion; but it is very unlikely that an Englishman would govern wrong; no doubt it is the fault of the people." With a few sentences like these we wash our hands of the destinies of one-fifth part of the human race.

We have not often found better exposed the hypocrisy and hollowness of the cry of the "white man's burden"—a burden that to all but a small minority consists but in glancing over the small modicum of "foreign" news in the morning paper, and in endeavouring to draw as much money as possible from "abroad" to be spent within the limits of the United Kingdom.

Five and a half millions of people are receiving relief; more than sixty millions are feeling the cruel pinch of hunger. Our imagination cannot grasp these vast numbers—we should be more keenly distressed to hear that half-a-dozen Welsh miners were buried alive, and that their rescuers might reach them too late. . . . We pass with far more real interest to the announcement that the Duke of —, whom we never saw, is going to marry some great heiress, of whom we never heard.

When brought to the test as a nation what real proof do we give that we are at all willing to bear "the white man's burden?" If in a distinct portion of the Empire governed from London and inhabited by people of our own blood and race, enjoying upon an average an income one-twentieth portion of our own, should we, as we do

towards India, turn a deaf ear to all suggestions for Imperial grants in famine time, or a generous sharing of common burthens for common benefits? In our monetary dealings with them should we adhere to the methods of the narrowest Chartered Accountancy?

I cannot help thinking that before we try to convert a subject people we ought to do them justice. I allude especially to the case of India. We often hear the enemies of missions (who are by no means always the friends of India) point disparagingly to the small results obtained. The only wonder is that these missions produce any results at all. They are too glaringly inconsistent with the political situation. . . . The people of India also suspect our motives, and think that while we profess to be anxious to establish the religion of Christ we are really trying to strengthen the foundations of the British Empire.

Mrs. Marks gauges to the full the domineering and insolent conduct of too many of our countrymen abroad.

A habit of insolent contempt is formed, which in the good-natured is often no worse than a passive ignoring of the existence of the despised. Whether it is active or only passive depends on the temperament and character of the individual Englishman. But there is always the invidious distinction: the conquered are always made to feel the presence of the intruder.

Here it would have been truer if she had used the word "generally" for "always." All who know India know how chivalrous is the bearing of a proportion—let us hope an increasing proportion—of our countrymen there. Yet what follows is sadly true:—

One cannot take up a book of which the scene is laid in India without seeing this, and it is astonishing to see the little effect which these usually unconscious and unintentional revelations make upon us.

But we must hold. We should only weaken Mrs. Marks' argument by attempting to condense it, and it is not always we give so much space to a notice of a magazine article. We have seldom within the limit of twenty-two octavo pages recognised greater perspicacity and sounder judgment than in the article before us.

NOTES FROM BOMBAY.

[FROM AN INDIAN CORRESPONDENT.]

BOMBAY, August 17.

The timely fall of rain has assured crops almost everywhere. Here and there the fall has been abnormal, and is likely to wash away the sowings. But on the whole there is little to cause anxiety. The heavy mortality from cholera, diarrhoea, and enteric fever is much to be deplored. Again, there is a recrudescence of the plague in Poona and Belgaum. As yet it has not assumed a virulent form, but there is no saying what the next few months may bring forth. It cannot be said that India is yet free from the physical calamities from which it has been suffering since 1896. And it is premature to say how far trade will revive, though the prospects seem hopeful, except those for the cotton industry, which depends on the issues in the Far East. Should the next three months bring a satisfactory solution of hostilities there, the Indo-Chinese trade, now absolutely paralysed, will have a fresh start. On the whole the prospects for the coming busy season are fair.

There is now a breathing-space for the Imperial Government. Meanwhile the report of the Select Committee on the Punjab Land Alienation Bill is published. But there does not appear to be any very material modification in the original draft. The hon. member who specially represents the Punjab in the Viceroy's Legislative Council is wholly dissatisfied with it. Sir Harnam Singh has drawn up a long minute of dissent. He states that the arbitrary character of the Bill remains untouched, and so far the measure will fail to give any satisfaction to the class in whose special behalf it has been introduced. He complains of the very imperfect definition of agriculturist. Who is to be considered an agriculturist? One of the sections says that the State will not recognise holders of land appearing on the register after 1870! The hon. member for the Punjab points out how mischievous will be the effect of fixing this arbitrary year. He says that hundreds and thousands of the poor classes have become owners of land in a variety of ways, by purchase, inheritance, gift and so forth. Are these to be entirely unrecognised simply because the State has fixed an arbitrary year? Apart from the evil effects of the Bill, if allowed to pass in its present form, on the economic conditions of the poor rayats in the Punjab, there will arise a serious political danger. Now one of the principal objects aimed at by the Bill is to give relief to the indebted peasantry. Sir

¹ "The Treatment of Subject Races." By Mrs. Alfred Marks, in *International Journal of Ethics*, July, 1900. Swan Sonnenschein and Co., London.

Harnam Singh asks whether that object will be achieved, or whether the Bill will not rather have the certain effect of increasing existing indebtedness and making agricultural lands "perpetual mortgages." It is apprehended that not only will the Bill fail in its object but that it will prove a "disastrous" evil politically. It behoves the English people, therefore, to understand the significance of this warning coming from a son of the soil in the Punjab. But somehow the Indian Government, so far as problems affecting the well-being of the masses are concerned, be it agriculture, or education, or aught else, does not care to listen to the opinions of the Indian people, and the result is that the population is discontented. This does not argue statesmanship. One witnesses with sorrow how far India has suffered, and is suffering, through the empiricism of the bureaucracy, which even after more than a century fails to understand the feelings and sentiments, the wants and wishes of the people.

The recent debate on the Indian Budget in the House of Commons has given no satisfaction to the people here. While they feel extremely grateful to Sir William Wedderburn, Mr. Souttar, Mr. Maclean, and other Parliamentary friends who sympathised with India and appealed to the British Government for generosity, they cannot help being dissatisfied with the sophistries of those in power. Even the *Times* of India is constrained to remark that the Government have behaved in this matter in a way which is creditable neither to its instinct of justice nor to its humanity. This is the general verdict. The friends of India, it is felt, have lost the battle simply because the Government made a party move, and because the Secretary of State is not strong enough to impress the interests of India on his colleagues in the Cabinet with that ability and vigour which a Randolph Churchill or a Stafford Northcote would have shown. The Calcutta *Statesman* says the same: "There only remained the possibility of a strong Minister for India, willing to fight for the interests of his department and for a cause which he believed to be right. Had Sir H. Fowler been at the India Office it is probable that there would have been a substantial grant to India, in spite of the war." Be it said to the credit of that erratic ex-Minister that he has all through supported those who have asked for the grant. The *Advocate of India*, too, has something pertinent to observe. It takes to task the logic of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who drew such an appalling contrast between the condition of the British Exchequer and that of the Indian Treasury. It entirely escaped him that for the last two years and upwards he and his colleagues have been subsidising the clergy and the landlords, to say nothing of that big slice of three-quarters of a million sterling which the "Long Spoon" Minister got for the sugar planters of the West Indies. It is only when India appears that the British Exchequer is found to be in a woeful condition of deficit.

