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NOTES AND NEWS.

FORTUNATELY the Mansion House Fund for the relief of the famine-stricken sufferers in India still remains open, and during last week it was increased by the sum of £350. Not a great sum in itself, indeed; yet, if the contributions would but continue to drop in even after this leisurely fashion the aid would prove not inconsiderable. The need must be very great and urgent, and the gloom of the future must be discouraging and depressing. In the absence of official information one can only have recourse to the fragmentary notes scattered through many of the Indian newspapers, and the collection and marshalling of these is not a task that attracts the British journalist. Accordingly the British public, from whom contributions are expected, have no sufficient means of estimating the need of their help: they can only act on a general impression of the denudation of the famine districts. The record of exports of hides and cooking utensils ought, however, to strike the imagination very forcibly. The shortness of the sowings of the various crops appears to be of the gloomiest augury for the immediate future.

Natal, it appears, has contributed upwards of £5,000 to the Indian Famine Fund. Lord Curzon (according to a Reuter's telegram from Durban, dated January 15), in returning thanks to the Governor, adds that it is a subject of congratulation with him that, while Natal generously showed her interest in India's misfortune, India, by despatching troops to South Africa, was enabled to offer material assistance for the security of the Colony while in grave peril. Very good; the spectacle of mutual helpfulness is always pleasing. But the interchange of courtesies must not be allowed to cover over the harsh and unjust treatment of British Indians in Natal. Once a resettlement is at length accomplished, our statesmen will have to see to it that our British Indian fellow-subjects in Natal obtain the full benefit of the "open door," so skilfully alluded to by Mr. Chandavakar in his Presidential address. And we shall look to Lord Curzon to exert his influence on behalf of the thousands of hard-working and useful citizens that India has sent to Natal—men that have made the prosperity of Natal, and without whose labours Natal would soon cease to be, more than in empty name, "the garden Colony."

The news of the Lahore meeting of the Indian National Congress is still of the most restricted character. The papers that have come by last mail get no farther than the Presidential Address. Both President and Address appear to have been most successful. Not a few important Anglo-Indian journals that have not hitherto been distinguished by friendliness to the Congress pronounce favourably on the present occasion. In another column we reproduce a remarkable article from the *Times of India*, which, we trust, marks a definitive change of spirit and of policy. We would fain hope, too, that this change is not unconnected with the indications of a broader spirit and a more conciliatory and juster policy recently manifested in

speeches of the Secretary of State and of the Viceroy. What is wanted is the elimination of feeling and prejudice, so that every political proposal and action may be judged calmly on the merits by everybody concerned. The *Friend of India* is an honourably conspicuous peace-maker. It says (December 27):—

The National Congress is, in our eyes, an effort with which every generous mind ought to sympathise. The people feel deeply the necessity of adopting Western methods of government; and all who feel kindly and generously towards them must sympathise with and support their aspirations.

How different is this from the ignorant, rancorous, and barren contempt of the *Saturday Review* (January 12), which flippantly tells its readers that "the annual meeting of that invalid institution which calls itself the Indian National Congress is over, and nobody is a bit the better or worse"!

The *Saturday Review* has a brilliant reputation behind it—a very long way indeed behind it, alas!—and may thus carry more weight with unthinking people than its judgments intrinsically justify. We cite it merely as a useful illustration of the sort of opposition that Indian questions have to fight down in certain quarters in this enlightened country. Our contemporary is in the tender stage of knowledge, otherwise it would hardly be so shameless as to speak of the Congress delegates as "the self-appointed reformers of the British administration." It says that "the virile Punjabi had apparently rather be guided by the English rulers than by Bengalis and Mahratta Brahmins." How does it know about the alleged preference of "the virile Punjabi"? And, if the Bengalis are primarily—and wisely—men of peace, though effective soldiers in Britain's need (a fact that is apt to be either conveniently unknown or dishonestly ignored), why are the Mahratta Brahmins not "virile" as well? Our contemporary would amend "the only striking announcement which has come over the wires"—namely that "statesmanship is wanted to solve the problem of the poverty of India, which is the real cause of periodical famine." Such statesmanship has been only too obviously wanted any time during the past generation and more. But "it might be more correct," thinks the *Saturday*, "to say that the famine contributes to the poverty and deficient rainfall to both. But, at any rate," it admits, "the proposition is a step in advance of the theory which ascribes famines to British misgovernment." This statement alone would give the short measure of the *Saturday*. If it has read the President's Address, it must be pitifully devoid of understanding.

Our Calcutta contemporary *Power and Guardian*, discussing the Indian Social Conference, protests against the exaggerated views prevalent in some quarters as to the training of Indian women. It insists that both their religious and physical training are well attended to, and that there are very few sickly women in Indian families that have kept to their ancestral mode of life. One very clear distinction must be drawn between the tendency of the National Congress and that of the Social Conference. The first aims at uniting all Indians, and the great majority of its resolutions concern all sections of the community. The second deals principally with a single section—though, no doubt, the most numerous—and risks the division of that section into hostile camps. Union and not division is what India needs. At the same time the leaders of the Social Conference are perfectly aware of the necessity of allowing time to work its due effects, and proceed so carefully and judiciously that the risks of division are reduced to the very minimum.

There are three principles in regard to Indian famine for which we have always contended, and which have been denied or at best very grudgingly conceded by the organs

of Anglo-Indian opinion. The first is that though there may be less uniformity in Indian than in British Indian Famine Administration, the former often equals and in some respects excels the latter. The second is that the intensity of famine depends on the prosperity or poverty of the people. The third is that heavy taxation is one of the causes of famine. Now all these principles are implicitly admitted by the *Times of India* in its remarks on the Report of Famine Administration in the Native State of Bhavnagar—a Report which is rightly praised for the plain straightforward way in which it tells its tale. The historical introduction has confirmed our contemporary in the view that the famine from which we are just emerging has been unprecedented in its severity, and far worse than that of 1877-1878.

There is abundant evidence of the excellence of the Famine Administration in Bhavnagar. The *Times of India* says:—

The Report accords with all that reaches us from independent sources, showing that the Bhavnagar Durbar did their work well. . . . If Bhavnagar passed through the famine with the minimum of loss and suffering, this was due, not to its having been favoured by Nature, but partly to the promptitude with which the young Thakore realised the imminence and the extent of the calamity, and partly to the relatively strong position of the cultivating classes in Bhavnagar.

We are also told that the measures taken to combat the famine seem to have been "liberal and well-designed." Nay, in one respect, Bhavnagar, like other Native States, showed itself superior to British India. Our Administration has always found a difficulty in reaching people in good position who are yet reduced to great need by the famine. This difficulty the Durbar surmounted by offering loans to impoverished landowners, whereby many were saved from ruin. It is well to note particularly our Anglo-Indian contemporary's reference to "the relatively strong position of the cultivating classes in Bhavnagar." Such a "position of the cultivating classes" is just what is wanted all over British India.

After speaking of the "relatively strong position of the cultivating classes" as mitigating the effects of famine, the *Times of India* goes on to say:—

We are inclined to put the same interpretation that the report puts upon the fact that comparatively few cultivators went upon relief works, namely that this class make in normal times have been able to accumulate a fair amount of wealth. The absence, too, of some of the more tragic incidents of famine confirms the general impression that the Bhavnagar peasantry are a lightly taxed and prosperous community.

So that, although famine, as eminent authorities assure us, is due solely to a failure of the rains, there will yet be few on the relief works and an absence of tragic incidents if the people are lightly taxed and prosperous. But is not this to say that the horrors of famine are due to poverty and not to drought?

Our Bombay contemporary admits, then, that heavy taxation is a cause of the intensity of Famine; and it honestly holds up the revenue policy of Bhavnagar to our admiration. Where the crops failed entirely, no attempt was made to collect revenue. Over the whole State less than 43 per cent. of the demand was realised, the outstanding district balances ranging from 86.5 per cent. to 17 per cent.

The Thakore came to the generous decision to remit the whole of this sum. There was no question of suspending the uncollected balances—the more excellent way of entirely freeing the cultivators of responsibility for them has been resorted to, and in addition to the great boon his Highness has . . . ordered that no outstanding of previous years and no taccavi advances are to be recovered this year.

Well may the *Times of India* add:—"British administrators ought not to be above taking a lesson in their revenue management from a well ordered Native State."

Having thus seen what one of the greatest Anglo-Indian newspapers has to say on this point, let us turn to the Report itself. There we shall find the opinion of a Bhavnagar official, Mr. Prabshankar D. Patrani, Huzur Secretary:—

In all these connexions, no doubt, the State has made great sacrifices. I am often convinced not only that the people will gratefully appreciate them, but that in the long run they will tend to promote the prosperity of our revenue, as well as that of the cultivating classes. These have gone back to their fields, encouraged by the feeling that the year of calamity through which they have passed

has left no lingering and clinging burden of taxation behind it, and they will labour with all the greater energy now that your Highness's generous policy has inspired them with hope and confidence for the future.

Happy people of Bhavnagar! Nor can it be said that they fail to recognise their good fortune or are wanting in gratitude to its authors. This they have shown in the most practical of all ways by paying the instalments of the current year's demand with unprecedented alacrity.

The last witness examined at Hansote in the Gujerat Revenue Enquiry was Mr. Behramji Dossabhai, the Mahalkari. He declared that he did not know that revenue was paid out of taccavi; but he was unable to account for payments being made within two or three days, and sometimes on the very day, of the receipt of taccavi. He admitted that in one case the talati Harilal had been guilty of an irregularity in making an attachment, but he denied that the act amounted to a criminal offence. Such irregularity, he declared, was not common among his subordinates. He admitted that food, clothing, &c., ought not to be seized until allowance had been made for the wants of the owners, that it was against Government orders to break open locks, and that it was illegal to issue an attachment before the issue of individual notices. The enquiry was to be resumed at Olpad on January 2.

A correspondent of the *Saturday Review* (December 22) writing over the suggestive initials of "R. E.," expresses the opinion that it is in vain to appeal to the India Office, or to the Government of India, "for support of any proposals to employ existing supplies of water for prevention of famines in India." These high authorities

seem possessed with a fatalism worthy of the Oriental races whom they rule and profess to enlighten. Famines must come in their course of nature; and to do their best to mitigate their horrors appears to be their simple creed. And to do them justice, they do not up to it, but at fearful cost of lives and money to the poor country for which they are responsible.

"How," then, "is it that their hearts are so hardened against preventive measures?"

For one thing, this: that Sir Arthur Cotton lacked "the gift of conciliating those who actively or passively opposed his views."

