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## NOTES AND NEWS.

WE print on another page a letter which Sir William Wedderburn, M.P., addressed a few days ago to the President of the Liberal Association in Banffshire, the constituency which Sir William represents in the House of Commons. Readers of INDIA did not need to be told that if the Chairman of the Indian Parliamentary Committee believed a certain policy to be "morally wrong" he would shirk no opportunity of refusing to have part or lot in it. On each of the three occasions in the recent short Session of Parliament upon which members of the House of Commons were required to approve or to protest against Mr. Chamberlain's war with the Transvaal, Sir William Wedderburn was among the few who consistently discharged the duty, unpopular as it is for the moment, of protesting. In the letter which is printed elsewhere he gives his reasons for his votes. They are summed up in two sentences. If the war was "morally wrong" in August how did it become "politically right" in October? "How could I vote for the continuance of a war which I regarded as immoral and unwise?"

That Sir William Wedderburn and the handful of members who did their duty with the same thoroughness should be reviled by the Rhodesian journals was, of course, to be expected. That is the only compliment that critics like the *Times* have it in their power to pay to men who, no matter what the consequences may be, refuse to palter with their principles. To such critics the politician who at a time of popular excitement asks not "By what ingenuity can I, if only for twenty-four hours, identify myself with the clamour of the noisiest section of the public?" but only "What ought I to do?" appears at best eccentric and at worst a bad citizen. So much the worse for the critics. But their criticisms are taken as read. It is, however, noteworthy that, amid the "cross-currents" of the time, even in a Scottish Liberal constituency the feeling excited by the war should be such as to cause one of the local associations to pass a resolution disapproving of a vote in the House of Commons which was a protest against the war. This feeling is no doubt due in part to the fact that Banffshire is the cradle and home of the gallant Gordon Highlanders, whose splendid heroism is worthy of a better cause. We trust that when men's minds have become calmer a different view may be taken. Meantime it is of importance to India to know fully what course has been adopted in this crisis by independent members of Parliament connected with her interests.

"There is much to make British Indian officialdom envious in the retrospect of Mysore affairs in 1898-1899," says the *Madras Mail*, rivaling the praises of the *Times* of India, referred to in our last issue. It must be allowed that there is ample justification for the remarks of these important Anglo-Indian journals, when it is remembered that in spite of decreased income and increased expenditure due to the plague, there has been hardly any disturbance of the financial equilibrium, owing to the "magnificent" surplus of 160 lakhs, nearly a whole year's revenue, carried forward from the previous year. But there is much else for which Mysore is enviable.

The fact that strikes the critic in British territory most is the apparent ease with which new notions are put into execution in

Mysore. An idea is started—most often in British territory, by the Government of India or by a local Government—and while it is still only an idea, and passing through the elaborate and complicated machinery of discussion and report that is the chief characteristic of our Secretariats, it is taken up by the simpler machinery of Mysore and passed through as a concrete measure of reform within a few months, maybe.

And remember that this is done by Indian officials—men whose capacity for government and administration is too often denied and ridiculed, if they happen to be on British territory and in the service of the Crown. If Indians can do so well in the highest posts in Mysore, why should they not do equally well in the highest posts of British India?

But the *Madras Mail*, misled by Sir Henry Fowler, thought it had found a blot in the Mysore administration, and has had in a subsequent issue to do penance. Here is the original passage:—

Probably the greatest defect of Mysore administration would be found to be its comparative costliness which probably accounts for the rate of taxation in Mysore being so much above the same in British India, as Sir Henry Fowler pointed out in the House of Commons some years ago.

But those who follow Sir Henry in Indian matters are sure to go wrong. The *Madras Mail* candidly acknowledges that the Mysore authorities succeeded in proving that Sir Henry was mistaken. Instead of the taxation per head of population being Rs. 3 in Mysore to Rs. 2.4 in Madras, as the ex-Secretary of State for India averred, the real figures are Rs. 3.27 for Madras and 3.04 for Mysore, or if Forest Revenue and Municipal taxes be taken into account, Rs. 3.38 for Madras and 3.37 for Mysore. Even on the bare figures, then, the advantage is with Mysore. But the *Madras Mail*, in common with most other Anglo-Indians, is not so ready to acknowledge that this is only a part of the advantage. Of the taxation raised in Mysore, practically the whole is spent in the country; of the taxation raised in Madras a considerable part goes to England, as "Home Charges" or in other ways; so that, even if the taxation in Mysore were higher, it might still have the better bargain, in that it had to pay no tribute to Europe.

Some little time ago the inhabitants of Dublin were thrown into a state almost of panic by an announcement that for the future the promotion of policemen would depend on the number of arrests and convictions due to their energy. It was pointed out that this was to put a premium on the invention of crime by the police, if the supply of actual crime should fall short, and that it was to discourage prevention and to encourage false accusations and perjury. In a very few days the obnoxious circular was withdrawn. But India is less fortunate even than Ireland. In spite of protests, statistics have continued to be the standard of police merit. But Sir Antony MacDonnell, whose good sense we have often had occasion to admire, speaks out strongly on this matter in his review of the police administration report for the United Provinces. Here is what he says:

The Lieutenant-Governor confesses that he attaches small importance to these calculations. They are a better index to bad than to good work. They fall altogether to take count of the work which should be most highly valued—the work which prevents the commission of crime. Excellent work was done during the year in preventing violent crime in the Ballia District; yet these arithmetical exercises assign to the District a conspicuously low place in the so-called order of merit.

"Yet," as the *Hindu* says, "the policeman continues to earn his rise by running in helpless people within his clutches somehow—without any sort of check from the Government."

The *Hindu* returns to the case of the Tinnevely rioters. It asks: If the excited feeling in the district was a reason for suppressing trial by jury, was it right to leave it entirely to the local police to collect evidence and get up



cases? Further, everywhere in India the police are anxious to secure convictions. A correspondent of the *Hindu* declares that men are being sent for trial with hardly any enquiry, and that mischief-makers and blackmailers are having a grand time. Moreover, so few judges are at present available to try the prisoners, over a thousand in number, that if they are to have a fair trial the proceedings must last for months, and many remain untried in gaol for long periods. Our contemporary continues:—

But there is a greater cruelty than this—it is putting them on trial in large numbers before a single judge. And that is what the Government is permitting to be done at Tinnevely. The Sikavasi outrage was no doubt one single incident in the riots. But as many as ninety-three men have been put up for trial in connexion with it, and each one must have his own defence to make. If so, how can each prisoner get a satisfactory hearing when all of them are put on trial together?

The *Hindu* suggests that they should be tried in batches of ten or twelve. The Government generously assigned two pleaders to the prisoners, but what can these do if they have to defend ninety-three persons at once? Finally our contemporary, recalling how the name of Manomohan Ghose is still cherished in many a village of Bengal, appeals to the more prosperous of the local pleaders to give their services to the poor prisoners.

The Natus, still confined to the plague-stricken district of Belgaum, are not forgotten by the people of India. Several leading citizens of Trichinopoly, we learn from the *Hindu*, have determined to start a popular agitation in favour of the Natus' liberation, and have to that end addressed a letter to the delegates of the Southern Group of Municipalities assembled there to elect a member of the Madras Legislative Council. As our contemporary says, this shows that neither distance nor difference of language and manners can prevent Indians from uniting when the liberty of the subject is threatened. This is one of the great results of British rule, and it is one that the rulers of India must take into account.

We print this week a letter from Mr. M. K. Gandhi, so well known as the champion of the Indians in Natal, announcing that the Government of that colony has suspended the rules under the Act against Indian immigration in favour of refugees from the Transvaal. The case, indeed, of the Indians was extraordinary. Expelled from the Transvaal with other subjects of the Queen at the outbreak of the war, they found themselves denied access to Natal (the only colony within easy reach) unless they knew a European language or paid a deposit of ten pounds, conditions which the majority could not fulfil. Those who had to fly by Delagoa Bay found themselves stranded in that pestilential climate, as the Natal Government had warned the shipping companies not to bring Indian passengers to Durban. This warning has now been withdrawn and the deposit is now no longer required. But the Indians are given to understand that their stay must only be temporary. It is, however, to be hoped that the Act will never again be enforced in its rigour. The greater part of the Colony has been saved from invasion by troops which have been drawn from India, and have been for years supported and kept in efficiency at the expense of the Indian taxpayer. It will be a crying scandal, worse than all that has gone before, if in the future the people of Natal should discriminate against their Indian fellow-subjects.

The *Tribune*, while welcoming the discussion of the present position of the Moslem community at the forthcoming Mahomedan Educational Conference, thinks that what is needed is not the passing of a resolution, as is suggested in some quarters, deploring that "a nation which once held the reins of this great empire is now deprived by the existing Power of even a subordinate share in the government." It objects that in the first place the poorer Mahometans, always the majority, can hardly be said ever to have held the reins of government. What is really wanted is that the Moslems of India should fit themselves for the new position in which they find themselves by assimilating the spirit of the West, without losing what is best in the spirit of the East—a hard task, no doubt, but one that the *Tribune* itself is doing its best to prove possible. Moreover, Hindu and Moslem, since in the main they suffer from the same evils, would do well to

make common cause; and here, too, the *Tribune* sets an example which all should follow.