But my own humble suggestion is that the friends of India would do well to agitate in and out of the House to secure for India that financial justice to which the aged Lord Northbrook so sympathetically drew the notice of his colleagues in the House of Lords. There are the arrears, adjusted arrears, admitted and acknowledged, of £2,400,000 due to India, overdrawn by the British Treasury in connexion with certain military and other charges. Why is the British Treasury shirking that large liability? Let our friends try to obtain this sum. I believe almost the entire body of the House must agree in seeing that this measure of justice is rendered to India.

ORDER AND PROGRESS IN INDIA.

THE following letter from Sir W. Wedderburn, M.P., appeared in the *New York Sun* of August 19th last:—

To the Editor of the *Sun*.—Sir,—I observe in your journal a correspondence as to the possibility of a general rising against foreigners in India similar to the "Boxer" movement in China. Your correspondent "Anglo-Indian" expresses the view that the principal safeguard against any such rising is to be found in the religious antipathies between Hindus and Mahometans. He points to the disturbances which in recent years have taken place in certain large towns between the followers of the two creeds, and notes with satisfaction that the effects of these conflicts have been to create a greater estrangement between the creeds than ever before existed. Will you allow me briefly to

state my reasons for holding that these religious dissensions are a source of danger, not of safety, and that the cause of order and progress in India will not be promoted by reliance upon the forces of race hatred and religious fanaticism?

In the first place, it is to be observed that this policy of pitting Mahometans against Hindus has been repudiated by the Government of India in the most unqualified terms. It is only a few years ago that serious riots broke out in connection with the "cow-killing" question. These riots were repressed by military force with considerable loss of life; and on that occasion the Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne, expressed his abhorrence of the sinister policy which would foment religious dissensions. In an important speech at Agra he indignantly rebuked those who could suspect the Government of such a policy, and said that he could "find no words strong enough to denounce the wickedness of those who say that the Government of India encourages these quarrels."

It thus appears that the doctrine of *Divide et Impera* does not find favour with the responsible authorities in India. I should be much surprised if it did, for it is evident that creed and race hatreds, leading up to secret conspiracy and open disorder, are a direct threat and danger to us as guardians of the *pax Britannica*. Suppose for a moment that we nursed these religious hatreds, and a conflict between Hindus and Mahometans became widespread among the towns and villages; what would our position be? We could not allow the disorder to continue. We should be compelled everywhere to call out the military and to shoot down impartially the combatants on both sides, rendering ourselves equally odious to all sections of the community.

Our safety lies in quite a different direction. It lies in making the people of India contented and prosperous by peaceful industry and educational progress, and in convincing them that their welfare is bound up with the maintenance of British rule. Fortunately, in following this simple and beneficent policy we have as eager allies a class of ever-increasing numbers and influence, the class who have accepted Western education, who have identified themselves with our methods, and who desire to give to our rule the stability and permanence of a national government.

Your correspondent "Anglo-Indian" in his letter has truly stated that the intelligence of the Indian people has made great progress of late years. Since the Indian universities were established, more than forty years ago, several generations of educated men have grown up. These men form the backbone of our administration, and have proved their intellectual power by sending a senior wrangler to Cambridge, and by taking the highest places in the Civil Service competitions in London. To the solution of questions affecting the future of India they bring not only the advanced ideas of modern teaching but also the importance of an ancient and conservative civilisation. They are therefore capable of advising us. They are also willing to do so, for they realise that under existing conditions India cannot stand alone. It is a choice between England and Russia; and they have no wish to exchange the rule of a nation which is progressive and freedom-loving for one that represents repression and reaction. The only other possibility for India is anarchy, which would be destructive of their best hopes and aspirations for India's future. From enlightened self-interest the educated classes are friends of British rule, and upon them we should rely as our best advisers and supporters, bearing in mind the words of Bacon: "It is without all controversy, learning doth make the minds of men gentle, generous, amiable, pliant to government; whereas ignorance makes them churlish, thwart, and mutinous."

The weak point of our position in India is that our administration, being bureaucratic and directed by foreigners, is out of touch with the people. The educated classes, as interpreters between the rulers and the ruled, have set themselves to remedy this defect. Being themselves in touch with the people, and knowing where the shoe pinches, they have, by means of the Indian National Congress, focused independent Indian opinion; and, year by year, in the resolutions and debates of that representative assembly they bring, dutifully and constitutionally, before Government the Indian view of Indian affairs. Where Congress influence extends there is no fear of any "Boxer" movement.

As I have already said, the great problem in India is an economic one—How to improve the condition of the masses.

If they are contented and prosperous all will be well. Lord Curzon, as Viceroy, has given evidence of possessing independence, vigour, and capacity. Let us hope that in seeking to solve this vital problem he will succeed in uniting the hearty endeavours of all friends of India.

W. WEDDERBURN.

House of Commons, London, August 8th.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

4,891,000 ON RELIEF.

The Secretary of State for India has received the following telegram from the Viceroy, dated September 4:—

"Famine. The rainfall has been comparatively light during the week, and more rain is wanted in parts of Hyderabad and Bombay, and Madras (Central), also in Behar and North-Western Provinces (East). General prospects continue to be, on the whole, favourable, especially in Central Provinces, Rajputana, and Gujarat. Mortality much reduced in Bombay Presidency (including Sind). Numbers in receipt of relief:—Bombay, 1,280,000; Punjab, 100,000; Central Provinces, 2,165,000; Berar, 231,000; Ajmere-Merwara, 68,000; Rajputana States, 186,000; Central India States, 88,000; Bombay Native States, 206,000; Baroda, 69,000; North-Western Provinces, 1,000; Punjab Native States, 25,000; Central Provinces Feudatory States, 43,000; Hyderabad, 400,000; Madras, 4,000; Bengal, 25,000. Total, 4,891,000."

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

"Following are figures for week ended August 25:—Famine-stricken districts, 3,024 cases of cholera, of which 2,337 were fatal. Native States—cases of cholera, 4,431; deaths from cholera, 2,985. Total number of deaths among numbers on relief works and gratuitous relief in British districts, 4,984, or 3·4·5 per mille. Rain moderate to slight. Agricultural prospects continue favourable, except in Bijapur, where crops are suffering for want of rain. Numbers on relief works steadily decreasing; numbers on gratuitous relief increasing."

THE MANSION HOUSE FUND.

The Mansion House Fund for the relief of the Indian famine sufferers amounted on Tuesday night to £364,352.

THE "INVESTORS' REVIEW" FUND.