He had no patience for those whose duller intellects failed to follow him as he dilated on the millions of cubic yards of water available for the cultivation of billions of acres of waste land (whether deltaic or upland it mattered not), productive of such financial results as made the first cost, whatever that might be, a point not worthy of consideration. He failed, therefore, to convert to his views, and make friends of, those in authority who had the power to carry out his projects; and his estimate of the comparative value of railways and canals was so crudely stated as to make an enemy of the powerful railway interest.

If this be so—his statement does seem far from just to Sir Arthur Cotton—then it speaks little for the judgment or the humanity of "those in authority who had the power to carry out his projects." Anyhow, "R. E." concludes that, when the first principles of the matter—that canals are not antagonistic but supplementary to railways, and are "calculated to increase indefinitely the produce which both are designed to carry and which railways alone are incompetent to carry"—when these first principles "shall have been grasped by those who have the necessary power at the India Office and in India, it will be easy to arrange the business details for the complete irrigation and canalisation of India, and to carry them into execution for the prevention of famines in the future."

The British expedition to China, it is well known, is controlled by the Secretary of State for India through the Viceroy. It was stated at a meeting of the International Arbitration and Peace Association the other night that Lord George Hamilton had called for the evidences of witnesses as to the alleged atrocities committed by International troops in China. The public and private accounts of such atrocities, as well as of the insane run upon "loot," had been so revolting that one cannot but hope that a full and accurate statement will be obtained, and that it will exculpate British and Indian troops from the vague general charges. The essential difficulty, of course, is to find out the facts through official channels. The "honour of the army" is an idea whose influence is not confined to France, and in a case of this kind it tends to militate against the discovery of the plain truth. At all events, it is

well that there should be an enquiry, and that too at the instance of the authorities themselves. So callous, or shameless, are some enterprising people that "loot from China" has been publicly advertised as for sale in an auction room in London this week.

The project of raising five Native regiments in India to replace British troops now occupying certain Colonial garrisons, says "a military correspondent" of the *Times* (January 11), "will arouse plentiful and perhaps not altogether harmonious discussion among advanced critics of military affairs." We shall be glad to follow the expert discussion. Meantime, the *Times'* military correspondent thinks "it is the question of the moral effect exercised by the presence of white troops, quite apart from numerical considerations, which affords perhaps the most serious argument in this discussion." We shall see. But the question of cost is perhaps the most pressing one; and we must remember that the project involves the withdrawal of a large number of able-bodied men from the works of peace. It is stated that "the Home Government has undertaken that under no conditions shall any extra burden in connexion with" the three new Native battalions already sanctioned for service at Mauritius and Singapore "fall on the Indian Exchequer, as all expenses will be provided for in the Army Estimates submitted to the Imperial Parliament." Very good so far. But this is not enough. Not only should no "extra" burden fall on the Indian Exchequer; not only should no burden at all fall on the Indian Exchequer; but the Indian Exchequer ought to be paid for the services of the men.

There is grave trouble at Coopers Hill. On Dec. 14 the Secretary of State wrote to the President of the Royal Engineering College requesting him to inform seven members of the teaching staff, specified by name and office, that the Secretary of State, while regretting the necessity for reducing the staff, and fully recognizing the value of their past services, is compelled to give them notice that they will be required to vacate their appointments at the end of the next Easter term.

The grounds of this action, to which the Secretary of State says he "is compelled" in the face of such strong regrets, are expressed to be

certain recommendations which have been laid before him by the Board of Visitors of Coopers Hill College for re-modelling the course of studies at the College with a view of reducing the present excessive cost of the staff and increasing the efficiency of the teaching.

On the face of it, about as extraordinary and surprising a reason as could have been devised.

For surely the last thing likely to increase the efficiency of the teaching is the wholesale dismissal of able teachers "the value of whose past services" is "fully recognised." The dismissed teachers are all men of acknowledged competence, and half of them are positively distinguished. They do not know, any more than the rest of the world, what is the nature or the grounds of the new "recommendations," and they naturally request "that an independent committee of experts in scientific engineering education and college management may be appointed to enquire into the working of the college, and that the whole of the teaching staff may be allowed to state their experience to that committee." They further affirm that "the college at the present time is in a flourishing condition both educationally and financially." Lord Kelvin among others has backed up their request for an enquiry. And now the *Times* opens a long leader (January 17) with the straight declaration that "the Secretary of State for India will be guilty of a grave and lamentable error if he is induced by the prompting of official podants to refuse the demand for enquiry"—"enquiry by a competent and independent tribunal." Such is the obvious course of justice. We know how difficult it is to get a department of State to grant "an enquiry by a competent and independent tribunal" in matters of infinitely greater moment. Only this is an English matter and it is strongly backed by Englishmen in England.

If serial publications specially devoted to record of trade facts and figures and exposition of commercial conditions would avail for the purpose, India ought to be in a fair way to extend its mercantile, also its manufacturing progress in many directions. These objects have long been well promoted on the Bengal side by the magazine entitled

Capital (rather tantalising in a land where that factor is deficient). On the Bombay side there are the *Indian Textile Journal* and others that might be named. Just now we have before us No. 8 of the *Indian Import and Export Journal*, which abounds with material and suggestive figures that should be quite as useful for enterprising merchants here as for those in Bombay where this serial is published. For instance, there is a paper entitled "Japanese Finance," which also brings out several points regarding the course of commerce and manufactures in that newly awakened and productive country which we little know here. It is by a Japanese banker, who explains various apparent anomalies connected with the large experiments in gold currency and tariffs that Japan has gone through during the last twenty years.

By far the larger portion of this number is occupied with articles that directly concern the mercantile interest of Western India, including statistics of the decline in Bombay trade during recent adverse times—notably particulars of decline in imports of piece-goods. On the other hand the enormous shrinkage in the quantities of raw cotton brought into Bombay island, during the last two years, shows that the stagnation of the mill industry is as much due to this falling off in supply as it is to the lack of active demand for yarns and other local products of the hundred or more mills now half idle in that Presidency. This number of the *Indian Import and Export Journal* also gives much information regarding both industries in Northern and Eastern India. So that it ought to be studied by our own Chambers of Commerce.

There has just been issued a very useful White Paper (No. 383—Sess. 2, 1900) setting forth the restrictions upon British Indian subjects in British Colonies and Dependencies. It is a

Return (1) showing, in the case of every British Colony and Dependency the population of which includes British Indians, what disabilities or restrictions are imposed upon such British Indians; (2) stating for each Colony and Dependency the approximate number of such British Indians; and (3) giving in each case from the Statutes or the bye-laws an abstract showing the nature of the disabilities or restrictions in question.

This return was moved for by Sir William Wedderburn so far back as May 11, 1899.

A correspondent writes to the *Champion* that efforts are being made to collect and garner the old Mahratta literature. He says:—

The Mahrattas have begun to collect and to preserve Marathi books and MSS. Thana has taken the lead, and Bombay has followed. There are now two Marathi *Grantha Sangrahalayas* which are doing this work. I am a member of the Bombay *Marathi Grantha Sangrahalaya*. It has collected nearly 3,500 Marathi books—the largest collection at present in Bombay, and the collection is still going on. The subscription is purposely kept at a small 2, so as to encourage all Marathi readers and to suit the poorest. There are at present 600 members on the roll, and thirty books are issued on an average every day. This is the beginning, and I believe we will do more useful and substantial work among those whose education has not gone beyond their mother tongue. If such *Sangrahalayas* were started all over the Deccan, they would undoubtedly prove helpful, and I would like to see *Hindi, Bengali, Gujarathi, Unnarsi, and Tamil Sangrahalayas* founded all over the country.

This admirable and patriotic example cannot be too widely or energetically followed. We trust the leaders of the various communities everywhere in India will earnestly encourage the movement.

Remittances on India for 70 lakhs were on Wednesday offered for tender by the India Council, and applications amounting to Rs. 2,16,10,000 were received at prices ranging from 1s. 4d. to 1s. 4½d. The following amounts were allotted—viz., in bills, Rs. 26,97,000 on Calcutta, Rs. 17,28,000 on Bombay, and Rs. 1,59,000 on Madras, all at an average of 1s. 4-03½d.; and in telegraphic transfers Rs. 11,10,000 on Calcutta and Rs. 13,05,000 on Bombay at an average of 1s. 4-09½d. Tenders for bills at 1s. 4-½d., and for telegraphic transfers at 1s. 4-¾d., will receive about 31 per cent., and above in full. Later the Council sold bills for Rs. 10,000 on Bombay at 1s. 4-½d. Last week remittances for Rs. 71,67,797 were sold for £479,744, making the total sold from April 1 to Tuesday night Rs. 12,20,32,456, producing £8,125,143. Next week 70 lakhs will again be offered.

THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

THE President of the Sixteenth Session of the Indian National Congress naturally took for the central subject of his Address the dread menace of famine so long overshadowing the land. The Congress, as the Hon. Mr. Chandavakar at once pointed out, has continuously from its very origin held up to the attention of Indian statesmen "the gravity and urgency of the great problem." At its second Session, at Calcutta, in 1883, the second resolution passed was conceived in these terms:—

That this Congress regards with the deepest sympathy, and views with grave apprehension, the increasing poverty of vast numbers of the population of India.

This resolution was moved by Mr. D. E. Wacha, of Bombay, and seconded by the Hon. S. Subramania Iyer, of Madras; and it was supported by well-known and representative delegates from every province of India, men qualified to speak of the condition of the country from their own personal observation and experience. Different speakers laid greater stress upon different causes and hoped more from different remedies, but they all agreed emphatically that the impoverishment of the rayat had reached such a point as to constitute an immediate danger to the State. Even in those days, half a generation ago, the extreme poverty of the people had been acknowledged by the Government, and was, indeed, patent to every observer. Since that time Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, who was President of that meeting of the Congress, and had been urging the importance of the problem for many years, has made it an incessant theme of his speeches and writings, and the very basis of his political efforts; and, moreover, he has systematically clinched his arguments with liberal citations from the statements and opinions of the highest official authorities. And what has the Government done? Its policy has been a policy of "patches"—of "small measures"—"more or less a policy of drift." And now Mr. Chandavakar finds "the increasing poverty of the masses in India" confronting him as the most serious problem of the time, and is driven to declare that, while British statesmen "have repeatedly called attention to it, and have in their own way devised or suggested remedies," yet "the Government has not approached its solution in a broad, comprehensive, masterly spirit, worthy of so great an Empire as that of Her Majesty in India."