Lord George Hamilton, in his speech on the last Indian budget, took for his text the wonderful recovery of India after the last great famine. The *Champion*, now that India is threatened with another famine, enquires how far agriculture has really recovered from the effects of the terrible year, 1896-1897. It finds, on looking at the figures, that the recovery has been far from complete. Comparing the year 1897-98 with the year 1893-94, it finds a diminution in the area under cultivation of 4.6 per cent, and in the number of ploughs of 6.6 per cent. The rayat has thus to till a larger acreage with each plough, though the acreage under cultivation is smaller. If the same years be taken for comparison, the loss in agricultural cattle was even greater. India is to-day poorer in agricultural bulls and bullocks by 10.08 per cent., in cows by 20.63 per cent, and in young stock by 20.66 per cent. Thus the loss in young stock is the greatest, yet it is on young stock that the hope of full recovery depends. If we take into review all the years from 1893 to 1898, the situation seems even worse than the *Champion* asserts, for two movements, both downhill, become apparent. The first is a very slow but steady movement of diminution, to be recognised even in comparatively good years; and the second, the big drop in the famine year, only partially, or not at all, made up in the supposed year of recuperation, 1897-98. The *Champion*, in the face of this terrible condition of things, suggests that the Government would do more good by assisting the rayat to procure cattle than by making laws to limit the alienation of land.

We are glad to see that the municipality of Nagpur is able to present a most creditable report for the past year, during which municipalities have been put on their mettle. The most important source of revenue is the octroi, which yields 73 per cent. of the whole; and water rate and conservancy cess bring in a considerable part of the remainder, despite difficulties of collection. There is thus a lack of elasticity in the revenue, which places obstacles in the way of an improvement of the water supply, and of the construction of a proper system of drainage. Both these projects have been brought into prominence by the visitation of plague, but they may not be unduly pressed after all, in consequence of the excellent way in which the plague was stamped out. The municipality appears to have taken prompt and drastic action, so that the plague carried off but few victims, and occasioned but little trouble to the inhabitants. "As the operations were undertaken sympathetically and with consideration for the feelings of the people," says the *Bombay Gazette*, "there was no unrest, and the officers were able to carry out their arduous work in complete accord with the population." Here, then, is yet another admirable example of that strangely uncommon commodity, common sense in administration.

Still the plague has effected a fresh lodgment, probably with the assistance of the famine. The local leaders of opinion have not done much for inoculation, so that this form of prevention will not prove of any great account. The municipal officers, however, are reported to be acting with their former energy and efficiency. The poorer classes are severely tried by the inevitable suffering consequent on the pressure of famine, notwithstanding the activity of the local administration in providing relief works. It is most satisfactory to learn that the European residents of the station have responded handsomely to an appeal for subscriptions in aid. The right kind of feeling seems happily to prevail, which is all important towards an early deliverance from the combined scourges. The severity of the visitations is unpleasantly indicated by the occupation of the law courts with cases of murder and dacoity. After all, the unanimity of sentiment gives the valuable support of courage and hopefulness in calamity.

A writer in the *Bombay Gazette* regards it as a "queer freak of sentiment" that a Hindu paper should protest indignantly against the municipal slaughter of stray pariah dogs, which "share with us the wonderful mystery of existence, and have the same capacity for happiness and suffering as we ourselves with all our boasted superiority." When the Hindu paper suggests "life-long imprisonment"



as sufficient, the Bombay writer thinks it mighty smart to ask, "why not carry the notion a little further, and add trial by jury?" The writer forgets that we have in London dogs' homes, and even a dogs' cemetery. But the point would not be worth notice except as an illustration of the thickness of British cuticle, and the hopeless incapacity of understanding Hindu feeling.

Lord Curzon displayed great anxiety to have his Punjab Land Alienation Bill well considered and criticised by the public before it should be passed into law. Why was not like anxiety displayed in the case of the Punjab Courts Bill? And why is so little attention paid to the criticisms of the public on all Bills—for example, on the Calcutta Municipal Bill? It seems scarcely worth anybody's while to pass an opinion on any Bill when such opinion will be disregarded if it happens not to jump with the views of the authorities. This Punjab Courts Bill created lively interest in the province, and memorials were presented on behalf of (1) the citizens of Lahore, (2) the Punjab Chief Court Bar Association, and (3) the Committee of the Indian Association, Lahore. These memorials dealt with points of substance on practical grounds of argument, and they represented the opinions of men that understood the working of such a measure in every aspect. They may, indeed, fairly be taken as the unanimous sense of the community on the matters in issue. Yet, in spite of the professed anxiety of the Government for guidance on the practical side of their legislative schemes, the Bill was passed into an Act precisely as if the people most interested in its provisions had never taken the slightest notice of it. This contempt for public opinion is only emphasised by professions of a desire to know what people think of legislative proposals. It would really be much better to drop the farce and proceed by the honest route of frank despotism.

The statement of Objects and Reasons alleged that second appeals had become so numerous "as to keep the Chief Court in arrears and to necessitate the continual services of additional judges," and affirmed that "the object aimed at is to give effect to the joint proposals of the Local Government and the judges of the Chief Court, who are at length agreed on a method of curtailing the number of second appeals, which, under the law as it stands, is admitted on all sides to offer to an abnormally litigious population an undesirable incentive to excessive litigation." Now, of course, excessive litigation is a mischievous thing, which wise legislators have always devised means of remedying. But first it is necessary to see that the litigation is excessive—that the population is "abnormally litigious." It cannot be maintained that the Punjab people are by nature "abnormally litigious"; they are not one whit more ready to rush into court than their neighbours of the North-West Provinces, for example. At the same time, they are undoubtedly very prompt to have recourse to the law, and they do fight their cases out as long as a rupee remains in their money-bags. The thing, then, is to find out precisely where the mischief lies, and to apply the appropriate remedy. Some 53 per cent. of the Punjab people are purely agricultural or pastoral, and the land is mainly held by small proprietors cultivating their own little patches, whereas elsewhere the land is held by considerable zemindars, the mass of the people being their tenants and labourers. Further, the small Punjab proprietors are generally poor and in debt; alienations of land are, therefore, more frequent; and the customary law enables reversioners and heirs to contest almost every alienation. Such is the mischief. How, then, to amend it? Obviously, by repeal of Section 40 of the Punjab Courts Act, 1884, and assimilation of the Punjab law of appeal to the general law laid down in Chapter XIII of the Civil Procedure Code. The people seem ripe for such a change, and it would not involve, as the new Act does, the deprivation of a right of appeal in proper cases, which is sure to create just discontent.

The method adopted in the Act is sufficiently simple. The Act merely raises the pecuniary limits of further appeal. Thus, in small causes no further appeal will lie unless the value of the suit is at least Rs. 1,000; in land suits, unless the value is at least Rs. 250; and in unclassified suits, unless the value is at least Rs. 1,000. And there is

no further appeal at all on the costs merely in small causes whatever the value of the suit; or in land suits unless the value is Rs. 1,000 or upwards; or in unclassified suits unless the value is Rs. 2,500 and upwards. Obviously, this implies super-excellent judges, or the alternative of serious injustice. Contrast the new position in the Punjab with the position in (say) the North-West Provinces. There, under the Code of Civil Procedure, an appeal lies to the High Court in all cases, except small causes under Rs. 500, on any of the following grounds:—

(a) The decision being contrary to some specified law or usage having the force of law; (b) the decision having failed to determine some material issue of law or usage having the force of law; (c) a substantial error or default in the procedure, as prescribed by this Code, which may possibly have produced error or default in the decision of the case upon the merits.

If the Punjab people are poorer, that seems no valid reason why they should be more stinted in opportunities of obtaining justice. The argument rather tells the other way.

The memorialists refer to the Report on the Administration of Civil Justice in the Punjab for 1897, and cite therefrom the average money value of suits during that year. The figures are:—

	Rs.	a.	p.
1. Suits for money or moveable property .. .. .	71	14	10
2. Land suits .. .. .	232	6	7
3. For other immovable property (i.e., unclassified suits) .. .. .	222	2	5
4. Other suits .. .. .	347	1	0

What follows? Plainly, "that in by far the vast majority of small cause and unclassified suits instituted in the Punjab, a litigant will, under the alterations proposed, be deprived of a right of appeal on questions of law, usage, or procedure, to that tribunal which is best able to decide such questions." As to land suits, in which the peculiarity of the Province really lies, the Punjab Chief Court Bar Association makes an important criticism:—

The real value of land is known to be about three times its value for jurisdictional purposes (an arbitrary valuation fixed at thirty times its revenue), and consequently if the limit for purposes of further appeal is fixed at Rs. 250, there will be no further appeal in a land suit unless the actual value of the land happens to exceed Rs. 750. In view of this difference between the actual value of land and its value for jurisdictional purposes, and having regard to the fact that in the Punjab agricultural holdings are small, we would respectfully suggest that the limits proposed should be reduced to Rs. 100 in cases where lower Courts disagree; and Rs. 250 in cases where the lower Courts agree.

The suggestion was a most reasonable and temperate one, but of course unavailing.