We take the following from the current issue (September 1) 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	£546 9 7
N. S., South Australia	1 1 0
T. H. Moore, Esq., Sucre	4 0 0
Total to date	£551 10 7

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

THE PROPOSED NATIONAL GRANT. FURTHER OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

The *Pilot* writes (September 1):—

The latest telegrams about the famine in India are of a reassuring nature. Rain has continued to fall abundantly where it was most wanted, and though a population considerably larger than that of London is still being fed by Government, it is less by a million than it was a month ago, and will continue to diminish as the

agricultural operations which the rain renders possible call the people away to their homes and their work. The first phase of the famine is over, and we consider that the Government of India are fairly entitled to congratulation on the manner in which they have emerged from it. But we confess that we cannot regard the present and the immediate future without misgivings. For gigantic as is the task which the Government of India have accomplished, that which still remains to be accomplished is more gigantic still. It is comparatively easy, even in India, to save life; the difficulty is to preserve it when it has been saved—to give a motive for living to those who had lost all but life itself. The rain has come, and the land lies ready for ploughing and sowing—must, in fact, be ploughed and sown now, or the winter crops too will be a failure. But the rayat is physically debilitated and morally disheartened; he has no seed grain, his plough oxen are long since dead, and he has no means to buy them, for his jewellery and his very household utensils have been sold; he must borrow when prices are at famine rates what he will have to repay when they are normal, and thereby pile up debts which will crush him or his successors out of existence. And when he has done so, when he has ploughed and sowed, and, if it may be, reaped, there is still his rent or his land-revenue to pay, and he begins each new season with a bigger deficit.

To meet a situation like this the Government of India employ two methods: loans to the small cultivator to enable him to procure grain and cattle, and suspensions or remissions of land revenue—well devised and carefully safe-guarded measures, but depending mainly for their success on the liberality with which they are, or can be, worked. And the question at the moment is what measure of liberality is possible in the present condition of Indian finances. A month ago £13,000,000 had been already spent, of which £1,000,000 only was on account of loans. The Mansion House Fund has been allotted in its entirety, and not very much more aid can reasonably be expected from that quarter. A month ago, however, the real need for money had scarcely begun, for the monsoon was interrupted, and over a large part of India agricultural operations were still impossible. But now with the rain the need is instant. Whence is the money to come? The Government of Bombay, who are primarily concerned, have long since come to the end of the resources available from provincial revenues, and have piteously explained to the world that they depend on the charity of the Government of India for every penny that they spend. The Government of India in their turn already anticipate a deficit of nearly a million in their budget, and before their revenue can come in freely again the economic equilibrium, disturbed by the loss of crops (estimated at over forty millions), must have been to some extent restored.

Now everyone has known all along that sooner or later such a situation must arise; and from the moment when it was first possible to realise the extent of the famine we have urged upon her Majesty's Government that it is their duty, as it should be their pleasure, to come to the aid of India by making a substantial grant to the Famine Fund. For months past that proposal has been pressed upon them by politicians and by the Press of all shades of opinion. But it has been summarily rejected. Lord George Hamilton has told us that when he first came to the India Office, twenty-seven years ago, he was taught that India must be self-supporting; and, as regards normal conditions of Indian finance, the proposition is inconceivably sound. But we have to face abnormal conditions; and as India has already received nearly a million from the Mansion House in the last three years, we fail to see how she would in principle be less self-supporting if her Majesty's Government proffered their generosity. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was more cynically practical. "If we are to make a grant," he said, in effect, "we must borrow. But the Secretary of State for India has borrowing powers: let him use them. Why should we borrow rather than India?" Why? Because our credit is good and Indian credit is bad. Because we are a rich country and India is a poor country; and because what India borrows India has to pay for. However, the Secretary of State for India borrowed, and his ideal has been so far fulfilled that India has been fed at her own expense.

But the matter cannot be allowed to rest thus. Money is still wanted, and always more money; while the stream of private generosity, which has flowed more freely than most of us ventured to hope, is drying up. And, look at it in whatever way we may, we cannot resist the conviction that it is still the duty of the Imperial Exchequer to give, and to give liberally. We have drawn on India largely for the war in South Africa; India, it must be remembered, held Ladysmith, and Indian settlers, whom we have allowed to be treated like beasts of burden in our own colonies, have done heroic service to our wounded. We have drawn on India even more largely for the Chinese expedition: India has saved the Legations. And throughout both these crises Indians of all ranks and classes have shown a loyalty and devotion to the Queen-Empress which have been surpassed in none of our possessions, and princes and merchants have vied with one another in their offers of men and stores, and even of personal service, for the common cause. They have made their sacrifices; it is for us now to make ours. Not policy alone, but

honour requires it of us. It is a matter which touches very nearly the national conscience. For if we stand by and see these men die, or sink beneath the weight of a grinding poverty to the level of the beasts that perish, in what sense can we be said to be discharging our moral responsibilities as a Christian nation?

The *Speaker* said (September 1):—

It is now happily certain that the condition of the famine districts in India has greatly improved. The heavy rains have filled the rivers, tanks and wells, and for the first time in twelve months there is water enough in the Peninsula for man and beast. But the troubles of the rayat are by no means over. Lord Curzon has stated that "no food crops could be sown after August 1"; and it was after that date that the rains began to fall. Other crops no doubt have been sown with the prospect of a good return; for cotton, at least, the rainfall was not too late. Live stock has been terribly depleted. During the long drought fodder became so scarce and dear that even the bullocks granted to cultivators out of the Famine Fund were dying of starvation. It is only too probable that in thousands of cases the rayat's whole capital has vanished; in other words, the cultivators of the soil throughout a considerable part of our Indian Empire are not in a position to carry on their industry. Surely this is an "Imperial question" to which England has given too little thought. There are still five and a half millions of our Indian fellow subjects "on relief," while for those who can manage to exist without charity, "prices," as the Viceroy cables, "are very high everywhere still." And yet Lord George Hamilton makes no demand on the Imperial Exchequer, and his "remissions" of taxation are in reality "suspensions" only, to be made good by the extortion of arrears in the next season of plenty. We do not deny that there is the strongest objection to Imperial doles. But what is to be said of a dole Government which spends 100 millions to improve the African property of Park Lane hotels, and cannot spare five for the famine-stricken Natives of our greatest dependency.

The *Daily Graphic* writes (September 1):—The satisfactory rainfall in India is at last beginning to produce an effect upon the numbers on famine relief. The total has now dropped to a little under 5,000,000. The reduction is something to be grateful for, but the absolute figure is still appalling. Five million persons in receipt of Government relief, to keep them from starvation, means probably forty or fifty millions who are feeling the pinch of famine, but can just fend for themselves. It is as if the whole population of the United Kingdom were hanging on the verge of starvation. In the face of this enormous and prolonged calamity that has overwhelmed a relatively poor country, it is melancholy to have to record that the richest country in the world is doing practically nothing. For reasons that are sufficiently well known, the Mansion House Fund this year has produced less than a quarter of the sum produced in 1897; yet the need now is at the very least double as great. It is impossible to hope for any great increase of private subscriptions, and an overwhelming case therefore arises for a national grant. India has never hesitated to contribute her full share to the common objects of the Empire. Indian Princes and Sepoys alike have voluntarily subscribed to assist the wounded in South Africa, and to aid in the operations in China. It is now our turn to act, and the Government may feel assured that the whole country would approve a generous national grant to assist our starving fellow-subjects.