It may seem not a little strange that it should still be necessary for Mr. Chandavakar to warn people against certain fallacious notions regarding the cause of poverty in India. But fallacies die hard, and the President wisely did not neglect the opportunity of dealing another blow at two or three antiquated misapprehensions, which, as will be seen in another column, Mr. Romesh Dutt has more recently exposed at Exeter. There is still a perverse reluctance in certain quarters to admit the direct bearing of the poverty of the Indian people upon the increasingly frequent and severe visitations of famine; but Mr. Chandavakar did not waste time in proof of a connexion that is too painfully clear to admit of dispute. Famine is now a question of money, not of food. During the last two famines—each in its turn the greatest of the century—anybody and everybody with money in his hand was able to procure food. Mr. Chandavakar scorns the suggestion of inevitableness. "No famine policy," he says roundly, "is worth the name which does not discard the pusillanimous doctrine that famines are inevitable, and that therefore not much can be done." The doctrine is a peculiarly barren one, and a perverse; if famines can be averted elsewhere, it is not particularly obvious why it is in India alone that they should be incapable of being averted. The overgrowth of population, again, is an ancient theory that saves both thinking and action. But it ought to be pretty well known by this time that "there are a score of countries where population has been increasing much faster than in India, and yet they have not been struck down by the phenomenal poverty which is staring us in the face" in India. Further, it is said, India "is a nation of spendthrifts"—particularly the rayat. Mr. Chandavakar cites eminent authorities, official and other, in vindication of his countrymen, and he pointedly says "we may safely challenge those who talk

of the rayat's extravagance to point out another peasant in the world who can maintain himself in normal years on Rs. 17 per annum." It is a poor heart indeed that never rejoices, and there certainly does not appear to be very wide scope for extravagance when a rayat rejoices on an average gross annual income of some thirty shillings sterling money. But, of course, the Deccan Riots Commission exploded all this nonsense a quarter of a century ago. Once more, it is alleged, the rayat makes reckless revelry in litigation. But it scarcely lies in the mouth of an Englishman to ensue the rayat's litigiousness until it cease to be possible for a Viceroy to hear at the table of his Legislative Council that "the character of our courts is a cause of our poverty." Before now we have quoted the scathing and humiliating description of the working of our civil courts written more than twenty years ago by Mr. A. O. Hume, after ten years' experience as Secretary to the Government in the Department of Revenue, Agriculture and Commerce; and now we will restrict ourselves to a single summary sentence. "With our innovations, our exotic systems of land and law," wrote Mr. Hume, "we have dissolved the bonds of society, we have turned peace into war, we have arrayed every class against that on which it was most dependent—capitalists against landowners, landlords against tenants, every man almost against his fellow." And is it not true to-day, as it was a quarter of a century back?

Mr. Chandavakar undoubtedly voices the opinion of educated India when he complains "that the Government has but touched the fringe of the subject hitherto in dealing with the question of its solution." Take the case of the money-lender. Everybody admits that the rayat cannot do without the money-lender—nor, for that matter, the Government either; but everybody also thinks that the grasping money-lender should be controlled. We did not create the money-lender indeed, but our system has fostered the grievous substitution of "the Marwari adventurer" for the village Bunnia or Brahmin "whose interests and fortunes were identified with those of the rayats to whom he lent." True, there is the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act of 1879, whose main object was to save the Deccan rayats from the exactions of the money-lenders, and to prevent the alienation of their lands in payment of their loans. But Mr. Chandavakar gives it as the experience of himself and his professional friends that "the relief which is given by the Act to the rayat is more apparent than real." The rayat is but a puppet worked by someone "behind him," and it is not he, but the other man—that is, the money-lender—that reaps the advantage. We have just referred to the distressing character of the machinery of civil justice. Mr. Chandavakar, at the moment, regarded it in a somewhat different point of view. "Undoubtedly it is a striking fact," he says, "that large and highly paid judicial establishments are kept up to deal with litigation the bulk of which—that is, over 60 per cent., as an examination of the statistics shows—concerns property or transactions worth less than Rs. 50." Mr. Chandavakar was regarding the facts as indicating the poverty of the people. At the same time they imply a severe censure on the Government for failing to modify a system that bewilders and harasses litigants, and leaves them, after all, in the lurch. Turning to the latest effort of the Government, the Punjab Land Alienation Act, which shows plainly the intentions and the hopes of the authorities for other provinces as well, Mr. Chandavakar was unable to say more than that "such measures may be good and useful, so far as they go, as palliatives." But stronger measures are felt to be needed. "The feeling largely shared in the country," said Mr. Chandavakar, "is that, side by side with all these palliative measures, it is necessary to relax the rigidity of the land revenue system"—its rigidity, "its uncertainties, and vagaries." Mr. Romesh Dutt has effectually raised this fundamentally important question. There is ample support from "independent official opinion" for the gravest doubts as to the soundness of the systems. "We rest satisfied for the present," said Mr. Chandavakar, "with the assurance given by Lord Curzon that the subject is under his consideration." Yes, but it is more than time that consideration had passed into action. What is wanted is a Central Department of Agriculture and Industries which shall pursue a systematic, sympathetic, consistent, and thorough-going policy.

We may for the present dismiss the department of agriculture with a general reference to the dismal description that Mr. Hume has given of the effects of our agricultural policy, and with a reminder that, while Sir James Caird stated (1879) that "the produce of the country on an average of years is barely sufficient to maintain the present population and make a saving for occasional famine," and that "scarcity deepening into famine is thus becoming of more frequent occurrence," he also calculated that one additional bushel of grain per acre would feed twenty-two millions more people. We may just add that such an increase seems an exceedingly modest expectation, seeing that Mr. Hume declared that "with proper manuring and proper tillage every acre, broadly speaking, of the land in the country can be made to yield 30, 50, or 70 per cent. more of every kind of crop than it at present produces." Mr. Chandavakar turns from agriculture to other industries. The Famine Commissioners of 1879 had stated—

that no remedy for the present evils can be complete which does not include the introduction of a diversity of occupations through which the surplus population may be drawn from agricultural pursuits and led to earn the means of subsistence in manufactures or some such employments.

Now, what has the Government done in this direction during the past twenty years? "Very little," says Mr. Chandavakar: "on the contrary, some things have been done, unconsciously perhaps, which have had the effect of reducing the number of our industries." But again Lord Curzon assures us that "Government is bestowing its serious attention upon the matter." The Viceroy's suggestion that nothing much is being done by the people themselves to turn the attention of the youth from literary to technical studies does not exempt the Government from its duty to proceed with the work. "After all," as Mr. Chandavakar says, "the mind of the Indian youth is not so hopelessly conservative and blindly stubborn." The story of Mr. Wagle's endeavours to learn the process of glass-making, which we printed only a fortnight ago (January 4; INDIA, vol. xv, p. 9), is a very striking confirmation of Mr. Chandavakar's opinion, as well as the "stream of tendency" mentioned by a Madras contemporary. "What is claimed at the hands of Government," as Mr. Chandavakar points out, "is that it should take advantage of this tendency and do all it can to help and forward it on." We could point to Native rulers that have even created such a stream of tendency and carefully helped it on; so that the Government is not without example. And the history of Indian industries might well prick the official conscience and advance "serious attention" to the stage of earnest action. As for the endeavours of British Indians to make a living in British Colonies, we need only express the hope that the Home Government will take Mr. Chandavakar's hint about the "open door."

Nor need we follow the President in his plea for "a policy of wise and judicious economy in administration," for we have been continuously urging this in every form. If all the suggestions he offers were frankly accepted and acted on, there can be no question that a heavy, probably a fatal, blow would be struck at the very roots of the essential cause of famine. The country would soon be brought back to prosperity. Even the *Times of India*, as will be seen in another column, finds that the Address has the superlative merit of being "practical." If it look carefully, it will also probably find that the resolutions of the Congress, too, are wonderfully practical. It will also observe that Mr. Chandavakar stated that the Congress has been from the first "a standing protest against the policy of drift," and that "the time is now come—it is now most opportune—when standing out more emphatically than ever, it ought to redouble its efforts and help the Government in the solution of the great Indian problem to which all eyes are now turned." We observe with great satisfaction the conciliatory attitude our contemporary adopts in the article we reprint elsewhere to-day, and we hope it will steadily further the efforts of the Congress in the direction outlined by the President. No one is more anxious to see thoroughly-instructed, conciliatory, and practical action than ourselves. But it requires two to play the game to much purpose, and that is why we welcome so cordially the new spirit displayed by a journal of so much influence among Anglo-Indians, not excluding the highest in the land.

THE FAMINE COMMISSION.

The Gazette of India which was brought by the last mail contains the text of the Resolution upon the appointment of the new Famine Commission. It is a somewhat voluminous document, and one is curious to know why the substance of it at any rate was not made known to the public at home by telegram before the end of the year. If it is assumed that the Famine Commission, and the scope of its enquiries, are of no interest to the British public, the assumption is both ungenerous and unjust. On the other hand the Resolution can give no great satisfaction to those Englishmen—and they are increasing in number—who are anxious to probe below the surface of Indian problems, and to ascertain the economic causes that make scarcity in India so often synonymous with famine. Briefly, the Famine Commission, as we anticipated last week in our remarks upon "The Dread of Enquiry," is to concern itself not with the causes of famine but only with the relief system. Subject to certain explanations and limitations the topics referred to it are as follows:—

1. How far the recommendations of the Famine Commission of 1898 have been followed, with or without modification, or departed from, in the different provinces in the late famine, and to what extent the fresh experience now acquired confirms their wisdom or suggests their amendment.

2. What light the experience of the recent famine throws upon the subjects of relief works, gratuitous relief, and of famine relief as a whole, how far the systems adopted in the different areas have been successful or the reverse in their bearing primarily upon the relief of distress, and secondarily with regard to economy; how they compare with each other, and whether any fresh rules or modifications of rules are required.

3. In what manner relief by means of taccavi or other advances of public money, and by means of suspension or remission of land assessment, has been applied in the different provinces to their special needs; whether the existing machinery for the prompt institution of these forms of relief is adequate and whether any general instructions are called for with regard to the principles or methods by which such relief should be determined.

4. In what manner the famine affected the death-rate of the various provinces and districts, with an enquiry into the causes of any variation.

5. The extent, nature, and general causes of immigration from Native States into British districts; its effect upon the relief measures in them; how it was dealt with, and what better arrangements for concerted action between British and Native authorities can be devised.

The utility of such an enquiry is not to be denied. Every one of the topics here set forth undoubtedly needs full elucidation. The inexplicable thing is that enquiry should be made to stop there. Everybody desires that the famine relief system in India should be as perfect as possible. But it goes without saying that what is still more desirable is that famine should not recur. It may well be that revision of the relief system is a sufficient task for one Commission. But, if so, there ought to be another. On the face of it the failure to enquire into what is so manifestly the more important question needs justification.