We are not sure that the memorialists do not rather minimise the effect of Section 70, which empowers the Chief Court to call for the record of any case not appealable to it. This revisional power the Chief Court may exercise in two sets of circumstances:—

(a) If the Court by which the case was decided appears to have exercised a jurisdiction not vested in it by law, or to have failed to exercise a jurisdiction so vested, or to have acted in the exercise of its jurisdiction with material irregularity; or,

(b) if, on application made to it, the Chief Court is of opinion that there is a question of law or custom and of general interest involved.

The application under clause (b) must be made within thirty days from the date of order whereby the applicant is aggrieved, unless on sufficient cause shown. Still, this revisional power is but trifling compensation for the new restrictions of the Act, and it seems strange that both the right of appeal and the powers of revision in the Punjab should not have been placed on the same wide basis as in the rest of British India. Appended to the revisional power is an extremely shabby pecuniary deterrent: "The litigant of the Punjab, who applies to the Chief Court for a revision order, is compelled in cases the value of which exceeds Rs. 25 to pay a court fee such as would be leviable if his application were in reality a memorandum of appeal, while in other richer parts of India a Rs. 2 stamp suffices," and "the Chief Court has added a further burden to this by ruling that no application for revision will be heard until security for costs has been filed." That is to say, "the litigant is subjected to more than the disadvantages of an appeal without enjoying any of the benefits." Not only has the Government thrown away a capital opportunity of assimilating the Laws of Procedure throughout British India, but it has laid the foundation of hardships that are bound to be fruitful in discontent.



## LORD LYTON'S INDIAN ADMINISTRATION.

IN the pious task of vindicating her father's career as Viceroy of India, Lady Betty Balfour has had only a partial success. He appears no doubt in these pages as an amiable and sincere man, not without high thoughts and generous feelings, a warm friend and a loyal colleague. All this his most severe critics have been willing to allow. But the impression left by the book is not one of strength, nor of success. Many turns of thought suggest that the career of a man of letters would have been more congenial to him than that of a statesman. As for those who disliked his policy twenty years ago, there is little in these pages to make them change their opinion now. Viewed in the light of official correspondence, the situation may seem more difficult than was believed at the time, and Lord Lytton is entitled to any benefit that that fact may give him. But in its main outlines the situation was sufficiently well known then, and the judgments then delivered are not likely to be reversed. In foreign affairs his administration will always be remembered for his interference in Afghanistan; in home affairs for his attack on the liberty of the press. There is something timely in the issue of this book just after an era in which the "forward" policy has been supreme, and while India is still in the throes of reaction. Yet there was one other act of Lord Lytton's which has obtained an enduring remembrance among the people he governed—the "Fuller" minute on the insufficient punishment of Europeans for killing or assaulting Indians still keeps his name in kindly recollection. Lady Betty Balfour begins her history with great professions of impartiality. But it is difficult to credit them when it is found that the "Fuller" minute is passed by while the "forward" policy and the Vernacular Press Act are discussed at great length and justified with much warmth.

To his relations with Afghanistan more than half the book is devoted. He is put forward as the real author of that "forward policy" which, whatever its other effects, has been fraught with so much bloodshed and financial disaster. How far it succeeded in Lord Lytton's hands will probably always be a matter of dispute. There are not wanting signs that the Ministry of Lord Beaconsfield looked on India and her frontier policy as mere pawns in the great game that they were playing against Russia in Europe. Nor is it denied that Lord Lytton was the willing agent of the British Government in this policy and gloried that his successes in Afghanistan had given a point or two to the British side at Constantinople or Berlin. That his policy was a real and permanent success it is difficult to see. There was one obvious failure at the beginning; for it is always a failure for a statesman who sets out to effect his purpose without war to have to resort to that extremity. That such a failure overtook Lord Lytton his own words show:—

"I neither desire a war with Afghanistan nor contemplate any step likely to provoke it. But every one who has had the slightest experience in the management of international relations must be aware that there are a thousand ways of influencing the conduct of your neighbours without going to war with them; and of augmenting, or enforcing, the external power of a State without recourse to arms. Nor is reckless action the only alternative to reckless inactivity.

Yet not one of these thousand ways succeeded, and Lord Lytton had to have recourse to arms—not once—but twice or even thrice.

But this was not the only failure. An attempt to force an embassy on Sher Ali, who had already received one from Russia, having failed, his country was invaded and he himself driven into exile. His imprisoned son became Amir, and Sir Louis Cavagnari was sent as British envoy to Kabul. The terrible result is well known. But the confident letter which Sir Louis wrote four days before the massacre shows in what a fool's paradise he and the Government of India were living. The envoy, indeed, was not so ignorant of his own countrymen as of the Afghans, for he wrote:—

"I am afraid there is no denying the fact that the British public require a blunder and a huge disaster to excite their interest.

Three days later, on September 2, Cavagnari telegraphed, "All well." The next day he and all his escort were massacred. Lord Lytton always believed that the Amir Yakub Khan was in the conspiracy, but the Commission

which investigated the affair took a more lenient view. However that may be, there was evidently some ground for the old Amir's dislike to receive an embassy from India at Kabul. It became evident, too, that if we were to have peace, to say nothing of friendship, with Afghanistan, it was necessary to make the Afghans clearly understand that we had no design of interfering with their internal affairs.

Thus Lord Lytton, having set out on this perilous road with the intention of asserting British influence without war, found himself involved in two successive invasions of Afghanistan, and having made a great point of the reception of a British embassy at Kabul, had the misfortune to see his envoy murdered and a strong national feeling aroused against the English. But this did not exhaust the tale of his failures. He decided for a weak Afghanistan and the separation of Kandahar from Kabul. But the puppet sovereign set up at the former place could only be kept on the throne by British bayonets, and in defending him our troops were defeated at Maiwand. Eventually we were glad enough to leave Afghanistan to whoever could get hold of its government—even to Abdur Ráhmán, who had been for years the guest of the Russians. Furthermore—but this was after Lord Lytton's departure—we allowed him to take possession of Kandahar as well. That the "forward" policy had not still more disastrous results is due chiefly to the unexpected abilities shown by Abdur Ráhmán, who has established a strong Afghanistan, the very thing Lord Lytton attempted to prevent. Meantime for this excursion into the great arena of international politics, where Russia played for the inheritance falling from Turkey's grasp, India had to pay over twelve millions sterling. In addition five millions were paid by England. Considering what we have seen since, we may think that the originators of the "forward" policy were less ungenerous than their successors. Yet even though only a part of the cost was borne by India, that was sufficient, combined with famine, to disarrange her finances, and hamper Lord Lytton's schemes for remitting taxation.

To turn now to the internal affairs of India, it is inevitable that the subject which most fixes the attention is the Vernacular Press Act, though it had an inglorious life and an early death. It is very remarkable, however, that the Viceroy did not ground his defence of the measure, as most of its other supporters did, on the alleged inculation of race hatred in the Indian journals. We read, on the contrary, that he

made almost exclusive use of those extracts which deal with the English as afraid of Russia, as defeated without a fight by Russia, as rapidly to be driven out of India by Russia. The selection of these extracts indicates that danger to the Empire was the dominant thought in his mind.

So that the measure appealed to its author on grounds which have ceased to enter into the practical politics of the day. Another thing which appears clearly from the discussions of the time is that the Indian Government was very far from being certain that the law on seditious writings was that which has since been laid down in the trial of Mr. Tilak.

It fell to Lord Lytton to take part in many great events while he was in India, and it would be unjust to deny that in some of these he bore himself well. The grand pageant when the Queen was proclaimed Empress of India showed that he had in him the makings of a fine Court Chamberlain. In the terrible famine which desolated Southern India he evinced much good sense in dealing with the actual distress, even if he was too much inclined to look to railways and other means of minimising the effects of famine rather than to improvements in the position of the rayafs which would prevent scarcities developing into famines. He also made several attempts to alleviate the taxation of India, notably in the case of the salt tax. His repeal of the cotton duties, which he left incomplete, is noticeable for the cynical frankness with which his Finance Minister repudiated the idea that his first duties were to the people of India. Sir John Strachey said:—

"We are often told that it is the duty of the Government of India to think of Indian interests alone, and that if the interests of Manchester suffer it is no affair of ours. For my part, I utterly repudiate such doctrines. I have not ceased to be an Englishman because I have passed the greater part of my life in India, and have become a member of the Indian Government.

This is alien rule with a vengeance!

<sup>1</sup> "The History of Lord Lytton's Indian Administration, 1876-1880." By Lady Betty Balfour. Longmans, Green, and Co., London, New York, and Bombay.



When one looks back on the work of Lord Lytton as Viceroy, it can hardly be denied that it lacked the element of permanence even more than that of most Indian statesmen. Of his failures in Afghanistan we have already spoken. The Vernacular Press Act was hardly ever put in operation, and was soon repealed. Even his reduction of the salt duties has not been maintained. The great work of his successor, Lord Ripon, in founding the free municipalities of India has lasted longer; and if it is now threatened with reversal, he is at least sure of an abiding place in the hearts of the Indian people. That Lord Lytton never obtained.