REVENUE COLLECTIONS IN THE FAMINE DISTRICTS.

We reproduce, especially for the information of our English readers, the following important letter signed "J.," and dated August 5, which appeared in the *Times of India* (Overland Weekly Edition) of August 11:—

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES OF INDIA."

Sir,—The monsoon has at length returned to the hard stricken land to relieve the tension of the situation and gladden the hearts of millions. Most of the famine sufferers will now be going back from the relief camps to their village homes and fields, and assisted with subsistence advances and a free distribution of the dole to their dependents, will be fairly able to resume their agricultural operations. There is, however, an upper stratum of distress—little touched by direct measures of State relief—which is represented by the bulk of our poorer rayats—who have never thrown themselves on the charity of the State, but have been manfully struggling to bear up against their misfortunes, and are entitled to every sympathy. *Tukari* advances, which are being so freely given, will no doubt go some way towards mitigating their hardships; but something more is needed to put heart and hope into them and give them a fresh start after a trial of such severity, and that is, as you have so often urged, a broad and large-minded policy of land revenue suspensions and remissions. And, we may be sure, nothing will redound more to the honour of Lord Northcote's Government than such a measure of relief to the hard-pressed rayats of the Presidency, based on a generous appreciation of their difficulties.

In a former letter I ventured to call attention to the existing orders of Government in regard to the collection of land revenue in the famine districts. As will have been gathered, these orders—intended when first issued in the last famine to meet a special emergency of a political character, and defeat a widespread "no payment of land revenue" combination, and which were found effective for the purpose—were, however, altogether out of place to a normal scheme of relief. They are—Firstly, utterly inconsistent with the broad principle laid down by the Famine Commission and the oft-repeated pledge of Government in accordance with the principle, viz., that "no one should be forced to borrow in order to pay the assessment" in a season of such distress. And indeed, as a matter of fact, large numbers of these poorer classes of rayats—including both land occupants and cultivating tenants—are at present borrowing, directly or indirectly, to meet their liabilities to the State.

Secondly, the present instructions of Government in the matter of land revenue collection are open to objection on the ground that they recognise no crop-failure—no matter what its extent or nature—as any ground *per se* for granting exemption, but order the levy of the assessment from all classes of cultivators—whether the land yields them anything or not—except in extreme cases. *Absolute want of means* is alone excepted—irrespective of the out-turn of the soil—as giving the rayat a claim to relief. "Government are unable," says the Government Resolution of April 7, 1900, "to accept the view that nobody who has lost his crop should be pressed to pay his land revenue in the current year. Whether the assessment is a tax or rent, it is a public due, which a man of means is under as strong an obligation to pay punctually as he is to discharge a private debt." Such unqualified insistence on payment of land revenue—even in a year of such disastrous crop-failure, as a matter of almost religious duty, however it may be in strict accordance with the abstract theory of public taxation, is nevertheless opposed—(a) to the recommendation of the Famine Commission of 1880, who write (in paragraph 166, Vol. I, of their report): "The duties devolving on Government in relation to the class of landholders are for the most part of a different character from those that attach to it in its relation to the landless classes. . . . Those who possess beneficial interests in the land do not in times of famine as a rule suffer the extremity of want or go in danger of their lives, but a large number of them are often severely pinched or obliged to borrow money for their support, and those who borrow at such a time do it on terms which make repayment difficult and may embarrass them for life. It becomes therefore the part of Government to assist such persons—who are in the position of tenants or co-proprietors of the land"—by suspending the collection of the ordinary instalments of land revenue, the payment of which must add to the difficulties of all who are hard pressed, and suggest "when information is received from the Agricultural Department that the failure of the main crop or one of the main crops of the year has been so great that no surplus produce is left to the landowners above their own necessary consumption and that of their dependents, instructions should be issued to the collectors" to suspend the levy of land revenue "on account of the crop which has been lost";

(b) To the opinion of the Lyall Famine Commission, who point out in paragraph 529 of their Report that "the duty and policy of making such remission to the landholders in years of absolute and abnormal failure of crop from any cause is an old obligation on the State, based on its original title to take land revenue";

(c) To the prescriptions of the Famine Relief Code, which authorises (Sections 137-140) the Collector to suspend the collection of instalments of land revenue in the case of an abnormal failure of the harvest, causing total or almost total destruction of the crops over a considerable area, "and with the sanction of Government to remit those suspended arrears after individual enquiry into each case";

(d) Moreover, to the former practice of the Presidency. In the Famine of 1876-77, Government in its Resolution No. 6557 of November 15, 1876, directed that "where, as is the case in the large number of villages in the Sinner Taluks, there has been what practically amounts to an entire failure of crops, the revenue is to be wholly remitted"; and laid down as a general principle that "broadly speaking, where the loss has been eight annas no remission should be granted; where it is more than eight and less than twelve one instalment should be remitted; and where it is more than twelve then the whole may be remitted as the Collector and his assistants think proper."

Thirdly, again, the present instructions are open to objection on the ground that they involve an examination into individual cases before such relief is allowed, and necessitate, in consequence, reliance to an unsafe extent on the judgment of the subordinate village official with whom the final decision must practically rest—however subject to checks by superior officers—as to whether a land occupant has the means of paying the assessment or not.

The Famine Commission of 1880 deprecated any such individual enquiry, mainly for the reason that when the work is entrusted to inferior officials, as it must needs be in this case, "it could hardly fail to lead to serious malpractices," and recommend that the measure of relief in this respect, as decided on, should be of general applicability, pointing out "that by making the degree of relaxation uniform over considerable tracts of country according to some uniform and clearly ascertained rule, the evils of personal favouritism, official

corruption and oppression would be to a great extent obviated" (*vide* Report, Vol. II, chap. III, paragraphs 5 and 8 of Section 3).

Fourthly and lastly, there is the further objection to the present instructions that relief of the kind under them is strictly confined to suspensions of the levy of the assessments, no remission being permitted except here and there, and in extreme cases in which the Divisional Commissioners are satisfied that there is no chance of an occupant being able for several years to come to pay what is due without borrowing. (G. R. of April 7, 1900.) Fifty per cent. of the land revenue in these famine districts has already been collected, and some 20 to 30 per cent. more is in course of collection, so that the final suspension will not be more than 20 to 30 per cent., at the outside, of the total demand—and with practically no remissions.

This is the whole extent of relief of the sort—20 to 30 per cent. suspensions—Government seems at present disposed to allow to the hard-pressed rayats of these famine-stricken parts, and that, too, in a year in which the loss of crops and cattle has been unprecedentedly disastrous. The outcome of the soil is not expected even to come up to nine per cent. of a normal yield.