Yet no justification is attempted. The Government of India merely assumes that famines will recur in India and that the sole practical question is how best to deal with them. The business of the Commission, as the Resolution more than once indicates, is to yield "valuable results in the treatment of future famines." Even in the postscript, so to say, which is appended to the reference, the same attitude is seen:—

The Commission will not be precluded from recording any recommendations or opinions which it is thought may be of use either in anticipation or in treatment of future famines.

How much will be admissible under this instruction is not quite clear. Sir Antony MacDonnell, the able and esteemed President of the Commission, and his colleagues may take the view that the most useful of all "recommendations in anticipation of future famines" would be recommendations which might avert them. But there would, on that interpretation, be something Hibernian in the phrase. The duty of making enquiries and recommendations regarding the prevention of famine ought not in any case to have been left to be a matter of inference from a vague passage in the postscript. It should have been placed in the forefront of the reference either to this Commission or to another. If a suitable phrase was wanted, the Secretary of State for India has supplied one. In the House of Commons on January 26, 1897, speaking on Sir William Wedderburn's motion for "a full and independent enquiry into the condition of the masses of the

Indian people with a view to ascertain the causes by reason of which they are helpless to resist even the first attacks of famine and pestilence." Lord George Hamilton said:—

I agree with the honourable Baronet that the opportunity this famine affords ought not to be allowed to pass without our taking every opportunity to enquire into and ascertain the best methods of protecting the people of India from the recurrence of similar calamities.

Unfortunately when the Famine Commission of that year came to be appointed, this excellent phrase had slipped from Lord George Hamilton's memory. The Commission was asked, not to "enquire into and ascertain the best methods of protecting the people of India from the recurrence of similar calamities" but to enquire into and amend the system of relief. Obviously if the people of India are to be protected from the recurrence of famine the Government must somehow ascertain the economic causes of famine. Those economic causes are more or less capable of being controlled, while the failure of the rains is not. The persistent avoidance of enquiry into the economic causes of famine wears, to say the least of it, a very ugly look. May we assume that another Commission is to be appointed for this larger and longer task, or that the modest and practical suggestion of an economic enquiry in a few typical villages is about to be adopted? So soon as Parliament meets it will be important to obtain an answer to these questions, and if it should appear that the authorities do not contemplate any immediate enquiry of the kind the question will arise, we think, whether the Indian National Congress ought not to undertake a duty neglected by the Government. Certainly it is not beyond the resources of the Congress in ability and judgment to prosecute the kind of investigation which Sir William Wedderburn has so often urged.

The fulness of detail with which the Resolution sets forth the topics for consideration in regard to the relief system is itself a commentary upon the avoidance of the larger enquiry. How comes it, one naturally asks, that men who can see so clearly the various parts of the machinery of relief should be wholly blind to the urgency of prevention? For if prevention is better than cure it is far better than mitigation. The Resolution is really an amplification of the statement which the Viceroy made at Simla last October. The first and most important subject for enquiry is the results of those recommendations of the former Commission which (significantly enough) were still undergoing examination by the local Governments when the famine of 1899 set in. The recommendations were nevertheless to some extent acted upon, but they will not be incorporated in the Famine Codes until Sir Antony MacDonnell and his colleagues have reported upon them. The Resolution, we notice, speaks of "the heavy mortality which has been recorded in many parts of the afflicted area." It is to be hoped in this connexion that a clear and full statement of the mortality directly or indirectly caused by the famine will shortly be available. The second subject for enquiry is the several methods of relief. Criticism has not been wanting here, and the public will await with interest the findings of the Commission on such important points as the proper place of gratuitous relief, the wage scale, the enforcement of tasks and other tests, and the question whether medical and other assistance has always been provided promptly and on an adequate scale. Greater uniformity is mentioned as a thing to be desired. But competent observers have been known to say that, in some respects at any rate, it is rather diversity and elasticity that are wanted in the relief system. The third topic has to do with loans to cultivators and others and the collection of the land revenue. We are glad to see that "the collection of the land revenue demand in the several provinces and the extent to which relief was granted to distressed owners and occupiers of land by revenue suspensions or remissions" are described as "matters for careful enquiry." As for "the larger question of the incidence and pressure of the land assessment in the different provinces, and its effects on the well-being and resources of the agricultural population," Lord Curzon, we are told, does not underrate its importance, and has already addressed the various local Governments and administrations upon it. "A study of their replies will enable him to decide whether further investigation is necessary." It is well-nigh inconceivable that further investigation should not be regarded as necessary. Here, then, we may have

the germ of that second Commission which will come to close quarters with the economic causes of famine—a conjecture which is encouraged by the statement in the Resolution that "it would be manifestly undesirable to postpone the labours of the present Commission" until it could be determined whether the further enquiry was necessary. It would also, we may add, be manifestly undesirable for the Government of India to reconcile itself to the expectation of future famines before exhausting the means of learning whether they may not be prevented.

OUR LONDON LETTER.

WESTMINSTER, Thursday.

LONDON is burying its dead bishop to-day beneath the dome of the great cathedral. Many eulogies have been passed on Dr. Creighton as ecclesiastic, scholar, and historian, all tending to emphasise the intellectual attainments of the man, though somewhat to the prejudice of his gifts of character. Yet the late bishop had a singularly winning personality. People spoke of him as a diplomatist; and so he was in the best sense of the word. But his diplomacy was without guile. He won over enemies and disarmed suspicion by the sheer charm of manner which was the genuine expression of his innate sincerity. Had he lived, Dr. Creighton would inevitably have filled the highest place in the Church. He was almost called to the archiepiscopal throne a few years ago, but after some hesitation the Prime Minister decided that Dr. Temple's venerable age must not be allowed to outweigh the claims of that prelate to the Primacy. Happily, Dr. Temple still flourishes to justify the wisdom of the experiment. The younger and, as everyone would have imagined, the more vigorous candidate, has failed to outlive the patriarch. Those who knew him best say that Dr. Creighton literally sacrificed his life in the cause of his Church.

Who will be the new Bishop of London? The prophets are practically unanimous in nominating the present Bishop of Winchester. Dr. Randall Davidson enjoys great advantages. To begin with, he is in the good graces of the Queen. As Dean of Windsor some years ago he had the privilege of a residence within the castle, and he is still one of her Majesty's most frequent guests. Moreover, he has had considerable experience in organisation. For many years he was chaplain to his father-in-law the late Archbishop Tait, and afterwards lived and worked as Bishop of Rochester in the heart of South London. Like the Archbishop of Canterbury he is keenly interested in the Temperance movement. It was he, indeed, who took Lord Salisbury to task last Session for ignoring the recommendations of the Licensing Commission. Unfortunately his health is by no means robust, and on that account he may be passed over. Mrs. Randall Davidson, being the daughter of one prelate as well as the wife of another, is an expert in diocesan work.

A name which is also freely mentioned in connexion with the vacant Bishopric is that of Dr. Welldon, the present Bishop of Calcutta. The nomination is at least plausible. Lord Salisbury made one of his happiest selections when he brought Dr. Moorhouse from Melbourne to preside over the See of Manchester, and he might do worse than attempt a repetition of that fortunate experiment by transferring Dr. Welldon from Calcutta to London. Formerly headmaster of Harrow, Dr. Welldon is credited with a genius for administration which, above all others, is the quality required in a Bishop of London. Moreover, Dr. Welldon is young, vigorous, and free from the reproach of ever having embarrassed the Government in its political designs.

All the festivities contemplated by municipalities in different parts of the country in honour of Lord Roberts have been indefinitely postponed. The Commander-in-Chief in requesting an extension of the period of grace, very properly indicates that the time is inopportune for eulogies and presentations. There would, indeed, have been something incongruous in the spectacle of Lord Roberts setting forth on a triumphal progress through London, Liverpool, Birmingham, Belfast, Edinburgh, and other cities, while his successor at Pretoria was still able to do little more than hold the Boers at bay. It is whispered that the abandonment of the tour may have been due to a hint from the Queen whose grief over the prolongation of the war is an open secret. But the true explanation is doubtless to be found in Lord Roberts's own excellent sense of propriety.

Recent events in South Africa do not tend to encourage hopes of an early settlement. Three members of the Cape Parliament had intended to visit England on a peace mission, but in view of De Wet's irreconcilable attitude they will probably reconsider their purpose. A platform propaganda could have little success at the present juncture, and it is quite certain that the delegates of the minority of a Colonial assembly would appeal in vain to be heard at the bar of the House of Commons. Indeed, there is no precedent for the appearance of even the authorised representatives of a British colony at the bar of the House, except in the capacity of witnesses. It was as a witness that Benjamin Franklin made his memorable statement in 1765, when, as Burke says, the encounter between the great American and hostile members reminded spectators of a master examined by a parcel of school-boys. On that occasion, Franklin achieved a temporary victory, which he celebrated, in characteristic fashion, by sending his wife material for a new gown. It is to be feared, however, that the wives of Messrs. Hofmeyr, Sauer, and Merriman have little prospect of seeing their wardrobes replenished under similar conditions.

Mr. Chamberlain touches nothing that he does not blemish. This sweeping conclusion is forced on the mind by the controversy that has arisen over the Australian Commonwealth banquet which is to be held next Monday under the presidency of the Colonial Secretary. The celebration, it appears, is to be of quite a party character. Australians have been writing to the papers protesting against the one-sided composition of the toast-list, and expressing their astonishment at the good nature of the Prince of Wales in accepting an invitation to the dinner. Among those who have declined invitations are the Duke of York, who probably received timely warning of the storm that was brewing, and Lord Carrington. It is said that the Prince accepted his invitation under the impression that the Duke of York was to be present.

One of the most important political events of the recess promises to be the forthcoming meeting of the general committee of the National Liberal Federation. Although described as a committee meeting this gathering is really an assembly of representative Liberals from all parts of the country, and in its deliberations it usually strikes a keynote for the party policy in Parliament. The meeting was to have been held last month, but in consequence of the special session of Parliament was deferred till February. It is now stated that the delegates will assemble at Rugby, this rendezvous having been selected presumably in recognition of Mr. Corrie Grant's success at the last election in recapturing the seat for Liberalism. Some attempt will probably be made to induce the General Committee to swallow the programme of foreign and domestic policy recently formulated on behalf of the Imperialist Liberal League by Mr. T. A. Brassey, in which case the proceedings may be lively as well as important.