### "MORAL SUASION."

THE difficulties that beset the British administration of India are legion, and they are strangely exacerbated and complicated by British administrators, especially in recent years. Why it is that our representatives prefer the rough and thorny path it is bootless to speculate; but it is not easy to suppose that the reason is that they are unaware of the existence of plain and easy paths. "The secret of managing the Natives of India" was perfectly well known to elder generations of British representatives in India, and the profit of practising it is written large in the records of history. More than half a century ago it was expressed by Colonel Best Jervis, out of the fulness of experience, in these terms: "to treat them as they are—as intelligent, open to reason, and perfectly reconciled to any reasonable purpose made plain to their understandings." The only marvel seems to be that such an open secret should ever have been converted into a mystery. Why, it may be asked, should it ever occur to an official to treat Indians as not intelligent, as not open to reason, as not practical enough to follow a course that they are satisfied is the right one? If the Indians really do produce such an impression on the British mind, they must form an extremely peculiar community, extraordinarily transformed under the "civilising" influences of British domination. But everybody knows that the old estimate expressed by Jervis is the very truth of the matter, and the sources of official contempt and high-handedness must be sought elsewhere than in the nature of the Indian populations. The fact is that the main fault lies on the ruling side.

One is therefore always gratified to find a public recognition of the old principle on the part of an Indian official of eminence. Men of real grit, like Sir Antony MacDonnell and Mr. H. J. S. Cotton, not merely recognise it in their speeches, but are so permeated with it that it informs every act of their administration. Hence, in large measure, their conspicuous success, as well as their notable popularity. The consequence is the most natural and inevitable thing in the world. The amazing circumstance seems to be that other officials should not imitate such shining examples, were it only on grounds of the merest selfishness. We are greatly pleased to observe that Lord Curzon has publicly set his seal on this method of moral suasion. "The campaign against the plague," he said at Bombay on November 9, "I know from experience, if it is to be successful, cannot be a campaign of compulsion, and can only be a campaign of moral suasion." And two days later, at a public meeting in Poona, "Let no effort be spared," he said, in reference to the practice of inoculation, "to win by persuasion that which you cannot extort by force." Lord Curzon could not have said a wiser word. The astounding thing is that it should ever have been necessary for him to say it at all. In consonance with all this, we must remember that already he had himself shown an example by submitting to inoculation. Nor should it be forgotten that the theory of moral suasion is not now picked up for the first time by the Viceroy. At the Etonian dinner, before he went out to take up the reins of government, he affirmed "that it is only by regard for the people's feelings, by respect for their prejudices—I will even go so far," he said, "as to say by deference to their scruples—that we can obtain the acquiescence as well as the submission of the governed." Submission without acquiescence is not worth having. Acquiescence supersedes submission; and surely the price of acquiescence is light in the extreme.

We should hope that Lord Curzon's example and precept will not fail of effect, and that it will be extended to

all parts of the British administration of India. "If only all Viceroy and all persons in authority had acted up to," Lord Curzon's profession at the Etonian dinner—so we wrote on November 4, 1898 (INDIA, vol. x, p. 244)—"how much misery and suffering might have been saved!" We now endorse that reflection and extend it to the future, in the trust that allegiance to the principle of moral suasion will save much misery and suffering in the coming years. Lord Curzon very appropriately repeated his confession of faith at Bombay and Poona. In both these cities the neglect of his principles stirred up the populations to refractoriness, insubordination, and even riot. The rigid insistence on hated methods of examination and segregation afforded a melancholy proof of the hopelessness, as well as of the heartlessness, of running counter to the natural feelings and the traditional customs and habits of the people. On the other hand, the plague administration of General Gatacre at Bombay, and of Colonel Creagh at Poona remains on record as a startling contrast to the plague administration of other officials, and a conclusive confirmation of the principle of moral suasion. What is so difficult to understand is why there should ever have been any attempt to drag the populations into the adoption of British theories in the teeth of their customary practices and their religious convictions, and that, too, often under circumstances of personal insult. The relief of the tension in the middle of last year by the issue of new plague regulations for Bombay and Madras in a more sympathetic spirit testified markedly to the folly of crude measures of force and to the value of intelligent consideration. But why on earth should the community and the Government ever have been set by the ears at all?

The plague, however, is not the only matter to which the principle of moral suasion needs to be applied. There is, indeed, no part of the legislative or administrative work of the Government in which it is not to be observed. Now it is not easy to follow the mind of Government and to discern a consistent allegiance to the principle. At one time Lord Curzon intimates his great anxiety to learn the public opinion on this or that Bill before his Legislative Council—say the Punjab Land Alienation Bill; but will he respect it? For we see how he hurries through other Bills, not a whit less important in their own sphere—say the Punjab Chief Courts Bill—without the slightest regard to professional or general opinion. Such a course of procedure, however conformable to the exigencies of Simla life, is sufficiently perplexing to the people that live lower down in the world, and who have to bear in their persons and in their estates the operations of hasty or one-sided legislation. Take, again, that disastrously conspicuous example of legislation in the face of the population—the Calcutta Municipal Act. Here was a case where the whole argument of the authorities was contested point by point, and in the opinion of unbiassed outsiders conclusively overthrown—a case where the citizens of Calcutta went all but solid against the proposed changes in the law, and the large majority of the elected Commissioners resigned their seats in a body—a case of thoroughgoing antagonism between Government and people. We cannot but ask Lord Curzon in what particular was regard shown for the people's feelings, or respect for their prejudices, or deference to their scruples, or in what way were their arguments met? If such be the only means whereby "we can obtain the acquiescence as well as the submission of the governed," we can only infer that the Government is sometimes content with submission, and cares nothing for acquiescence. Yet it is impossible to suppose that Lord Curzon intends to restrict the principle of moral suasion to the plague administration solely. On comparison of his own profession with the acts of the supreme and the local Governments, and with the general attitude of British officials, we can only infer how strangely difficult it is even for a Viceroy to impart currency to the most obviously practical principle of government and administration.

It would be easy enough to set out a variety of other examples of really serious importance where there has been no thought of suasion on the part of officialdom—examples with which our attentive readers cannot but be familiar. Such cases all throw us back upon the fundamental question of the bearing of British officials towards the Indian community. The profession of moral suasion is totally futile—nay, it is many degrees worse than futile—unless it be carried out consistently in the con-



duct of the Government from the highest to the lowest rung of the official ladder. The principle implies a certain belief in the intelligence, reasonableness, and amenability of the people to whom the appeal is addressed. But, we must point out, it is a principle that cuts both ways; it implies also knowledge, reasonableness, and adaptability on the part of those that apply it. Again and again we have insisted on the danger of the widening gulf between the rulers and the ruled at the point of personal relations, a gulf that bars the rulers from essential knowledge of the feelings and opinions of the ruled. How much greater is the danger, however, when the united convictions of the people are fully set forth to the Government and enforced by irrefragable argument, as in the case of the Calcutta Municipal Bill, and yet are trampled upon by sheer unreasoning, unbearing force. It is a delicate enterprise to use moral suasion when it suits you and to neglect it when it does not suit you. In a word, Lord Curzon is committed to the arduous labour of placing the relations of rulers and ruled on the old footing of friendship, reason, and common interest. If he succeeds in recalling officialism to this elementary position of common sense and humanity, he will mark his Viceroyalty with distinction, as well as with beneficence. But unhappily the lions in the way are multitudinous and fierce, and the task of walking straight forward may be beyond the strength and the courage of any one man. All that can be done is to encourage Lord Curzon to go forward resolutely, in the faith that in no possible event can the principle of moral suasion be other than honourable and advantageous both to India and to Great Britain.

## NOTES FROM BOMBAY.

### LORD CURZON'S RECENT UTTERANCES.

[FROM AN INDIAN CORRESPONDENT.]

BOMBAY, October 28.

During the week there have been two weighty deliverances by Lord Curzon. At the last meeting of the Legislative Council at Simla, his lordship spoke words of the greatest sympathy to the Indian people in connexion with the famine which has again overtaken us. The speech was conceived in that happy vein of which the Viceroy is a master, and interspersed with many statesmanlike reflections which, if practically carried out, would achieve great results for poor India. But it is here that the rub comes in. A Viceroy's speech may be conceived in the finest temper and uttered with the best of motives. But unless he is another Dalhousie, and able to convert his words into deeds—deeds which shall fructify for the welfare of the country—it is futile to expect any good. Fine words, and finer sympathy, with altruistic notions touching administration, bring no comfort to the homes of the lowly. Nor do they bring bread to the hungry and the starving. I repeat once more that the great problem which a Viceroy, specially gifted with a power and a will to do good, has to solve in this country is how to keep the population fairly fed. That is the question. So many millions daily go to bed with empty bellies, and so many more rise the next day hungry, that he will be the greatest benefactor of the country who can achieve the object of feeding the people. There is nothing so dangerous, even to the best governed State, as the "rebellion of the belly." In this connexion it may not be amiss to recall a remarkably well conceived article which the *Spectator* wrote in January, 1883, headed "The Great Danger of India." A copy of it might be respectfully dedicated to the Viceroy. The writer predicted recurring famines if things were allowed to drift in India so far as agricultural matters were concerned. Population may press on the means of subsistence. But that is no new phenomenon. It is to be witnessed everywhere. India is no exception to the general rule. Population is not growing in India at a higher rate than one per cent. per annum, which is the general average. But India's misfortune is that it is governed by an extravagantly costly foreign agency that demands an annual strain on the resources of its producers which it is impossible it can continue to bear. Every decade the burden grows heavier. This burden becomes the more grievous owing to the large amount of national wealth which is annually drained away, never to return. Thus there is little capital, while this dismal economic drain impairs the condition of the producers who, again, are yoked

to a land revenue policy that it is impossible to get relieved. While such an unnatural policy lasts, whatever official optimists may say, it will happen that the number who go to bed hungry every day must increase, while the land to be put under food crops must prove insufficient for the daily subsistence of a population increasing at the rate of two millions per annum. Not all their famine codes, and not all their land law palliatives will prevent famines which, providential visitations though they be, are not such as cannot be greatly mitigated by human agency, especially by civilised agency with illimitable resources like those of England. It is a matter of regret, therefore, to see Viceroy after Viceroy indulging in platitudes on the subject which in no way advance the problem towards the stage of solution.