A more liberal policy of relief was followed in the famine of 1876-77 in this Presidency, as well as in the North-West and Central Provinces in the famine of 1896-97. In the famine of 1876-77, the crop yield was about 32 per cent. of a normal average, ranging from 62.3 per cent. in Satara to 3.6 in Sholapur, and the suspensions of land revenue in the affected districts amounted to 29.2 lakhs, and the remissions to 3.1 lakhs on a total demand of 141 lakhs. The local Government contemplated a far larger measure of relief—particularly in the shape of remissions—but Lord Lytton's Government, concurring in the suggestions of Sir R. Temple, their Famine Delegate, unfortunately interposed its veto. In the last famine in the N.-W. Provinces, where the yield of the *kharrif* or autumn crop was 39.25 per cent., and of the *rahi* or spring crop, 60.75 per cent. of a normal average, the suspensions aggregated 147.3 lakhs on a total demand of 530 lakhs or 28 per cent., and of this suspended revenue 60 lakhs were ultimately, with the sanction of the Government of India, remitted, or 11 per cent. (*vide* N.-W. Provinces Famine Report, p. 27). In the Central Provinces the outcome of crops was about 39 per cent. of a full yield and 46 per cent. of an average (*vide* Central Provinces Famine Report, p. 42), varying from 70 per cent. in Sambalpur to 17 per cent. in Bilahat, and of the total current and arrear demand of 94.8 lakhs, 56.3 lakhs were collected, leaving an uncollected balance of 38.4 lakhs, or 41 per cent., and out of this suspended arrear full 20.7 lakhs, or nearly 60 per cent., were remitted (*vide* Material and Moral Progress Report for 1897-8, p. 100). In this famine the policy of the Central Provinces Administration is understood to be even more liberal. Mr. Fraser, the large-hearted Chief Commissioner, who is at present piloting these Provinces through a crisis of unparalleled severity with such skill and ability, is believed to have in contemplation remissions of more than one-half of the present year's demand. And in granting these remissions, no distinction, it is said, will be made as between those who are able to pay, and those who are not, without borrowing; but crop failure will be taken as the only standard by which to apportion the measure of relief in all cases—only remissions on the Malguzars' estates will be made strictly conditional on their extending like relief to their tenants.

On our side this year, though our loss of crops and cattle is much more disastrous than anywhere else, or at any time previous, the policy of the local Government is rather one of extremely restricted relief, viz., only to suspend the collection of land revenue, and that, too, in cases where it could not be collected without undue pressure and suspension of the levy is absolutely necessary—the suspended arrears to stand over till the return of better seasons—and to remit it in none but extreme cases. This policy, as you once suggested, is no doubt in a sense imposed upon it by the principles of its land revenue system, which does not favour remissions of assessments even in years of drought. The working theory of the system is that the land assessments are so light and moderate, and are based on so liberal a consideration of seasonal variations and vicissitudes, that they scarcely render necessary any large relaxation in the enforcement of the State demand—no matter how serious the crop-failure; and the view is strongly held that, as a result of this liberal policy of land revenue administration, the Bombay rayat is so prosperous, and has always such an abundance of means he is able in good years to lay up—that he is well able—even in circumstances of abnormal harvest failure—generally speaking to meet all his liabilities, and that all that may be necessary in hard cases is a postponement at the most of the levy of the demand.

This roseate view, however, of the rayat's position has unfortunately little to rest on, and is in fact one of those fondly-cherished illusions of the Bombay Land Revenue Administration which fact and argument alike are powerless to dispel. All available indications would seem to point to the disquieting conclusion that under the Land Settlements at present in force, his condition is going from bad to worse and his resources are continually failing. We find to go beyond the four Deccan districts under the Relief Act, we find that a larger and larger breadth of occupied land is here year by year passing from the hands of the rayats into those of the sowkars—by mortgage or sale. The mortgage figures for the three years 1896-7-8-9 are as under:—

Years.	Mortgages without Possession.	Mortgages with Possession.	Total Number of Land Mortgages.
1896-7	26,916	24,943	51,859
1897-8	33,137	34,045	67,182
1898-9	24,258	18,514	42,772
Total	84,311	77,502	161,813

vide Table A given in the Registration Annual Report for 1897-98 and 1898-99.

The total number of holdings, both Government and alienated, in these districts is 263,637; and assuming that the mortgage period is usually three years, it would appear that full 61 per cent. of the total number of holdings are at this moment in the hands of the sowkars. The sales of land during these three years were 51,918, or about 20 per cent.

Year.	Number of Sales.
1896-7	16,385
1897-8	19,645
1898-9	15,888
Total	61,918

So that the two classes of transactions taken together reveal what will be recognised as a most distressing feature of the situation, viz., that over 80 per cent. of the total number of holdings in those four districts has passed during these years by mortgage or sale into the hands of the money-lenders from those of the cultivating rayats, who, as a consequence of such transfer, sink down more or less to a status little removed from that of predial slaves—a state of things, be it remembered, reached after twenty years' working of a special legislative measure intended for the relief of the agriculturists.

Even official optimism will not claim such a position of things as any evidence of the growing prosperity of the rayat in these Deccan districts, and matters are not much better in other parts. And would it be too much to hope that Government will not allow any such view of his condition and resources—which is so utterly at variance with the facts—to influence and colour its action in this respect and interfere with the adoption of a large and beneficent measure of relief such as alone would meet the needs of the time, and do a great deal effectually to help him out of his difficulties?

But it is further urged, in defence of Government's present policy of restricting relief in this direction within such narrow limits, that it has the high sanction of the Famine Commission of 1880 (*vide* Lord Northcote's Poona speech). It is no doubt true that the Famine Commission did recommend in 1880 such a cautious line of action in the matter, pointing out that "it is not expedient to remit any part of the land revenue till it becomes certain that it cannot be collected without undue pressure on the persons liable for it. The demand suspended should stand over in the expectation of an early return of prosperity," etc., etc. (Report, Vol. I, paragraph 169). But it has to be borne in mind that when the Strachey Commission reported in 1880—i.e., some twenty years ago—they had no condition of things to deal with so grave and so alarming as that which confronts us to-day. A year of unprecedentedly calamitous loss of crops and cattle, following on a long series of more or less unfavourable seasons, and that, too, coming upon a peasantry hard-pressed and struggling in the best of times—this constitutes a position of exceptional difficulty in which such restricted relief as Government at present has in view can assuredly be no adequate alleviation of the rayat's misfortunes. As you have more than once urged, with such unanswerable force, *large and liberal remissions*—not mere suspensions—of land revenue, and they, too, based on general considerations and applied to large areas over which uniform conditions prevail—instead of to individual holdings and apportioned to the extent of crop failure—this is the most pressing requirement of the hour; and Lord Northcote's Government may once more be appealed to to give a generous consideration to the rayat's present difficulties, and help him in the hour of his sore need. A rigorous levy of the State demand on the land at a time like this most grievously add to his already heavy embarrassments, from which he might find it a hard struggle to extricate himself for years to come. Referring to this aspect of the question, the Lyall Commission observe (*vide* paragraph 539 of their Report): "We take this opportunity of remarking that any want of proper liberality in granting these remissions in time of great loss of crops and cattle would in our opinion be inconsistent with the present policy of readiness to make great changes of laws and regulations in the hope of saving the agricultural classes from indebtedness;" and adds, "this seems plain, but with a strongly departmental system of government such an inconsistency is not impossible. Each department is apt to find reasons for its own hard and fast rules, though it is apt to cry against the rigidity of those of other departments."