"A. B.," otherwise Mr. Augustine Birrell, who writes an introduction to this month's number of the *Liberal Magazine*, comments somewhat inconclusively on the mystery of Lord Hardwicke's appointment. "Lord Salisbury," he says, "has publicly bewailed the difficulty of getting capable men to serve the Queen in his Ministry. This was his excuse for going to the Stock Exchange to find an Under-Secretary of State for India. I often wonder whether ministers are stupider than they used to be. I hardly think it possible. Still it is significant when a Prime Minister makes such a complaint. Great Empires and small minds go ill together." Mr. Birrell, with subtle irony, defends Lord Salisbury from the Tory outcry against the pre-eminence of the Cecil family in the new Cabinet on the plea that nobody could enumerate on his fingers the names of men whose claims have been overlooked in order to find room for the Prime Minister's sons, nephews, and sons-in-law.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

THE MANSION HOUSE FUND.

On January 14 it was announced that the Mansion House Fund for the relief of the sufferers by famine amounted to £391,850, and that a further remittance of a lakh of rupees—£6,700—had been made to the Viceroy.

THE "INVESTORS' REVIEW" FUND.

We take the following from the current issue (January 12) of the *Investors' Review*—

An aged lady, the widow of an old Indian official, who has

frequently addressed us before, writes to lament the apathy of the British public towards India and its needs, and pleads that some efforts should be made to bring the subject before the public. "Let some good hearts and wise heads," she says, "consult for a re-opening of appeals for poor India." We should be only too delighted to further any such movement, for India's necessities remain appalling, and it is not famine alone that afflicts her. Plague continues to gnaw into the vitals of the population, and is devastating places seldom or never heard of in official telegrams. Thus the *Indian Mirror* for Sunday, December 16, states that "plague is working terrible havoc in Patna, and that city may with truth be said to be in a state of siege. All business is at a standstill, and courts and schools will soon be obliged to suspend operations—litigants, lawyers, teachers, and students having all run away." "Bankipore has been denuded of half its population; and the pleaders have petitioned the authorities for the closing of the courts." In other parts of the country we fear the same history is repeated, and before much longer time has passed by these and other scourges afflicting our dependency must force themselves upon the notice of Englishmen in a most unpleasant way. True as this may be, it is impossible to arouse active general interest in a people so far away, especially when home miseries are on the increase.

Few more pathetic, not to say sardonic, commentaries upon the blessings of a state of war have ever appeared in print than the appeals of the Princess of Wales and Lord Roberts for help to the starving wives and families of our soldiers engaged in fighting the Empire's battles in South Africa. What a mockery upon our civilisation, upon the vaunted strength of our Empire, that these earnest outcries for public charity should have to be made. Coming from the quarters they do, such appeals will be listened to—as they deserve to be listened to, since the poor "Tommy" who loyally sheds his fellow-man's blood or his own for Empire's glory is but the tool—far more promptly and substantially than any that can be made for India; and our little fund has all along stood at a disadvantage as being something administered by Native charitable hands. The average Englishman, tutored by the average Indian official, does not believe in the Native, and more is the pity. Nevertheless we must persevere.

Subscriptions to our little fund, from which not a penny is deducted for advertisements in newspapers or any other kind of charges, may be sent to A. J. Wilson, at this office; cheques to be crossed "Indian Bank of London, Indian Finance Fund."

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|---|-----------|
| Amount previously acknowledged | £938 14 8 |
| Miss Jeanne Scott, Glasgow | 0 2 0 |
| Veschoor's Park Indian Circle (per T. B. W. Chapman, Esq.) | 0 8 0 |
| Miss Christabel Osborn | 1 0 0 |

Total to date £940 4 8

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

THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

SIXTEENTH SESSION.

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT,
THE HON. N. G. CHANDAVAKAR.

(Continued from page 20).

LAND REVENUE REFORM.

That brings me to the principle of a law which has recently been passed for the Punjab, and the application of which to other parts of the country is said to be under the consideration of the Government. The object of this law is to restrict the riyat's power of alienation. It is not possible to foresee the consequences of it, and we know that it encountered strenuous opposition in its passage through the Viceroyal Legislative Council. Both the maver of the Punjab Land Alienation Bill and his Excellency the Viceroy have claimed for it no more than that it is a bold experiment, based on the principle that "he who never risks anything never wins anything." But, assuming that the experiment will succeed, it will only serve to tie the riyat to the land—a very good object to gain so far; but to tie the riyat to the land is one thing, and to enable him to live and flourish on it is another. Such measures may be good and useful as far as they go as palliatives. But, after all is done by way of palliatives for the riyat's relief, his poverty will remain, and the evil of agrarian indotment may still stare us in the face like the goblin in the German legend, who, as soon as the peasant had burnt his house down to get rid of him, reappeared amidst the saved furniture, and lustily shouted out—"Lo! I am still here!" The feeling largely shared in the country is that side by side with all these palliative measures it is necessary to relax the rigidity of the land revenue system. Mr. Dutt dealt with this subject in his last year's Presidential Address, and the Hon. Mr. Mohta for Bombay and the Hon. Mr. Bose for the Central Provinces drew pointed attention to it in their speeches on the last Budget at a meeting of the Viceroy's Legislative Council. His Excellency the Viceroy has care than once assured us that this important subject is now engaging his "independent investigation." But his Excellency put the question to the Mahajana Sabha of Madras the other day: "Supposing that we did reduce the assessment throughout India by 25 per cent., is

there a man among you who would guarantee me that he honestly believed that there would be no more famine, no more poverty, no more distress?" No one would be so bold as to give a guarantee on that condition, and no one, I take it, thinks that a mere reduction by 25 per cent. in the assessment throughout India will stamp out poverty, for the poor will always be with us. But what is put forward is that if the assessments be reduced 25 per cent. in the Madras and Bombay Presidencies and in the Central Provinces, where revision assessments have been raised more than 25 per cent., the relief given will be sufficient to dispense with the necessity of direct famine relief to that extent. At present where Government levy high assessments in good years, they have to refund the sums so levied by opening relief works when famine visits the land. The rigidity of the land revenue system, its uncertainties and vagaries, are questions which must be tackled side by side with the other phases of the problem, and then some step will have been taken in the attempt to help the ryat in coping with famine or distress. The ryat may be right, or the ryas may be wrong, but the fact is, there is a vast amount of work to be done with the necessity of the periodic revision of settlements for the Kallian Taluka in the Bombay. As an instance, I will take that of its last Settlement Report that at the last revision survey it was found that garden cultivation had considerably decreased. "In superior soils, and where sufficient moisture is retained for second crops, they are grown to some extent, but not as much as might be." That is the tale told, and in accounting for it, one Survey Officer concerned in the revision settlement ascribed it to "the laziness and lethargy of the cultivators," but another officer "to the advent of the revision survey, for fear that the existence of the second crops would lead to a higher estimate being made of the capabilities of their lands." The ryat may not be lazy and lethargic, formerly when garden cultivation flourished; its subsequent decrease can only be due to the cause suggested by the Survey Officer—the fear of the ryat that improvement means more assessment. That is the crux of the problem. The situation would be comical were it not serious. When the Deccan Riots Commission was appointed to devise measures for the relief of indebtedness, two of its members condemned the Bombay Land Revenue system—and they were officers belonging to North India, and, therefore, independent so far as the Bombay Presidency went. Mr. Rogers, who, on the other hand, was a Bombay Civilian, was being defending the Bombay system but condemning the Madras system, and it seems to doubt if the Central Provinces system is all right. That points a moral, and shows that even independent opinion is not unanimous on this much- vexed question. We rest satisfied for the present, however, with the assurance given by Lord Curzon that the subject is under his consideration.

A CONSISTENT AGRICULTURAL POLICY NEEDED.

All that we plead for is a more systematic, more sympathetic agricultural policy than has been pursued. Government have gone to the relief of the Bengal ryat, and fixed the relations between him and his zemindar. Government are going to give relief to the ryat in Ratnagiri as against his khot. Why does it not examine more closely than it has done, and subject to a thorough impartial enquiry, its own relations towards its own tenants? Then as to the improvement of agriculture. It was stated by the Honorable Mr. Ibbetson some months ago, in reply to the Honorable Mr. Darbhanga, that the Secretary of State had sanctioned the appointment of a Director to become the chief of a great Government organisation for affording assistance to the agricultural industry in this country. This we welcome as a hopeful assurance. That was the dream of Lord Mayo's wise and judicious administration, and it is known to all that Mr. Hume in Lord Mayo's time was appointed to organise an Agricultural Department for the improvement of agriculture. But one Viceroy succeeds another—and we drift. At one time the cry is taken up that the ryat's ways of cultivation require to be reformed. We hear it for a time, and then it is replaced by another cry that the ryat knows all about it and stands in no need of help. Now, the Indian ryat is neither a sinner nor a saint in his business—he is neither stupid nor perfect. It is no use teaching him to give up his methods of cultivation wholesale. He is wiser than his teachers there. But at the same time the State may gently take him in hand, and help him to improve his industry by scientific methods where that can be done. And it can be done, provided the policy is pursued systematically and steadily. Let us hope that this new experiment which is to be made by the appointment of a Director of Agriculture for affording assistance to the agricultural industry of the country will be met by a consistency of policy. We wish the Director of Agriculture, but a Central Department of Agriculture and Industries.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