More hopeful was the Resolution of Lord Curzon's Government in connexion with the late miscarriage of justice in the Rangoon outrage case. It is a very dignified rebuke to the army and to the authorities, civil and military, which somehow were not able to bring justice home to the culprits. The Resolution has been received with great satisfaction. The source of the satisfaction lies in the fact that justice after all has not left the conscience of the Government of India. Its spirit still lingers there. This revives hope in the breasts of Indians.

The last topic to which I will refer is the appointment, just announced, of Sir Stafford Northcote to be Governor of Bombay. There has been no time yet to ascertain the opinion of the Presidency. Perhaps the more enlightened and critical parts of the population would have been pleased if so experienced, able, and sympathetic an administrator as Sir Antony MacDonnell had been rewarded for his services in the North-West Provinces. However, the Ministry has to please the party as a whole; and, as there are so many claimants for this piece of patronage, it is not surprising that the son of a former Secretary of State for India has been the lucky nominee—a Secretary of State who is still remembered with feelings of gratitude and respect by all India. It is premature to pronounce any opinion on a new appointment of this character. All that we can say that we hope Sir Stafford Northcote may turn out a better man every way than his two immediate predecessors.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

### INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL AND IN NATAL.

To the Editor of "INDIA."

Sir,—About a month ago, in forwarding a copy of the communication to his Honour the British Agent at Pretoria on behalf of British Indians in the Transvaal, it was my painful duty to comment somewhat bitterly on the refusal of the Natal Government to afford relief to the Indian refugees from

<sup>1</sup>The comments referred to were the following:—"The Transvaal is being cleared of its population as fast as possible, no less than 26,000 persons having left during the last few days. The prominent members of the Uitlander Council, the editors of the English newspapers in Johannesburg have also left. The largest houses in Johannesburg have suspended their businesses and sent away their clerks and books beyond the border. If the Indians think of leaving the Transvaal at such a time, it cannot be wondered at. They naturally cannot go to Delagoa Bay, because of its malarial climate; nor could they go to the Cape in any large number, because of the great distance, and the consequent heavy charges and the small Indian population there. There are no public homes for them. They have to depend upon the help of private friends whom they can find only in Natal. They have approached the Natal Government with a view to obtain suspension of the Immigration Restriction Act during the crisis. The reply received during the week was that the Government had no power to do so under the Act. This is hardly correct, and in reply to a further communication they say, 'in the enforcement or non-enforcement of the Immigration Restriction Act the Government will be influenced by considerations of humanity, and will not seek, in the event of hostilities breaking out, to exercise its powers unreasonably or oppressively.' This is good so far as it goes, but it does not give the relief that is required. To leave after the actual hostilities commence may be impossible. The Government have been further approached, and it remains to be seen what they will do. I write this to show how awful our position is in South Africa. To find that British subjects cannot find shelter from danger on a British soil is truly heartrending. The Natal Government would seem to have done their best to shake the faith of the poor Indians in British justice, and in the enchanting power of the phrase 'British subject.' Happily they do not represent the whole of the British Empire. Strange as it may appear, a cablegram to-day announces that, in reply to repeated representations from Natal, the Imperial Government have ordered the despatch of 10,000 troops from India for the protection of Natal, which refuses to give temporary shelter to the Indians from the Transvaal, to guard against which the above troops are intended. Comment is superfluous."



Johannesburg. The Immigration Restrictions Act prohibits the entry of those that have not been formerly domiciled in Natal and do not know any of the European languages. The Government have passed certain rules under the Act whereby temporary permission to Indian visitors may be given on a deposit by the applicants of £10 each. The Government were asked to suspend the deposit during the tension. Yielding to, there is reason to believe, pressure from the British Agent, they graciously suspended the deposit. Another difficulty cropped up in the meantime. Most of the refugees from Johannesburg availed themselves of the railway between that place and Durban, but during the past few days that communication has been cut off, and the refugees have to go to Delagoa Bay, and thence to Durban. Europeans have been coming from Delagoa Bay in thousands, but as the shipping companies, in response to circulars from the Government, have not been taking any Indian passengers, they would not in this instance also. The Government were, therefore, approached for relief in the matter, and they have been pleased to notify to the shipping companies that they may bring the Indian refugees from Delagoa Bay, on condition that they should take out temporary passes on their landing. It was considered that it was due to the Natal Government that this fact also should be as prominently brought to your notice as their refusal. We once again feel that, though in Natal, yet we are British subjects, and that in time of danger the enchanting phrase has not, after all, lost any of its charm. The attitude the Natal Government have now taken up during the crisis is the silver lining to the dark cloud that is hanging over our heads in Natal, as well as other parts of South Africa. We only trust that the fellow-feeling that has guided the Natal Government in its treatment of the Indians during the crisis would be continued, even after it is over, and that British subjects of all nationalities will be allowed to remain, as they ought to be, in harmony and peace.

Though no native Indian troops have landed in Durban, the Indians attached to the troops from India have not failed to extort the suppressed admiration of the Europeans.—Yours,  
M. K. GANDHI.

Durban, October 14, 1899.

## SIR W. WEDDERBURN, M.P., AND THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA.

The following letter (which is referred to in "Notes and News") was addressed on November 2 by Sir W. Wedderburn, M.P., to Mr. A. R. Stuart, President of the Banffshire Liberal Association:—

DEAR MR. STUART.—My public meetings having been temporarily postponed, will you allow me briefly to state to you, as President of the Banffshire Liberal Association, the main grounds for the three votes which I recorded, in the recent short Session of Parliament, against the calamitous war now proceeding in South Africa.

Had this war been proposed only three months ago, few, I think, of my constituents would have approved a vote in its favour. If the war was then morally wrong, has it in a few short weeks become politically right? I do not think so. This is how Mr. Chamberlain himself characterised such a war, speaking from his place in the House of Commons on May 8, 1896: "A war in South Africa would be one of the most serious wars that could possibly be waged. It would be in the nature of a civil war. It would be a long war, a bitter war, and a costly war. As I have pointed out, it would leave behind it the embers of a strife which I believe generations would hardly be long enough to extinguish. To go to war with President Kruger in order to force upon him reforms in the internal affairs of his State, with which successive Secretaries of State, standing in this place, have repudiated all right of interference, that would have been a course of action as immoral as it would have been unwise." In this view of the case I concurred, and still concur. How, then, could I vote for the continuance of a war which I regarded as immoral and unwise? Owing to an unhappy misunderstanding hostilities have indeed broken out, but that is not a ground for giving my support to a course of action which I hold to be unjust and injurious to the best interests of the country.

That the war arose from a misunderstanding, we have the authority of the Duke of Devonshire. Speaking just before the outbreak of hostilities, on September 30 last, he said: "The obstacle which seems to stand in the way of a peaceful settlement of our difficulties with the South African Republic appears to be in the rooted conviction which they have that in the demands which we have made we cherish some designs hostile to their independence and self-government." He then stated that this apprehension was "absolutely unfounded." If this be so, and if this disastrous war has broken out through a misunderstanding, why should we not have called a halt, when as yet but little blood had been shed, in order to remove this unhappy misunderstanding? An amendment was moved with this object in view. It proposed arbitration on the lines of the Peace Resolutions at the Hague; and I voted for this amendment. It may be said that the proposal was too late to stop the calamities of war. Perhaps so; but it was none the less a duty to make the

attempt. If the ship is about to run upon sunken rocks, the warning cry may come too late, but none the less it would be wrong to keep silence. Also I do not myself believe that it would have been too late to remove the fatal misunderstanding. Indeed, even without formal arbitration, I am convinced that if the Duke of Devonshire, or some other trusted British statesman, had been sent out as a Peace Commissioner, with the clear assurance that the independence of the Transvaal would be respected, even at the eleventh hour the terrible consequences of this war might have been averted.

The second vote I recorded was in favour of Mr. Stanhope's amendment condemning the mode in which the negotiations had been conducted by the Colonial Office. On this question the case as presented by Sir Edward Clarke, Solicitor-General to the late Conservative Government, appeared to me conclusive. He pointed out that the Transvaal Government were willing to grant a five years' franchise on terms which Sir Alfred Milner admitted were "better than any proposal that he himself had made." But this proposal was put aside by Mr. Chamberlain, who upset the negotiations by reviving the claim of suzerainty, which had been extinct for fifteen years, and by shadowing forth further demands of a far-reaching kind. Upon this claim to suzerainty Sir E. Clarke, as a lawyer in the first rank, pronounced as follows: "I say here that for a British Minister since 1834 to assert that we have a suzerainty over the Transvaal is not only a statement made in defiance of fact, but also is a breach of national faith." When, under these circumstances, the Transvaal Government considered their worst fears confirmed, and, believing that their independence was attacked, in despair struck the first blow, I cannot but hold that the war was forced upon them.