A large and generous measure of relief in this direction will, on the other hand, naturally help the hard-pressed rayat in tiding over the time of sore trial and keep clear of ruinous borrowing. And, if you trust me to repeat your appeal to the authorities on his behalf. It may not be out of place to point out that a liberal policy of land revenue remissions in a year of distress like this—whatever sacrifice of revenue it might entail—would eventually recoup the State for such present sacrifice a hundred-fold, and besides can involve no injustice whatever, as is sometimes supposed, to the "general taxpayer." Eighty-six per cent. and more of our population is agricultural, and the rayat is the source of our food and of our life and strength; and it is only not to be forgotten in this connexion that it is he—not the income-tax paying merchant—who bears, Atlas-like on his broad shoulders, the main weight of public burdens. But when he totters under the heavy load—as he does at a time like this—it becomes the sacred duty of the State to help him and seek by every means in its power to ameliorate his lot.

Government apparently are of opinion, however, relying on the much-misread expression of the last famine, that any such large remissions as are suggested are scarcely necessary, and will involve an unjustifiable throwing away of public revenues. If no such remissions were needed in 1896-7—practically the land revenue for the year, almost to the last rupee having come in with marvellous ease—none will be needed in this year either. This is, however, a debatable point, and I would, with your permission, reserve it for another occasion.

August 5.

J.

MR. G. P. PILLAI ON THE CAUSES OF FAMINE.

The lecture last Sunday morning at the Brixton Progressive Club, Mayall Road (says the *Brixtonian* of August 31), was given by Mr. G. P. Parameswaram Pillai, B.A., editor of the *Madras Standard*, the subject being "The Indian Famine." Owing probably to the fine weather, the hall was certainly not so full as it ought to have been. However, an appreciative audience frequently applauded the lecturer in his progress from point to point. The lecturer commenced by stating that the present famine in India was the worst famine of the century. It affected an area of 420,000 square miles, containing 62 millions of people, and the number of people obtaining relief was six million, though owing to the recent fall of rains it has decreased slightly. The famine of 1897 was bad in itself, but compared to the famine of 1900 it was by no means severe. The area affected that year was only 275,000 square miles, and the highest number of people on relief was 34 millions. The present famine was also very disastrous in its results, considering that 7,000 to 8,000 died weekly of cholera alone in the famine districts. Cholera, fever, dysentery, and other diseases were incidental to famine, and the total number of deaths that may be traced to famine directly or indirectly must be very large indeed. Mortality among cattle has been unprecedentedly high. After giving a more detailed description of the condition of the people in the famine districts, the lecturer proceeded to enquire how it was that famines were so very frequent during British administration in India. Since 1770 there have been twenty-two famines in India, or one famine in every six years on an average. During the earlier years of British occupation it might be said that some of the famines were caused by constant wars and internal disturbances. But it is surprising that even since 1858, when India was brought directly under the Crown, there have been ten serious famines, and the consequent loss of life has been ascertained to be at least fifteen millions. What, then, are the causes of these frequent famines? Some say they are due to the improvidence of the people, but the Deccan Riots Commission, which enquired into this theory, came to the conclusion that there was nothing to substantiate the charge. Others urge—and Lord George Hamilton among them—that the great increase of population is the cause. But the last census report of India has revealed the fact that so far as the rate of increase of population is concerned, India comes twentieth in a list of twenty-eight of the most important countries of the world! The primary cause of famine is certainly want of rain, and the agricultural condition of the majority of the people is to some extent responsible. But absence of rain cannot lead to starvation and death if at other times people are able to lay by any stores of grain, as they used to do in days of yore. One of the chief causes of famine is the heavy assessment of land obtaining in many parts of India. In some places, such as Bengal, the assessment on land is light, and consequently famines rarely occur there, and when they do occur, no loss of life takes place. But in other parts, such as Bombay, Madras, and Central Provinces, the assessment is high—so high sometimes as one-half of the net produce of the land ascertained in normal years. Under Hindu rules only one-fifth of the gross produce of the land was appropriated by Government, but the high rate of assessment under British rule, the constant increase of such assessment, the inability of landholders to appeal to civil courts for redress in cases of excessive assessment, and the levy of taxation on water which is supposed to percolate to lands, have contributed to the great poverty of the people and their consequent suffering in times of famine. In England the average income of a man is £40 a year, whereas in India, according to Lord Cromer, it is twenty-seven rupees, or less than £2. We have the official authority of the late Sir William Hunter, who stated that forty millions of people in India went through life on insufficient food. Another chief cause of famine in England is the shape of salaries, annuities, pensions, interest, &c. Even the Secretary of State for India and his Council are paid by the Indian taxpayer, and no member of Parliament has the right to propose a reduction of his salary in the House. Besides the drain, India is unjustly burdened with the cost of such wars as the Abyssinian Expedition, the Perak Expedition, the Egyptian War, the Sudan War, &c. Indian soldiers maintained by the Indian taxpayer are often employed elsewhere. If the soldiers in India are just sufficient to maintain the Indian Empire, they ought not to be utilised for wars in South Africa, China, and other places; it is unjust to make India pay for such a large army. The Government of India is also the costliest Government in the world, and no steps are being taken to economise the cost of administration. One of the chief ways in which retrenchment could be effected is to employ a larger number of natives of the country in offices which they are competent to fill. But natives are systematically excluded from the higher ranks of the service. According to a Parliamentary return published in 1892, out of 2,388 officers drawing salaries of 10,000 rupees a year and upwards in India, only sixty were natives of India; and while the total salary of the latter was 1,002 (calculated in thousands of rupees), that of Englishmen was 42,070. Generally, the people of England were indifferent to the interests of India. There cannot be a better instance of it than the refusal of Parliament to offer a paltry grant of five million pounds to India. It is strange that both the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the leader of the House of Commons should have opposed this grant, though even such Conservative papers as the *Times* and the *Standard* had supported it. Though India had, as a whole, stood by England in the South African War, and though

India went to the rescue of England in China, no political concession has been granted to India by the present Government, and no practical sympathy shown. They would not even offer a parliamentary grant, though even Turkey and China had come forward to help poverty-stricken India. Whether they succeed in establishing another empire in Africa or not, they ought to take the necessary steps to consolidate the Indian Empire, take the people more into their confidence, and convince them by their acts that the interests of the ruled are identical with the interests of the ruler.