That brings me to the subject of industrial development—a subject for which I am rather afraid to speak with the warning before me of Lord Curzon, given the other day at Madras, that this subject of technical education or industrial development has "an extraordinary fascination for the tongue in India." I know that there are people who talk about it without knowing the real aspects of India's industrial situation, but after all the talkers may not be altogether a useless class. In every country the talkers precede the actors at every stage of its progress. And, as the late Mr. Bright once put it, "I have observed that all great questions in this country require thirty hours of many times repeated before they are settled. There is no such shower and much sunshine between the sowing of the seed and the reaping of the harvest, but the harvest is reaped generally after all." And in India, where there is such a tendency to let things drift, there is no fear that talk may do no good—for that is one way of keeping the problem before us. The first Famine Commission declared that "the multiplication of industries was the only complete remedy for famine." That was twenty years ago. But since that report was made very little has been done to advance the suggestion into the region of practice. On the contrary, some things have been done, unconsciously perhaps,

which have had the effect of reducing the number of our industries. Is it any wonder that, under the circumstances, with millions of people coming on the land, millions of them should go out of it, and that Sir James Lyall and his colleagues on the second Famine Commission should find that numbers of the peasantry have been, and are being, reduced to landless and jobless labourers? These are the people whom a famine first touches, and who flock to relief works the moment they are opened, and as they go on increasing in numbers, famine relief must soon outrun the resources of Government. The present relief policy is doomed to early extinction, and already during the famine it has been stretched to breaking point. We are assured here again by Lord Curzon that as to this question of industrial development "Government is bestowing its serious attention upon the matter." His Excellency, however, suggested the difficulty which stands in the way. Replying to the Mahajana Sabha of Madras on this point, his Excellency asked: "Are you quite certain that those agencies and institutions which exercise so powerful a control upon the mind of the Indian youth are using their influence as they might do to encourage the particular form of education which in theory they applaud?" Now I do not wish for one moment to minimise this difficulty. That we have our part to do in this matter—to do our best to turn the mind of our youth to industrial channels rather than the seeking of employment—what I education, and the courting of Government employment—what I will freely admit. But what has happened in India by way of a tendency to seek literary education, and go in for Government employment is what happened at one time in some countries in Europe, and what will happen in any country at first where schools are established and the improved machinery of official administration creates a large number of offices. Montalembert many years ago pointed that out in writing about some countries in Europe. If tendency will move in another direction—slowly, but steadily—if the initiative comes from the State, as it has done in many other civilised countries. It is true that on the principle that, while one man can lead a horse to the water, even twenty cannot make it drink, the Government may open schools for technical instruction, but they cannot get Indian youth to enter them if the youth will not enter, and the Government cannot create the spirit of enterprise where there is no desire for enterprise. But, after all, the mind of the Indian youth is not so hopelessly conservative and blindly stubborn. There are already signs that our educated men are not merely talking in the matter. As a Madras newspaper pointed out the other day in advertising to Lord Curzon's advice to the students of Cochin, there is a stream of tendency in the direction. What is claimed at the hands of Government is that it should take advantage of this tendency, and do what it can to help and forward it on. One way of helping it, it was pointed out by the *Indian Agriculturist* in Madras last week, is said: "If we wish to see how a Government can help its subjects to solve this problem, we have only to look at what has been done in Canada, and is now being done in Ireland. In Canada, as we have more than once pointed out in these columns, the Agricultural Department acts on the principle that, as it can command better brains than the individual farmer, its duty is to take the initiative, and to show the farmer how he can improve his methods, and where he can find new sources of profit. If these new sources are beyond his unaided reach, the Department gives him a helping hand, but always on the understanding that as soon as the individual has secured a good grip of the new industry, he will do the rest of the work for himself. It is in this spirit that the Canadian Department of Agriculture has organised a cold storage service of train and steam-boat, so that butter and cheese can be sent in good condition from remote Canadian farms right away to Liverpool. As soon as the system is self-supporting and self-managing—an end already in sight—the Department will leave it alone, and go on to something else. The Irish Department of Agriculture has been planned with the same ends in view, but with this valuable addition that it is empowered to deal with manufacturing industries as well as agriculture." Above all, no country has pursued a *laissez faire* policy of commerce and agriculture. Even in England it was only in the middle of this century, when industries had grown to manhood, the machinery had been invented, and manufactures had fully exhausted the advisability and needs of the old policy of protection, that, in response to the altered circumstances, the Free Trade policy was pursued. Now, I do not plead for Protection, for if I did I should have to go back to the times when people had faith in it, and we do not live in those times. And even if we did ask for Protection, there is not the slightest chance that we shall get it. We have to deal with the question as a question of practical politics and not of theory. It is a creed that is obsolete, and British statesmen will have none of it. And what Lord Salisbury said some twelve years ago is true. His Lordship said: "My belief is that Protection means nothing else but civil war." But if the British manufacturer does not get Protection, he gets from the State something very much better in its stead—"the open door" or "foreign markets." Now, let that open-door policy be for the whole Empire, and let not Indian subjects go to Natal or Cape Colony be treated as if India had no part given or lot in the Empire. Nor should they be subjected to such restrictive rules as have been recently passed regarding the Baraki College in India and Cooper's Hill in England. It is our own country, and our own industry. The exorbitant duty levied on the Bombay mill industry clearly shows that under the present policy no Indian industry will be allowed to outgrow European competition.

WISE AND ECONOMICAL ADMINISTRATION.

But the solution of this problem which calls for remedies against famines will not be complete unless they are made possible by a policy of wise and judicious economy in administration. Government are more than individuals cannot both eat and have it. The larger the proportion of revenues spent on the administration, the less of it there is to devote to the relief of the people. It is encouraging to find that Lord Curzon has applied himself to this question also. Some years ago no less an authority on Indian finance than Sir

And Colvin said in an article contributed to the columns of the *Nineteenth Century*—an article which created considerable interest at the time it appeared—that “there can be no improvement in Indian finance so long as Indian revenues are depleted by the claims of frontier extension.” Soon after his assumption of the office of Viceroy, Lord Curzon addressed himself to this question, and his examination of the subject in relation to the financial condition of the country has resulted in what may be regarded as a wise compromise, the new policy being to irritate the susceptibilities of the frontier tribes as little as possible, and to concentrate their good-will. It is the policy of subsidising these tribes may be carried too far, and these annually-recurring subsidies may in course of time mount up to the cost of a war. Besides, good-will obtained by subsidies will have to be kept up by subsidies, and these may become a perpetual drain on the country. The success of the new policy will have to depend mainly on the careful choice of the officers appointed to deal with and keep in hand the wild tribes on the frontier. Here it is mainly a question of “men, not measures.” These rude, unsophisticated men adore a man that is true and brave and discreet, and ascendancy so gained over them will be proof against the outburst of fanaticism more than anything else. But it is not on frontier extensions alone that money has been wasted. I am prepared to make every allowance for expenditure to grow in these days of advancing civilisation and increasing and increased State responsibilities. But it should not in any case be allowed to outgrow the capacity of the country, and when it does, it makes a costly administration synonymous with a ruinous administration. Complaints have been made that, while important works of public utility are postponed or declined, works of considerably less urgency are undertaken, and hatched on, and to condense their good-will. It is true. An Anglo-Indian friend cited to me the other day what may appear a trifling instance, but what seems to me to be an illustration of what I am submitting. He had always wondered, he said, how Government could sanction the erection of a costly building for a military mess in the Marine Lines on the Queen’s Road in Bombay. While every pie the Government could spare was, it was said, wanted for plague and famine, here was a building rising in imposing greatness, and it stands there as one more proof of how economy is more preached than practised. There is another thing—the importation of medical men from England for the purpose of this mess. These may be a paper matter, these straws best show how the wind blows. Apart from these individual instances there is a general tendency for the cost of the administration of the country to increase, and it is a danger to be guarded against. If the country progressed in a corresponding measure, it will not much matter, but the country does not. The Welby Commission say that the cost of Civil Government increased during the period of 1883-84 to 1895-96 at a rate more than double that of the population during the same period, notwithstanding the re-imposition of the taxation remitted in previous years, and the addition of further new taxation at a rate only slightly in excess of the growth of the population. This means, to my mind, that while the prosperity of the nation has been practically at a standstill, the expenditure has grown by leaps and bounds. But it is somewhat encouraging to find that the Secretary of State for India has resolved and arranged to relieve India by 257,000 yearly, beginning on the 1st of April next.

THE CONGRESS AND THE GOVERNMENT.

Lord Curzon, we all feel, has begun well by setting his face against the policy of drift which I have been speaking. But after all Lord Curzon has come among us for five years, two of which have expired, and but three remain. Will British statesmanship drift into the old policy after him? It is here that our duty lies. The Congress has been from the beginning of its existence a standing protest against the policy of drift, and its time is now come—it is now most opportune to speak out more emphatically than ever, it ought to redouble its efforts, and help the Government in the solution of the great Indian problem to which all eyes are now turned. We belong to a movement which is the product of the genius of the British administration. It is a movement which is the natural outcome of the spirit of the age, and all that is best, noble, and enduring in the *Pax Britannica*, and the one duty that devolves on it is to stand forth and preach: “Not drift, but wise and sustained direction will save India.” And in fulfilling this duty we have no reason to fear that we shall be suspected as noisy agitators who wish to emigrate rather than help the Government. We have moved on since it used to be said in some quarters that the educated native does not represent the people. That controversy is now a mere matter of history, or, if it is not, I look upon it as a mere war of words. And so far as I have been able to gauge official opinion, the large majority of those who are responsible for the good administration of the country recognise the value of the opinion and influence of educated natives. And the very wise and statesmanlike observations made on this subject by Lord Curzon in his reply to the address presented to him by the Municipal Corporation of Bombay ought to dispel all doubt on the point. We have now arrived at the stage where the Congress has it in its power to make its usefulness felt by carrying on its work on its old-acquainted constitutional lines, by helping the Government with facts, with information, with practical suggestions which will strengthen its hands, and enable it to pursue a policy of large and liberal measures and give up the tendency to drift in administration.

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.

This is the duty before us. It is that to which we have committed ourselves, and for the performance of which in the spirit of loyal adherence to the Throne of her Majesty we have here assembled. And that year has passed before the august reform which our Viceroy has devoted himself—arduously and bravely—the task to which one man or even a body of men to say that he or they can finish the work and see his or their endeavours crowned with success. A learned divine has said, and said rightly: “One alone among the

sons of men was able to say—*It is finished.*” But that British statesmanship has awakened to the gravity of the situation which envelops the Indian problem is one of the most hopeful signs that the country has a better future before it, and the last famine—the disastrous suffering that it has brought to the people, the terrible strain it has put upon the officials, and the marks it has left of misery and death—will not be altogether a calamity if it keeps alive the conscience it has so signally served to awaken. All this should incite us for the future. It should encourage us to devote ourselves to our country’s cause with unflinching zeal. We have as members of this Congress taken upon ourselves a sacred duty; and it is ours to go on in the discharge of it with faith in our mission, hope for the future, and loyal trust in the sense of justice and righteousness of the Government of her Majesty the Queen-Empress.

THE LAHORE CONGRESS.