Mr. Stanhope's amendment was supported by the bulk of the Liberal party. This is ground for satisfaction. But the whole question now at issue is beyond and above party. It is one of first principles: whether, in good or bad report, we are prepared with singleness of heart to seek after that righteousness which alone exalts a nation.

My third vote had reference to the eight millions to be raised by borrowing; and I voted against the proposal, as this seemed to me the constitutional way of recording a protest, however unavailing, against a war which appears to me unnecessary and unjust; which must cost many valuable lives; and which is fraught with danger to the future welfare of this country.

As I have written this letter solely to give the reason for my recent votes, it may be out of place to refer to the military aspect of the case, but I cannot lose the opportunity of expressing my admiration for the splendid heroism of our troops, and my deep sympathy with those who at home are awaiting tidings of relatives and friends at the seat of war.—Yours sincerely,

W. WEDDERBURN.

Meredith, Gloucester, November 2, 1899.

## THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

SPEECH BY LORD CURZON.

We give below report of the speech delivered by Lord Curzon, at Simla, on October 20, upon the famine outlook in India. Lord Curzon said:—

I should like to supplement the detailed statement to which we have just listened from the Hon. Member in charge of the Revenue and Agricultural Department (Mr. Rivaz) by a few observations of a more general character upon the attitude and policy of the Government. It has been a source of great distress to me—and my feelings in this respect are those of all my colleagues—that, in my first year of office, while plague, the first great Indian scourge, has remained a persistent visitor, the second, which is famine, should once again be threatening this sorely-tried country, and its patient and unmurmuring population. For months past it is no exaggeration to say that the daily meteorological report has been to everyone of us who are in our different spheres responsible for the Indian Government a document to which we have turned with most anxious interest each morning, and day by day as we have contemplated the sky of brass and the unclouded sun we have longed bitterly, and would have sacrificed much, for the sight that met the watcher upon Camel—of a little cloud no bigger than a man's hand. If in our regrets at the ill-fortune that has attended us we may nevertheless recognise some grounds of legitimate alleviation, they will consist in the facts that we have had upon the present occasion long warning of the coming scarcity, and have in consequence been able to formulate our plans of campaign in advance; and secondly, that while the area of certain distress is unfortunately large, much too large, it is yet considerably smaller than the corresponding area in the famine of 1896-97, and if Providence should favour us with late autumnal rains, it is still capable of contraction. In Rajputana it is to be feared that the suffering will be in excess of any since the sad year of 1868-69, and in the Central Provinces I regret to think that a portion of the ordeal



of three years ago may again have to be endured by the same poor people who have barely had time to recover from the last shock. But elsewhere, as Mr. Rivaz has shown, the situation though grave affords less ground for acute apprehension, while in many parts of India the sufferings of unfortunates elsewhere will to some extent be balanced by exceptionally favourable conditions.

The narrowness and comparatively precise definition of the areas affected should enable us to devote our energies to their relief with all the greater concentration. I do not pretend that in so doing we have any novel or startling methods of procedure to announce. Perhaps the worst and least reassuring declaration that a Viceroy could make upon an occasion like this would be that the Government of India proposed to experiment in respect of scarcity and famine. Our proceedings must be and will be founded upon the very opposite extreme of principle. All that we have acquired from recorded observations of a century, all that we have learned from the experience of the past twenty-five years during which India has three times been visited by serious famines, all that we have been advised or warned by the recent Famine Commission—these must be the base of our action. They will furnish a "pocket book" for "field service" with which our "soldiers" of peace will enter upon their humane and bloodless "campaign."

#### A FOUR-FOLD SCHEME OF RELIEF.

If I be asked to summarise the action which it is in the power of the Government of India to take against famine in respect either of executive intervention, of sympathetic assistance or of local control, I would make the following reply: In our own territories we have a four-fold scheme of operations. In larger villages and towns we open poor-houses for the reception and sustenance of famishing waifs and strays. In country hamlets we distribute gratuitous relief weekly or fortnightly to sick and aged, to widow and orphan. We employ tens of thousands of impoverished but willing hands upon relief works—the making of roads, the digging of tanks, the construction of embankments for the future. An idea of the numbers who are already thus engaged has already been given to you, and they represent but a small fraction of the total for whom the existing organisation would enable us with scarcely a hitch to provide paid employment of this character should the emergency arise. Finally, by the appointment of special officers selected for training or experience, we supplement the existing staff and endeavour both to supply a stimulus and to strengthen local supervision. These are our more immediate measures. Prospectively we always have in contemplation *accout* advances to enable the peasant to sow his seed before the next rains, and that ultimate stand-by of the distressed agriculturist, in all lands, remission of rent, or, as we call it in India, land revenue. I do not think that in any period of scarcity or famine the Government of India has shown an inclination to be ungenerous in these particulars.

If we turn to the situation as it affects the Native States, we are necessarily upon a somewhat different ground. Here we must be careful to do nothing that would diminish the responsibility or slacken the energies of the Native Chiefs and Durbars. The Government of India should not step in either to usurp their proper functions or to relieve them of an obligatory duty. On the other hand, we may do much—and in the case of Rajputana we are endeavouring to do much—by the loan of officers and by the offer of expert advice to systematise and to co-ordinate local action. We can further help the Native States with loans from the Imperial exchequer, and I believe that my hon. colleague the Finance Member is prepared to show a far from obdurate disposition in this respect, and we may by individual acts of assistance or relief contribute to lessen the strain. For instance, I may mention that a little while ago I offered to remove and to maintain at the expense of the Government of India one of the two Imperial Service Cavalry regiments of Jodhpur during the present and forthcoming distress, and that this offer was gladly accepted by the State.

#### AN APPEAL TO PRIVATE CHARITY.

May I venture to add that there must be many localities, populous districts or large cities, in which men of substance reside, where some local effort for the assistance of their suffering countrymen would be most acceptable. I have already heard of such private charity having been started—in some cases of a local famine relief fund, of a subscription list and of a committee of distribution. There are large classes of the native population who are not touched either by relief works or by gratuitous relief, but who may be saved from perishing by the timely exercise of such philanthropy. In detailing the liberal and sustained plan of action with which the Government of India is prepared to meet the emergency, I feel that I have a peculiar right to call also upon India's own sons to come to her rescue in the hour of her trial.

My own knowledge of famine work and famine relief is necessarily at present, owing to the short time which I have spent in the country, only in an incipient stage. May I add that I propose to invest it, in so far as I can, with a more practical and beneficial complexion by visiting, in the course of my forthcoming tour, a large number of the principal areas of distress in Northern and Central India. The experience which I shall thereby gain may, I hope, enable me both

to render useful help on future occasions should such arise, and to enter more closely into the sorrows as well as the joys of the Indian people.

#### INDIAN LIBERALITY.

In connexion with Lord Curzon's wish that the Natives of India should take their share in the work of relieving the existing distress, we are glad (writes the *Englishman*) to learn that some Marwari gentlemen have already opened a relief fund at Bikanir to deal with the famine in Rajputana. Rai Bahadur Kastur Chand, of the firm of Bansilal Abirchand of Calcutta, has contributed Rs. 50,000; Seth Chandmal Deadha, Rs. 10,000; Seth Jagannath Mohra, Rs. 10,000; Seth Shree Kisesandas Champallal, Rs. 7,000; and Seth Labhchand Suganchand Damani, Rs. 7,000. Further subscriptions have been promised, and it is hoped that the fund will amount to at least Rs. 16,00,000.

#### THE DETENTION OF THE NATUS.

##### LETTERS TO LORD CURZON.

The following series of letters, addressed to the Viceroy of India, have been forwarded to us for publication:—

Ettupattai Banglow, Trinichopoly Cantonment,

Trichinopoly, August 5, 1899.

MY LORD.—It is fortunate that Providence should place the destinies of India under the guidance of so sympathetic a ruler as your Excellency and the lives of 250 millions of her Majesty's loyal subjects should be entrusted to your care. You have already won the golden opinion of the peoples of India inhabiting a country as large in extent as Europe perhaps Russia excepted. I have taken liberty to make this simple but earnest appeal to you. It was the impression of all India that the rights of speech, the freedom of discussion, the individual liberty and personal property were respected under the British rule and her Majesty's subjects could enjoy these privileges as their birthright. Her Majesty's humble subjects were also confident that no one, to whatever race, colour, caste, or creed he may belong, could be imprisoned or outlawed without being properly tried. These fond and fervent hopes which we cherished from our cradle were rudely shattered when all sleeping and forgotten laws, not even known in pre-British days, were put in force against poor Natus brothers of Belgaum. My lord, if Natus are really guilty, disloyal, dangerous, and treacherous to the British Government, let the definite charges be laid at their door, let them be tried before a proper tribunal, let suspicion, if there were any, be proved, and let them afterwards even be hanged; but let there be no mockery of laws, and let at least the forms of laws be preserved. Then only the confidence of the nation in the just administration of the British laws and the distribution of British justice will be restored. If the subjects can be imprisoned without being properly tried, and if their liberty depends upon the sweet will of the rulers, no faith will be kept in such a government. I am only a layman not versed in law, but let not my letter be treated with contempt. I humbly pray for your lordship to set Natus completely free, if they cannot be proved guilty, and your gracious action will be gratefully received by the teeming millions of faithful people and you will be enthroned in their hearts for ever.