In the discussion which followed, Dr. Smith, Dr. Martin, and Messrs. Hubbard, McGibbon, Dyle, Gardner, and Turner took part, the general contention being that the picture of the Indian famine and the description of its causes, as presented them by the lecturer, could not have been more accurately put before them. To the few criticisms which were made in the opposite direction, the lecturer replied *ad libitum*, and the proceedings closed with a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Pillai for his very able speech.

SUCKING THE INDIAN ORANGE.

[FROM THE "INVESTORS' REVIEW."]

Whatever the source of India's woes may be so far as the laws of Nature are concerned, no rain, however liberal, can now save a population of well-nigh 100,000,000 from being at the very least decimated before the end of the present year. In other words, we stand to lose 10,000,000 of the actual and potential taxpayers in India by this famine, and not the most violent and valiant of our Empire upholders can contemplate such a contingency without qualms that all may not be quite so perfect in our methods of government and exploitation as we seek to persuade ourselves.

In all business circles we find an optimism about our capacity as rulers, our wisdom and judgment as financiers, and the general efficacy of our administrative measures in dealing with dependencies that actually crows the mind which endeavours to place the truth in any measure before the public. Put to the test, in no direction has our high-spirited, merry-go-round sort of financial methods of conducting our affairs or foreign affairs proved to be of enduring excellence. What has been most prominently developed even at home by our system of throwing every burden possible upon the future—except the current interest upon debts and other forms of capitalisation indulged in without limit—except an appalling amount of misery amongst whole classes of our working population? With each advance in the path of apparent civilisation certain classes of the nation have been compelled to suffer increased inconvenience and greater difficulty in obtaining, not exactly the means of existence, but the means of comfortable and decent existence. If this is the case at home, where our population has all the advantages drawn from what may be called its investments in tributary states and dependencies, how much more must it be so with those dependencies themselves which are subject to the fullest extent to that draining process inseparable from our belauded financial method of fastening upon a country, loading it with burdens, and calling the result progress in civilisation?

Turning over our *Speaker* many weeks ago, always an interesting and suggestive paper now, we came upon a review of a little book by Mr. Romesh C. Dutt, entitled "The Civilisation of India." The essay did not strike us as being quite up to the average high level of *Speaker* articles, but it was interesting and kindly, and we should have passed it by without notice except for that little Latin word *tributum* which is stuck in against the word "tribute" in an extract from Mr. Dutt's pages described as "a modelled panegyric of the Mahomedan dynasties." Tribute, yes, we know; Anglo-Indians and economists of all descriptions in this country have for many years scorned the views put forth by the present writer that the money drawn from India by us as administrators of the country, as developers of it and so on year by year, is to a very large extent mere tribute and nothing more. It is something drawn out of the country with no compensation at all. For example, as the minority reporters in that Commission appointed to deal with the administration of Indian expenditure point out, the cost of the Army of India rose between 1884 and 1885, and 1895 and 1896, by no less than 60 per cent. Part of that expenditure was made in India itself, no doubt; but no increase can take place in the cost of such an appendage of Imperialism, even within the Peninsula, without adding to the outgoings in the form of tribute. The Indian taxpayer has to remit the fruit of his toil, be it tea, indigo, sugar, cotton, wheat, rice, or any other product of the soil, getting nothing back.

The military expenditure is naturally the most glaring of the examples that can be brought forward in support of the statement that the money drawn every year from India and distributed in this country is in great part tribute, but much of its Civil Service charges are of the same description, and these have risen almost as heavily as the military within the last thirty years, since the latter became a direct dependency of the British Crown governed in the Queen's name in lieu of being in the nominal possession of a trading company. One cause of the growth in civil expenditure is the multiplication of offices in India held by Europeans, and another is the short services, comparatively speaking, that these Europeans are expected to give, and the consequent furloughs. Hence arises the growth of "home charges" in the form of pensions and allowances—money drained away in increasing amounts from India, which, were its native servants of India mostly natives of the localities where they are expected to work, as was the case under Mahomedan emperors, would remain there. As it is, from much of this expenditure India receives no appreciable benefit, direct or indirect. It is, therefore, "tribute."

Expenditure of this kind even when it does grow, as grow it will everywhere, would at least stand a chance of being disbursed again within the country, shedding back some of its benefits on the com-

munity whose labour provided for it were conditions normal. Nothing of the kind happens in India, because the conditions are abnormal, unnatural, and in many ways pernicious, and consequently the tendency of our financial system there is to increase her poverty. There is a steady bleeding to death of the country going on, no matter by what name we may cover it, one result of which is the perfect helplessness of the entire labouring community when a drought comes. It is debt-consumed and tax-harrowed, destitute therefore, of resources of any kind, and immediately falls a victim to hunger and the diseases that follow upon hunger.

One thing we continually pride ourselves upon is the enormous benefit that has accrued to India from our railway building there. "We have opened up the country," the City man complacently tells you, fumbling his watch seals or otherwise expressing his perfect self-confidence and full assurance that of all forms of human wisdom the wisdom of the British moneylender, company projector, and railway engineer is the highest the world has yet seen. It is useless to ask such beings whether at home here, rural England has benefited by the spread of railways like a fisherman's net all over the country, whether the land is better cultivated and country districts more populous now than before railways were in existence. We are stared at if we ask such questions, and by some put down as little better than a lunatic. This point of view none the less is most pertinent. To the enquiry whether India or the Indian rural population had really gained or lost by the introduction of railways, the capitalist's reply—serene and self-satisfied—is that if these railways are paying large dividends or yielding large surpluses over working expenses, therefore they must be "doing good" to the country. But that by no means follows. Look at the East Indian Railway, for instance, which habitually works its business as a carrier of man, beast, and goods for between 28 and 32 per cent. of the gross receipts. Now, taken over a series of years, what does that low percentage mean? It must mean one of two things. Assuming the line to be kept in proper condition, which we do not doubt, the inference must be either that the servants of the company are underpaid, or that the charges exacted for its services are, on an average, considerably higher than the character of the traffic and condition of the population warrant. No other Indian railway is able to conduct its business much under 50 per cent. of the gross receipts, although both the Eastern Bengal and the Bombay and Baroda do sometimes contrive to bring their percentages below 40 per cent. The East Indian has a great business, lying, as it does, in the richest province of our dependency and serving the greatest city contained in it, but it employs this position—assuming its wages bill to be fair and that it gives adequate means of subsistence to the swarms of servants it has to keep—to maintain its rates far above what they ought to be if it is to benefit first of all the community it serves instead of drawing away the people's substance with a single eye to the profit of its own stockholders.