We have much pleasure in reproducing the following article from our able Anglo-Indian contemporary, the *Times of India* (Dec. 29):—

No one can read the report of the address delivered at the opening of the Lahore Congress on Thursday by the Hon. Mr. Chandavakar without feeling that the deliberations of that body claim the respectful attention of all—whether Englishmen or Natives, officials or non-officials—who are interested in the well-being of India. That proposition may be laid down upon the broad general ground that it is foolish and unjust for any intelligent person to turn aside with indifference from any reasoned statement of the opinions of any man or class of men who, in good faith, and in command of authentic sources of information, endeavour to enlist public interest in the well-being of the country. But there are special reasons for bespeaking interest in the Congress of 1900. One reason is largely personal. This year, as it was last year, the Congress is presided over by a gentleman of recognised attainments, who is known at once for his keen concern in the fortunes of his country, for the moderation of his views, and for his loyalty to Government. When in two successive years the Congress has at its head men of the stamp of Mr. Dutt and Mr. Chandavakar, those amongst us who have in the past been alienated from it by the extravagance of its demands, and by the straggling and occasionally venomous dissidence of some of its leaders, are bound to ask if the time has not come for a change of attitude in regard to it. Nor is it here alone that the call for an endeavour to establish new and more amicable relations with the Congress is heard. A few weeks since there emanated from a quarter from which, we must own, little has come in the past which could evoke a favouring response from practical minds in India, an appeal which for our part we cannot undertake the responsibility of ignoring. Scidmore, indeed, has any document signed by Sir William Wedderburn, Mr. Allan Hume, and Mr. Darabhai Nauroji carried weight amongst men who desire the orderly development of our institutions in India along lines in rigid conformity with an effective British control, and the permeating influence of the British spirit through all the channels of administration. Nevertheless, we can read, if we are not mistaken, in the manifesto of the British Committee of the Congress a desire to infuse a new and (as we shall venture to call it) a better spirit into political movements in India. The Committee say that the present is a critical time for the Congress—“a parting of two ways; as it will depend upon the attitude and action of the Indian people, and of the Indian authorities, whether this constitutional movement of the educated classes shall develop into its full usefulness by drawing together the rulers and the ruled and promoting the welfare of both India and this country, or whether the efforts that have been made shall end in disappointment and reaction.” The immediate incentive to this declaration was some wise and kindly utterances by Lord George Hamilton, in the course of which the Secretary of State, looking back over the recent terrible struggle with famine, had expressed a hope that the good would come of evil, seeing that the joint labour of the various districts had “rekindled between the Government and the governed that feeling of regard and affection which was so marked a characteristic in India” in other days. These words are not misread when they are interpreted as an invitation to a better understanding. Why go on with their damaging conflict in Parliament, in the Press, and before the British public? the Committee ask; and they add: “A *Concordat* would be much better for all parties, and the olive branch now held out by the highest authority will, we believe, be gladly welcomed by the influential and educated classes throughout the country.” The Congress leaders have, it ought to be recognised, translated these kind sentiments into fact by the choice of their President for 1900. Nor have the Government shown a less conciliatory spirit than that to which such effective expression was given by the Secretary of State. In selecting for a High Court Judgeship a publicist whose Presidency of the Congress had been determined upon and announced some weeks before, they have let it be seen that association with a constitutional political movement carries with it no risk of falling under official disfavour. We seem, indeed, to have returned to the point at which Government can once more ostensibly stand the Congress, as it was described by Lord Lansdowne’s Government, as one of the movements “perfectly legitimate in themselves.” Mr. Chandavakar’s review of the development of the Congress movement on Thursday was too summary to permit him to enquire into the causes which had brought it into changed and less favourable relations with the Government—and even with independent European opinion—since the days when Lord Dufferin was almost ostentatiously friendly to it, and when the Governor of Madras specially regarded the grounds of Government House to its members. It is change was under the circumstances inevitable, and we do not complain that the President of this year’s Congress felt under no compulsion to explain how it was brought about. If the Congress and the official classes are to become once again, so to say, on speaking terms, nothing is so well calculated to ensure this desirable result as the presence at the head of its deliberations of men of the type of this year’s President. Government themselves, if they are so disposed, may derive no little advantage from the re-establish-

ment of the old relations. A popular assembly, with educated men for its leaders, will be more inclined to speak under a sense of responsibility, to weigh its words, and to keep within the limits of practicality, when it knows that the ears of authority are not closed to its complaints, and that its representations will be received with sympathy. Nor can we believe that any Government, when it has within reach a body of men who are well disposed towards it, and have no other purpose in view than to help it to advance the well-being of the population, would deliberately elect to deprive itself of the councils or even the complaints of such an assembly. The most bureaucratic of administrators—if Sir William Lee Warner will allow the word to pass—would find it difficult to demonstrate the advantage of governing in the dark. It rests, of course, very much with the Congress therefore—but not wholly—to decide whether it shall in the future exercise a useful influence upon governing opinion and action. There is surely work for it to do if it will only set about it in a right spirit. Our Legislative Councils—as we said at the most recent meeting of the local council in Poona—are becoming increasingly informing and effective instruments for the instruction of administrators and the public alike, and nothing that has happened for many years past has so powerfully awakened public interest in the workings of the Bombay Revenue system as our latest provincial Budget debate. The National Congress can, if it chooses to, continue and expand the process; for there is no question upon which more light is urgently needed. But the work can only be done on a liberal condition, that men go to the Congress more largely equipped with first hand knowledge than with rhetoric and generalisations.

Thursday's Presidential address will, as we have suggested, more than repay perusal. We shall not pay Mr. Chandavakar the compliment that is really due to him if we say that it was eloquent. Its best merit was that it was practical. When he spoke of delusive operations of the Deccan Agriculturists' Act in merely substituting one class of creditors for another, he did so as a pleader who had observed the phenomenon in the course of his professional experience. Evidence of this nature is valuable at this time, inasmuch as the Government of India, having made one bold experiment with the indebted landholder in the Punjab, are contemplating others in the same direction. This is a time, therefore, when they should welcome evidence and criticism—even the criticism of men who in the light of concrete knowledge of agrarian economics may endeavour to pull to pieces this latest attempt at the solution of the problem. Here, however, we come to an aspect of the Congress movement which claims the careful attention of all who desire that it shall be an effective organisation. It will do little good, no matter who may be its leaders, or however wisely they may speak, so long as it remains an annual meeting merely for the hearing of speeches and the passing of resolutions. The dreary and unprofitable race of electing a "subjects committee" a few hours before the public proceedings begin, should be summarily ended. In its place there should be organised a permanent committee which should receive and collate information bearing upon all the subjects concerning which the Congress desires to instruct the public and to influence the Government. There is no reason why such an organisation should not establish relations with the authorities, much as a generation ago the old Sarvajani Sabha—before it elected to play the rôle of a deliberate deceiver of the people—was in relations with the Bombay Government. Mr. Chandavakar gave an excellent description of the lines along which the Congress can usefully proceed when he said towards the conclusion of his address on Tuesday: "We have now arrived at a stage when the Congress has it in its power to make its usefulness felt by carrying on its work on its old accustomed constitutional lines, by helping the Government with facts, with information, with practical suggestions, which will strengthen its hands, and enable it to pursue a policy of large and liberal measures, and give up the tendency to drift into administration." No one who comes in close touch, as we ourselves do, with the usual channels of unofficial criticism, can fail to be impressed—sometimes to be depressed—by the poverty of spontaneous unofficial criticism from which India suffers. Yet never was there a time when there was a greater need for it, and if the Congress under wise guidance can stimulate and inform the critical faculty of the people there will no longer be a justification for looking askance at the movement.

THE FAMINE COMMISSION.

The following is the resolution of the Government of India, dated Calcutta, December 20th, constituting the Famine Commission:

The Governor-General in Council has decided, with the concurrence of her Majesty's Secretary of State for India in Council, and in accordance with the action taken after the famines of 1876-78 and 1890-97, to appoint a Commission to collate and consider the experiences of the late famine while they are still fresh in the memory of the Governments and the people, and to investigate the differences in the methods of relief which have been adopted in the different provinces of British India, both as regards their success in saving life or in mitigating distress, and also as regards efficiency and economy. The magnitude and severity of the drought, the unparalleled souls on which it has been found necessary to conduct relief operations, and the heavy mortality which, notwithstanding these efforts, has been recorded in many parts of the afflicted area, commend this course to her Majesty's Government and to the Governor-General in Council as likely to be productive of valuable results in the treatment of future famines.

2. The report of the Commission of 1898 in its exhaustive survey of the principles and practice of famine relief as developed during the two preceding decades, and in its full discussion of the technical details of the Famine Codes, obviously prescribes a starting point for

the Commission which the Governor-General in Council proposes to constitute, and will greatly facilitate and abbreviate its labours. The drought of 1899 occurred while the recommendations of the Commission of 1898 were still undergoing examination by the Local Governments, and before definite conclusions as to their incorporation in the Famine Codes had been arrived at. The recommendations, however, were, in a greater or less degree and in a more or less modified form acted upon in every province where famine prevailed, and largely influenced the policy which has been pursued. It is highly desirable that the results of actual experience as to their working should be ascertained and brought under review before the final revision of the Famine Codes is undertaken. This will constitute the first and most important subject of enquiry.

3. Connected with this subject is the relative use that has been made in the various provinces of the several methods of relief recognised in the Codes, and their results as regarded from the standpoint both of the successful relief of distress and of financial outlay. Gratuitous relief has been more largely resorted to in some tracts than in others, and has varied widely in form: relief works have exhibited great diversities in scheme and management; the difficult problem of adapting the relief system to the special requirements of the rainy season has been differently treated in different localities; the wage scale, the effective enforcement of tax and other tests of necessity, the provision of adequate administrative, medical and public works establishments, are also matters in respect of which the practice has varied much. Absolute uniformity of method in the widely diverse conditions which famine presents is unsustainable, but the degree of variation in the methods actually adopted cannot be wholly thus explained. A close analysis and comparison of methods and results should conduce to greater uniformity in the administration in future famines as well as to increased efficiency and economy in relief operations. In considering results, the Commission will examine the mortality during the famine in each province with reference to its excess over the mortality of ordinary years, and to the causes of such excess.

4. Intimately connected with the system of famine relief are the subjects of loans to cultivators and others, and the collection of the land revenue. The use made of the loan system (taconr) or other advances in the various provinces should be enquired into, and suggestions should, if necessary, be made for improving or extending this form of relief. The collection of the land revenue demand in the several provinces and the extent to which relief was granted to distressed owners and occupiers of land by revenue suspensions or remissions are also matters for careful enquiry. Every province has its own regulations on this subject, which have been framed with special reference to the local revenue assessment system and to local conditions. Here again uniformity of treatment is neither practicable nor desirable. But in the late famine considerable divergence has occurred in different parts of British India, if not in the question of principle, at least in the method adopted for selecting the recipients of relief and in the machinery for granting it. From the Famine Commission of 1878 to the present time authorities have recognised that a prompt and judicious application of the form of relief within proper limits and subject to proper safeguards is an essential feature of famine administration. But there is room for differences of opinion and practice as regards the limits, the safeguards, and the machinery, and these considerations govern the application of the principle. The Commission may profitably examine the actual practice prevailing in the several affected provinces as exemplified in the late famine, with a view to ascertaining whether it is calculated to give, and actually does give, a proper measure of relief in the matter of the land revenue demand in a year of drought and general distress. As regards the larger question of the incidence and pressure of the land assessment in the time of a famine, and its effects on the well-being and resources of the agricultural population, the Commission will be glad to be under no necessity to re-underline the importance of this subject, upon which he has already addressed the various Local Governments and administrations. A study of their replies will enable him to decide whether further investigation is necessary. It would be manifestly undesirable to postpone the labours of the present Commission until an answer can be given to this question. But should the Commission in the course of its enquiries find it necessary to ask any question on this subject solely with a view of obtaining information likely to be of use in connexion with the matters specifically referred to for examination and report, it will be at liberty to do so.