I beg to remain, my Lord, your most obedient subject,  
S. KAILASAM AIYAR.

August 7, 1899.

MY LORD.—I beg to add the following to what I have already said in my last letter:

I am totally unacquainted with the Natus brothers and I am a perfect stranger to them. I am a voluntary and unpaid advocate of their cause. I was deeply moved with grief on account of their long imprisonment and suffering in their prison when their guilt is not brought home and when the world is unaware of their cause. The unkind treatment which they received at the hands of the enlightened Government of Bombay, the spirited and manly appeal which the wife of the younger Natus addressed to the hon. members of the House of Commons—an example which every virtuous wife should imitate and which every husband should admire and be proud of—the prohibitions of attendance of the elder Natus to his beloved daughter's marriage, must touch even the most callous of hearts. The country is excited, agitated, and uneasy at the exercise of an arbitrary power. Benevolence, kindness, generosity, and mercy in the rulers beget submission, willing obedience, loyalty, and gratitude in the subjects. A favourable decision from your Government will be hailed with delight throughout the length and breadth of India.

I beg to remain, my Lord, your most obedient and devoted servant,  
S. KAILASAM AIYAR.

August 12, 1899.

MY LORD.—Permit me once more to address your lordship on the question of "Natus imprisonment." It is a wise ruler who listens to the loudest complaints of the most powerful subject as well as the petty grievances of the meanest individual in the kingdom. If my letters have not the weight and sanction of authority, the importance of the subject will speak for itself. I have nothing to boast but naked reason, pure and simple, to recommend itself to your lordship's consideration. Every schoolboy knows, no subject in England can be imprisoned without being brought to trial. It is the wisdom of the constitution of the British Isles not to vest such a power in the hands of the sovereign. The free nations of Europe are very suspicious, and they are very jealous of their rights and liberties. It is a question of doubt whether such extraordinary powers can be safely entrusted in the hands of a viceroy who is merely a representative of the sovereigns of England and as a delegated authority



rules this vast province in the name of Parliament. By imprisoning Natus, and confiscating their properties, a death-blow is aimed at personal liberty and security of property. There will be nothing to compensate for the loss of freedom of once a free nation who framed their own laws and had power over their purse. Since the death of unhappy Charles, no monarch of England dared to imprison his subject at his will. I fear that there is no parallel to Natus' case in the history of modern times. If the country be threatened with war, or if there be any secret conspiracy to overthrow the ruling power, some excuse may be found for the extraordinary exercise of unlawful power; but it is not redounding to the glory of the rulers to haul up two peaceable and respectable citizens to prison. Natus were beyond all doubt not in any way connected in the murder of Rand and Ayerst. The unjust infliction of unnecessary punishment on them is most revolting. They are the most worthy subjects to receive due justice for your lords' part for the cruel wrongs they have suffered. Nothing will be more propitious to your lordship's administration and nothing will be more becoming to your august personage than to blot out such a law from the penal code itself.

With sincere regards and fervent prayer for your Excellency's welfare, I beg to subscribe myself, my Lord, your most obedient servant and devoted subject,  
S. KAILASAM AITYAR.

August 30, 1899.

My Lord,—Silence is golden, but at times prudence of higher nature compels us to speak freely our minds. Therefore I need no apology when I again address you on this all-absorbing topic. History reveals, when the British Empire was a-building, the Mahratta Empire was about to be split up, the ancestors of the present Natus are in invaluable service to the East India Company. Naturally it is expected that the sons of those allies will be more leniently treated. Natus are in the prime of their lives and in the bloom of their youth. They are now banished from all societies and removed from the sphere of all active and useful life. They are torn away from the fond embraces of their children, and they are now separated from those who are nearest, dearest and tenderest to them. Injustice done to them is unparalleled in the annals of the British administration in India. Even if you ransack the history of the civilised world, it furnishes us no such example. The cases of Hampden and Pym, Nandikumar and Chajitsingh, cannot be cited as parallels. If delinquency on your part does not permit you to revoke the judgment passed by your noble predecessor and if there is no proper tribunal in India before which they can be tried, their case can be safely placed in the hands of the House of Lords, who can boast of glorious traditions. "Impeachment is the guardian purity of the British constitution." By that highest tribunal of England Earl of Strafford was condemned. Lord Bacon justly acknowledged the judgment passed on him. Criminals of other lands were tried for high crimes and misdemeanours, and Warren Hastings, who occupied no less exalted position than your Excellency, was trembling before the immortal eloquence of Burke and versatile Sheridan. Let them decide, my Lord, whether political considerations will allow to invest in the hands of a Viceroy a power which is not entrusted even in the hands of the sovereign of England. In fighting for Natus, we are not fighting for larger and freer representation or for a power over the purse. Time may, perhaps, come when prosperity, imbued with English spirit and English ideas, will fight not merely for an image and semblance of the British constitution, but for its substance. In this case we fight for personal liberty and security of property. If we have not even these, we are but a nation of slaves. If an Englishman be treated as Natus, will not there be a tumult and uproar within the walls of Parliament itself? Let the people of India learn that all the subjects are the same in the eyes of the law, let them be made to feel the sense of equality, and let them be judged by the highest standard of current political morality, then all differences and racial prejudices will completely vanish. Her Majesty's declaration in the proclamation of 1858, pending by Lord Beaconsfield, whose memory the Conservative leader of Parliament you still cherish and to whose principles you still adhere, says as follows: "It is our earnest desire to administer its (India) government for the benefit of all our subjects resident therein. In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward. And may the God of all power grant us, and to those in authority under us, strength to carry out these our wishes for the good of our people." If persons are detained in prison without trial, and if their property be confiscated, what prosperity, what contentment, what security, and what belief in the impartial administration of the British Government for the benefit of the subjects will there be in the minds of the people? The subjects of a sovereign to his subjects is the same as a parent to his children. If the parent ask for bread, will he give stones? If they ask for eggs, will he give scorpions? We demand the rights and privileges. Government must satisfy our just demands. Ludicrous and unfounded rumours are afloat that Natus are dangerous to the internal peace of the country.

The conquerors of Blenheim, Waterloo and Plassey, the army which carried the victorious arms to the gates of Kabul and Kandahar, the statesmen who dictate their terms at Versailles and Berlin, and the forces which keep in awe a Czar of Russia need not fear for an humble subject, however powerful he may be, and for his sake they need not violate the law of the constitution. The additional punitive force is enough, my Lord, to keep poor Natus in check.

You congratulated Paranjype, a countryman and kinsman of Natus. Nothing will tend to bring a closer and more harmonious relation between the peoples of England and India than a favourable decision in this case. This case is the touchstone to try your lordship's statesmanship, in deciding which you stand or fall as a constitutional statesman.

My Lord, I pray you will act in such a way as to deserve the over-lasting reward, estimation, reverence, gratitude, admiration and adoration of generations yet unborn.—I beg to remain, my Lord, your most obedient servant,  
S. KAILASAM AITYAR.

## ADMINISTRATION IN MYSORE.

[FROM THE "MADRAS MAIL."]

There is much to make British Indian officialdom envious in the retrospect of Mysore affairs in 1898-99 contained in Sir K. Sheshadri Iyer's Address to the Mysore Representative Assembly on Tuesday. Notwithstanding an aggregate decrease in revenue amounting to Rs. 13½ lakhs, due for the most part to the prevalence of plague, and notwithstanding a total deficit on the year of Rs. 21,27,274, caused chiefly by extraordinary expenditure connected with the same epidemic, amounting to nearly Rs. 8½ lakhs, added to the decrease in revenue aforesaid, the state administration was still able, as it were, to come up smiling. The deficit was easily provided for out of the magnificent surplus of close upon Rs. 160 lakhs (almost a whole year's revenue), carried forward from the previous year, and as the Budget estimate for the current year estimates a surplus of Rs. 13 lakhs, the financial equilibrium will not be disturbed for long. Moreover, the deficit of Rs. 21½ lakhs is nominally reducible by something like Rs. 16½ lakhs if "large expenditure on several items of an exceptional character not really chargeable to the year's ordinary income be eliminated." Thus, Rs. 11,15,000 of the year's income was expended as capital outlay on reproductive works like the Marikanave Reservoir and the Birur-Shimoga Railway, while the large sum of Rs. 5,67,339 was paid to a fund called the Damodar Dasee Charity, of which more anon. Thus financial stringency has not been the position of Mysore, being able only to meet with equanimity a serious deficit of revenue, but at the same time to continue to make large extra grants on what is really capital account for big and remunerative undertakings under Public Works.