We know how railways work in this country under their monopoly, and how they have systematically already depopulated whole regions of the kingdom by their capricious and excessive charges for the carriage of goods, is not the same thing happening in India? Must it not be happening when such a company as the East Indian Railway is able to conduct its affairs at a profit so disproportionate to those of any other line either in India or anywhere else? We ask this question because it seems to us that here we have an extreme example of the kind of "tribute" that the construction of great public works such as these railways brings into existence in India. It would be bad enough were any of the excessive or other profits accruing within the Peninsula, or at least accumulated there in the hands of wealthy Natives who, as a class, would dispense a portion of their riches; but when we consider that the whole of the profit, whether excessive or otherwise, comes home, or almost the whole of it, and that along with this we have the gains of every other form of business, all acquired more or less on a monopoly footing, being steadily and always remitted to this country, it surely ought to be plain to the commonest understanding that the first question any enquirer into the beneficent or other effects of our rule would endeavour to do his best to elucidate is: Are these various methods of developing India, civilising it, and causing the whole of the wealth brought into the markets of the world costing more than the people can afford or not? We have been looking again at that curious document, the majority report of the Royal Commission above alluded to, and anything more dreary and hopeless we have never seen in relation to India. It is dreary just because this one vital question is not only ignored by the Commissioners, but is not even suspected by them to exist. So comfortable in mind are we that everything is for the best in any part of the world where the feet of Englishmen descend to be planted as those of a conqueror, that to call in question the results of our great expenditure of capital at 5 per cent. and otherwise in the Indian Peninsula is to the average city financial man and to the average political expert something akin to the sin of blasphemy. Nevertheless, this is the one question that we shall have to set ourselves to solve at no distant date unless we are prepared to moon our way onwards, jingling the gold in our pockets and thinking what a mighty people we are, until the hunger of India comes to gnaw at our own hearts. For the capital that is not handled altruistically with a view to benefit first "those others," the people, in the end devours itself.

After the above was written there came into our hands a copy of that ably-conducted paper, the *Advocate of India*. In this was found an interesting and valuable article dealing with this very question of railway finances in the Peninsula. It is full of cogency. After pointing out that apart from the notorious loss entailed by the guaranteed railways upon the Indian taxpayer, it goes on to allege that the country has lost to date nearly Rs. 380,000,000 on the State lines. "It will not do to jump to optimistic conclusions simply on the basis of a prosperous year like a famine year." What sarcasm lurks in that final clause! The writer scolds "moral blessings," as well he may, and insists that "the building of all sorts of railways in all sorts of directions most indiscriminately has only one result in the end; they are a perennial burden to the taxpayer." One-fourth the amount wasted on railways that involve loss spent on irrigation work

would have infinitely benefited the taxpayer, whereas now he is strangled, a prey to ever-recurring famine. The remainder of the article is so pertinent that we take the liberty of quoting it here entire.

THE LOWER BURMA CHIEF COURT.

The Times of Wednesday last (September 5) printed the following letter:—

SIR,—In your issue of yesterday appears a brief summary of the reply of the Government of India to the unanimous protest of the non-official residents of Rangoon, European and Asiatic, against the appointment of a Burma civilian, who is not a barrister, to the Chief Judgeship of the newly-formed Chief Court of Lower Burma. Parliament has laid down that the Chief Justice of every Indian High Court shall be a barrister. What is there in the circumstances of Lower Burma to justify what looks like an evasion of the intention of Parliament?

The Government of India gives several grounds for treating Lower Burma exceptionally. First, to quote from your columns, the Government of India says "it was considered desirable that the inspection of the subordinate Courts of the interior should be vested in the Chief Judge." That is hardly a completely accurate statement of the case. The Courts Bill, as originally drafted, provided for inspection by the Chief Judge in person, but the Select Committee unanimously recommended, and the Viceroy's Council unanimously accepted, the amendment, that the inspection should be carried out by the Chief Judge, or, as is the rule in all the Indian Provinces, by any other Judge deputed by him. The Select Committee or the Legislative Council never contemplated that the principal appointment in the new Court should be a closed one for Indian civilians. Had this intention of Government been known, strenuous opposition would have been offered in Council. Further, a Chief Judge who is to deal effectively with judicial work at headquarters will be quite unable to travel, often for weeks on end, in remote districts for the purpose of examining masses of clerical work, the records of subordinate officials, for of such is the work of inspection.

The Government of India apparently thinks the judicial training acquired by an Indian civilian sufficient for a Chief Judge. For "Indian civilian" it is necessary to read "Burma civilian" to understand the astonishment and dismay with which the news of the appointment was received in Burma. In the older Provinces of India a civilian selects, if he thinks fit, the judicial side, and a judicial officer he remains. In Burma, on the other hand, there is no separation of executive from judicial functions. The same official is police officer, magistrate, revenue collector, forest officer, public works officer, and what not. The district officers of Burma are probably as hardworked men as there are in the whole Empire. Their multifarious duties, as was very forcibly pointed out during the debate on the Bill by Mr. Donald S. P., the able civilian who represents Burma in the Imperial Council, leave them very little time for judicial work. Promotion has come, not to judicial officers and for judicial work, but to those who have been successful in their executive duties. And the Chief Judgeship has now been conferred on an officer, who, whatever his executive distinction, which is not doubted, has had purely judicial experience hardly exceeding two years; though thereby the distinguished barrister judge who for sixteen years past occupied the chief judicial office in Lower Burma was superseded and, as the only protest in his power, resigned.

Appeals from the province, the Government of India thinks, will be more numerous than from Rangoon. No doubt they will. The Government of India thinks a civilian who has had a very few years' legal experience is the most competent man to deal with those appeals. The non-officials of Burma may be pardoned for preferring a trained lawyer—a man, moreover who would be quite independent of the Executive Government.

This is a matter to which attention will be called in Parliament on an early date, when it is to be hoped the Secretary of State will be able to produce some more convincing reasons than those of the Government of India for this unwelcome and unexpected step—a step which has done even more to estrange the non-official community of Burma from their rulers than the hundred and one "pin-pricks" they have received during the last two years.—Your obedient servant,

August 30.

FRANK MCCARTHY.

KANWAR MAHARAJ SINGH has been placed in the 3rd class in the School of Literate Humaniores, Oxford.

THE well-known artists, Mr. Ravi Varma and his brother, have returned home to Travancore after their periodical visit to Bombay, where they have taken the portraits of several leading men.

DR. JAGADISH CHUNDER BOSE has arrived in Paris, having been sent by the Government of Bengal, with the sanction of the Secretary of State, to attend the International Science Congress at Paris. He has now come to England, and will read a Paper before the British Association, which meets this year at Bradford. Mrs. Bose has accompanied him to Europe.

DR. S. C. PAUL, M.B., of the Ceylon Civil Medical Department, has passed the M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., during a short stay in London. He was trained at the Madras Medical College.

MR. MOTT BULASA, of the Decan Education Society, has received the scholarship of this year from Manchester College, Oxford.

A UNIVERSITY Scholarship, of the value of £150, offered by the Government of Ceylon, has been won by a Malay student, named Akbar, of the Royal College, Ceylon. It is presumed that the scholarship is for study in this country.

NOW READY.
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The Proposed Separation OF Judicial and Executive Duties in India. MEMORIAL

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

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(late Chief Justice of Bengal, Member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council).

SIR CHARLES SARGENT

(late Chief Justice of Bombay).

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