5. The Commission's enquiries will be limited to famine relief in British India, and these enquiries the Commission may have to take cognizance of the fact that the same or similar conditions in districts bordering on native territory has been affected by immigration from Native States, the Commission should examine and report upon the extent, nature, and general causes of such immigration, its effect on the relief measures and on the death-rate of British districts in which it chiefly occurred, and the methods adopted by British officers in concert with the States for checking or regulating it. The Commission should also advise with reference to the recommendations on the point made by the Famine Commission of 1898, whether and in what manner a greater amount of co-operation can be secured between British and Native Governments in the future.

6. While it will be open to the Commission to consider and report on the general character and effects, as a method of relief, of the several kinds of public works which have been undertaken in the several provinces, the Governor-General in Council does not propose to refer to the Commission the question in its technical aspect of the relief programmes of public works existing in the several provinces at the outbreak of the famine and utilised for the employment of famine labour. This question was carefully considered by the Famine Commission of 1898, and formed the subject of several valuable recommendations. In pursuance of these recommendations an enquiry is necessary as to the utility of the public works which have been undertaken in the late famine, and as to the measures which should

be taken to complete and maintain such of them as are found to be of permanent advantage. And enquiry will also be necessary as to what additional irrigation and water-storage projects of a protective nature can be devised in each province for inclusion in the relief programmes and for eventual execution either in times of famine or at other times by funds allotted from the annual famine grant. The investigation and preparation of such projects require to be placed on a more systematic and permanent basis, and to be more closely and unremittingly pursued. The enquiries which the Governor-General in Council has in view under this head are, however, as observed above, of a technical character, and he considers that it will be more convenient, instead of remitting them to the Commission, to make special arrangements in the Public Works Department for their prosecution.

7. Subject to the foregoing remarks the Commission will therefore enquire into and report upon the following subjects:—

(i) How far the recommendations of the Famine Commission of 1898 have been followed, with or without modification, or departed from in the different provinces in the late famine; and to what extent the S. S. experience now acquired confirms their wisdom or suggests their amendment.

(ii) What light the experience of the recent famine throws upon the subjects of Relief Works, Gratuitous Relief, or Famine Relief as a whole; how far the systems adopted in the different areas have been successful, or the reverse, in their bearing, primarily, upon the relief of distress, and, secondarily, with regard to economy; how they compare with each other; and whether any fresh rules or modifications of rules are required.

(iii) In what manner relief by means of *tacavi* or other advances of public money, and by means of the suspension or remission of the land assessment, has been applied in the different provinces to their special needs; whether the existing machinery for the prompt institution of these forms of relief is adequate; and whether any general instructions are called for with regard to the principles or methods by which such relief should be determined.

(iv) In what manner the famine affected the death-rate of the various provinces and districts, with an enquiry into the causes of any variation.

(v) The extent, nature, and general causes of immigration from Native States into British districts: its effect upon relief measures in them; how it was dealt with; and what better arrangements for concerted action between British and Native authorities can be devised.

8. The Commission will not be precluded from recording any recommendations or opinions which it is thought may be of use either in anticipation or in the treatment of future famines.

9. The Commission will be constituted as follows:—President, the Honourable Sir A. P. MacDonnell, G.C.S.I., I.C.S., Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces and Chief Commissioner of Oudh. Members: The Honourable Mr. F. A. Nicholson, C.I.E., I.C.S., member of the Board of Revenue, Madras; the Honourable Mr. J. A. Bourdillon, C.S.I., I.C.S., Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal; Rao Bahadur Kanti Chander Mukharji, C.I.E., Chief Member of the Council of the Jaipur State in Rajputana. Secretary, Mr. S. H. Bather, I.C.S., Settlement Officer, North-Western Province and Oudh; and will assemble at such time and at such place as the President may appoint. The general conduct of the enquiry and the regulation of the course of business before the Commission is entrusted to the President in communication with the members. The Governor-General in Council leaves it to the President to determine the procedure to be adopted in obtaining and recording evidence. It is desirable in the interests of public business and with a view to despatch that the proceedings of the Commission in these respects should be abbreviated as far as possible. The Commission through its Secretary, acting under the instructions of the President, will correspond directly with Local Governments and Departments of the Government of India, and with any local authorities with whom such communications may be authorized by Local Governments as a matter of convenience and in order to save time. The Governor-General in Council desires that all communications or requisitions emanating from the Commission may be treated as urgent and complied with promptly, and that in the event of the Commission visiting a province it may be afforded every facility for its enquiries.

MR. ROMESH DUTT AT EXETER.

On January 11th, at the Exeter Swimming Baths Hall, Mr. Romesh Dutt, C.I.E., delivered a lecture on "Famines in India; their causes and remedies." The chair was occupied by Sir John B. Phear, and there was a large and influential attendance. We give the report of the *Western Times* (January 12):—

The CHAIRMAN said Imperialism was the test word of their language. They were pleased to be members of the greatest Empire that ever was. But how many of them realised the great responsibilities of that Empire? How many knew anything about the methods by which their Imperial rule was carried out? Few were possessed of the conditions of life in India and of the shortcomings of the supreme Government in relation to the rule of the people. This was to a greater extent now than formerly, because until comparatively recent years Englishmen who went out in the service of the great Company went out with the intention of spending their lives there. The great men whose names were associated with the growth of the great Indian Empire literally identified themselves with the people from the commencement of their going out to the end of their lives. But in these days of weekly post, days when the young official annually gets his three months' leave, he returns to England and associates himself with English life. Thus the connexion of the Indian officials with the people of India had become much less close than it used to be;

They must look for a remedy. The people of England must look to being instructed by the Native gentry who occupy positions of trust and responsibility in India. Therefore they in Exeter could not but feel indebted to Mr. Dutt for having come amongst them in order that they might form an opinion with regard to the affairs and administration of that dependency. Mr. Dutt, to his (Sir John Phear's) knowledge, became a member of the Indian Civil Service in 1871. He entered into the lower grade of the service, and had risen to the highest class until he had retired on the well-earned terms of the service. Mr. Dutt had been engaged in some of the most remarkable famines which had occurred of late years in different parts of India. As to the famines, they did not mean that there was any lack of food, but that the people of India had not the means of purchasing that food.

Mr. Dutt said doubtless the subject which he should speak on had engaged their minds for several months past. The gravity of the situation was that the present famine was by no means a singular or isolated instance. It was one of a succession of the famines which had visited India ever since the commencement of the century, and particularly within the last forty or fifty years. There had been a famine in India on the average once in every six or seven years. He remembered the famine of 1860 and the terrible accounts which were received in Calcutta. Then hundreds of thousands of people perished in that famine. Within six years after that there was even a worse famine, and at that time Sir John Phear was sitting in the capacity of a High Court Judge in Calcutta. In that famine the loss of life was most terrible. The famine of 1877 accounted for no less than the loss of more than five millions of people. The famine of 1890 had resulted in the loss of a million lives. India had had a long period of peace, and how was it that it was the only country under civilised administration in which there were so many famines? Where there had been such a succession of famines with such regularity, the question must arise, What is the reason of those famines, and how can they be remedied? It had been said that the population increased at such a rate that famine was the only means of clearing the country of its superabundance of population. But the increase of population in India was less than one per cent., whereas the increase in England was a little over one per cent. They were told also that the famines were due to providence and ignorance of the people, but with all their ignorance there was no more frugal or more provident race of cultivators on the face of the earth. The money-lenders were also said to be the cause of the poverty, but the money-lenders could not be styled as the cause of poverty. Therefore they must go deeper for the cause of the poverty. Everyone agreed that the cause of the famine in India was the drought, and they must shape the administration so that the cultivator should be able to put something by on the good years to meet the years of drought. It was highly necessary that agriculture should be lightly taxed so that cultivators might be able to save something year after year for periods of drought and famine. The great portion of the revenue was drawn from the land, and the percentage imposed on the land was increasing. While the demands on the soil increased, it was impossible for the cultivators to save sufficient money or grain in years of good harvest to make up for the bad years. One half the net revenue of India was taken clean away from India to fructify the trade and industry of England. That had resulted in a perpetual drain on the resources of India, and this in itself would account for the famines which had arisen. Up to the present day all civil or military administration had been charged to India, and more than that, many of the wars waged hundreds of miles from India had been charged to India. The English people should see that the administration in regard to India should be conducted on equitable lines. Endeavours should be made to take off the crushing load from which agriculture suffered in India, and he hoped the day was not far distant when a great administrator and financier would go out to India and place her finances on a just basis as Mr. Gladstone did in this country. (Hear, hear.)

PUBLIC MEETINGS ON INDIAN QUESTIONS.

THE WORK OF THE BRITISH COMMITTEE.

MR. DADABHAI NAOROJI'S ENGAGEMENTS.

Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, indefatigable as ever, proposes to deliver addresses on Indian questions as follows:—

January 23.—Strand Women's Liberal and Radical Association. Mr. Naoroji will take the chair at Miss Garland's lecture at the National Liberal Club, at 8 p.m.

January 31.—Toynbee Hall.

February 10.—Hatcham Liberal Club.

February 25.—Myston Road Library and Debating Society.

March 10.—Reading: (1) To members of the First Day Adult School, at 9.30 a.m.; (2) to the Castle Street Chapel Pleasant Hour Society, in the Chapel, at 3 p.m.

MR. CAINE AND MR. PILLAI IN CORNWALL.

Mr. W. S. Caine, M.P., and Mr. G. P. Pillai have arranged a series of Congress meetings in Cornwall as follows:—

February 4.—Recluth Liberal Club.

February 5.—Camborne Liberal Club.

February 6.—Balmouth: Annual Meeting of the Women's Liberal Association of Cornwall.

February 7.—Penzance: Public Meeting.

February 8.—St. Ives: Public Meeting.

Both gentlemen will speak at each of these meetings on Indian questions and Congress policy.

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