Its enviable position does not end there, however. The fact that strikes the critic in British territory most is the apparent ease with which new notions are put into execution in Mysore. An idea is started—most often in British territory, by the Government of India or by a Local Government—and while it is still only an idea, and passing through the elaborate and complicated machinery of discussion and report that is the chief characteristic of our Secretariats, it is taken up by the simpler machinery of Mysore and passed through a concrete measure of reform within a few months, maybe. The result is, of course, that Native State like Mysore stands in relation to the vast areas of British territory outside of it, something like a small model estate in a ring fence stands in relation to a vast and scattered estate with many varieties of soil, tenure, and population. With no large questions of Imperial policy to disturb its even working, and safe in the general protection afforded to it by the Imperial Government, a State like Mysore is able to indulge in many luxuries and experiments in administration such as cannot be attempted in British territory without many anxious misgivings and a most elaborate counting of cost and probable effect. It says much, however, for the progressive spirit that animates the Mysore Administration under Sir K. Sheshadri Iyer that the Durbar does not rest content with what might well pass for enlightened and successful government, but is ever striving to add another and another project to his scheme of operations. Take Public Works, for instance. A week or two ago we published a full description of the great Marikanave Irrigation scheme, a scheme which had been subjected to decades of examination and which would probably never have been attempted but for the special and personal stimulus given to it by the Dewan; and in the paragraphs devoted to Public Works in the Dewan's Address many other new projects for the development of irrigation and for the improvement of communications are alluded to.

The project of utilising the water-power of Cauvery Falls for the generation of electricity is another of the Mysore Government's schemes which has been fully explained in these columns recently; and it is one that emphasises more than any other the initiative and enterprise of the Government. If the result is successful, the Mysore State will indeed have good reason to be proud of having pioneered an industry of such immense importance to India. "In embarking upon this great undertaking," says the Dewan in his Address, "the Government are influenced wholly by the consideration that the supply of a cheap motive power of the kind and on the scale proposed, is likely to greatly foster private industrial enterprise throughout the State, and thus to directly increase the wealth and general prosperity of the country." Another direction in which the Mysore Government has been making special efforts is in the Geological Survey of the Province. Its Geological Department is extraordinarily well-manned and equipped, and has been able to survey, and as regards the economical, as distinguished from the purely scientific, aspect of its work, it can hardly fail to reveal all the mineral treasures that there are to be exploited. An Agricultural Chemist is another "luxury" that the Mysore Government has allowed itself; and, judging from the work already performed by this officer, he is in a fair way to justify his appointment as a necessity rather than as a luxury. His appointment, as described by the Dewan, certainly has extremely important objects, being "for the purpose of a systematic examination of soils in all parts of the State, the ascertainment of the appropriate manures required for particular soils, the adoption of measures for the removal of insect and other pests, the introduction of improved methods of cultivation generally, the revival of decaying industries, and other allied purposes."

The scheme of Agricultural Banks, which is another feature of Mysore administration, is based on principles which are not very sound, for, as we have frequently pointed out, they are not Agricultural Banks in the accepted sense of the term, but rather local organisations for administering State loans; and in regard to the large advances made to Native coffee planters it is doubtful if the security for repayment or realisation is sufficient. But it is not impossible that the scheme may in the more or less distant future lead to real local co-operation and real mutual credit, which are the main principles of any such system of banking in its proper sense. Yet another Mysore experiment is that connected with State Life Assurance. Unfortunately, the Dewan does not give any details beyond mere figures, and in the absence of any further actuarial



explanations it is impossible to test the soundness of the Fund by these figures alone. Another fund of a different kind is the Damodar Dass Charity Fund, which may possibly be the means of doing great things for original research in India. The fund is composed of a sum of Rs. 5,67,338 due to the late Damodar Dass from his share in the Maharaja's Krishna Raja Wodeyar III, which was, in the absence of legal heirs of the creditor, assigned by the Durbar towards the establishment and maintenance of public charities under the designation of "Damodar Dass Charities." After due consideration, the Government has resolved that four-fifths of the income from the sum should be devoted to the grant of scholarships to enable selected candidates from Indian universities to prosecute post-graduate studies, or researches of an advanced scientific or technical character, in any university or other institution in India, or any other country approved by the Mysore Government. The remaining fifth of the annual income from the fund will be available for the grant of scholarships for the general education of the members of the Guzerati community, to whom the deceased belonged.

We have touched on a few only of the various matters mentioned by the Dewan in his address; but we have said enough to indicate how liberal, practical, and enterprising the administration is in many novel and important directions outside the ordinary routine of government. Whether the fair prospect on the surface is accompanied in all respects by soundness and perfection beneath the surface we are not prepared to say. No administration is perfect, and from time to time we hear of faults and deficiencies in Mysore—very often from the newspapers in the shape of high go to show that it is not perfect. Probably the greatest defect of Mysore administration would be found to be its comparative costliness, especially in regard to its establishments, a costliness which probably accounts for the rate of taxation per head in Mysore being so much above the same in British India, as Sir Henry Fowler pointed out in the House of Commons some years ago. Certainly the head of a district in Mysore, with his average of 3,000 square miles of territory, must be in a happy position compared with his confrère in the neighbouring British Province with his average of something like 7,000 square miles of territory; and it would be found, we think, if a careful comparison were made, that the district and departmental charges in Mysore, with its 28,000 square miles of territory, and 173 people to the square mile, would not be conspicuous for economy when compared with the same in Madras, with its 150,000 square miles of territory and 252 people to the square mile.

#### [FROM THE "BOMBAY GAZETTE."]

The annual address of the Dewan of Mysore which was submitted to the Representative Assembly on Tuesday, is an extremely able survey of the condition of the State during the past year. A large portion of the address is devoted to the history of the plague in the Mysore State, which during the year was smitten to the extent of 12,274 deaths; Mysore City, and Bangalore in particular, suffered severely. The epidemic has not yet totally disappeared, but the energetic measures adopted for dealing with the disease have had excellent results, and the outlook is much more encouraging than it was about a year ago. A large number of condemned houses in Bangalore City have been demolished, the congested portions of the city opened out, and other permanent improvements effected by the extension of the city towards the suburbs. The effects of plague are also seen in the financial results of the year. The revenue having decreased by 13½ lakhs, while the expenditure showed a rise. Railway earnings declined considerably, the drop in receipts being Rs. 4,58,000. The total revenue for the year amounted to Rs. 17,16,668 and the expenditure to Rs. 2,00,43,942, the result being a deficit of Rs. 21,27,274. But it is pointed out that a large portion of the expenditure was of an exceptional character which ought really not to be charged to the year's income. Thus a sum of over ten lakhs was spent upon the Marikanave Reservoir, and the Rane-Shimoga Railway, which is now about to be opened. The Marikanave Reservoir across the Vedavati River is a splendid project, estimated to cost Rs. 39 lakhs. This and other large irrigation works will benefit wide arid tracts in the Chitaldrug District. But the enlightened administration of the Dewan does not stop at works of this kind. One of the most interesting paragraphs in Sir Sheshadri Iyer's address is that in which it is stated that it has been decided to utilise the force of the Cauvery Falls at Sivasaundram for the production of electric power, which it is intended to transmit at a cheap rate, for the use of the Kolar Gold Mines and other industrial enterprises in the State. The arrangement of the details of this scheme have been left to Captain de Lotbinière, who has been deputed to Europe and America to consult experts in regard to the project. Reduced exchange rates account for a decrease in the 5 per cent. royalty on the gold mining in the State, but in spite of this the gold produced by the mines being 81,57,741 10s. od. Any fears that the State might suffer from drought this year have been happily dispelled by the rain which fell in September. This supplied the deficiency of the previous two months, and filled the tanks. There is abundant pasturage for cattle, the crop area is up to the average, and altogether the season in Mysore appears to be most favourable. Among the varied interests to which the Government of the State applies itself, excellent work is being done by the Geological and Archeological surveys, and the Department of Meteorology. An agricultural chemist has been appointed for five years to make a systematic examination of soils in all parts of the State, to ascertain the most suitable manures for particular soils, what measures should be adopted for the removal of insect and other pests, and to introduce improved methods of agriculture generally. This should, undoubtedly, result in great good to the State. The admirable system of Agricultural Banks was somewhat retarded by the plague, and the belief of the people that *Vikari* was to be a year of great calamities. There are, however, sixty-three of these banks in existence, and their dealings during the year amounted to Rs. 4,02,288 under receipts and Rs. 4,09,829 under disbursements. There is also a scheme of

State Life Insurance, and the most recent of the beneficent projects of the Dewan is the establishment of scholarships to enable selected candidates to prosecute post-graduate studies or researches of an advanced scientific or technical character in any university or other institution in India, or any other country approved by the Mysore Government. The fund to provide for these scholarships is called the Damodar Dass Charity. A sum of Rs. 5,67,338 was due to the late Damodar Dass, a Gujerati gentleman, from the late Maharaja, but owing to the failure of legal heirs of the creditor the amount lapsed, and it has been decided to set it aside for educational purposes apparently on somewhat similar lines to the scheme of Mr. J. N. Tata. Taking altogether the review of the year's progress in Mysore is the record of a flourishing State, on which its able and enlightened Dewan has good reason to be congratulated.

## INDIA IN THE BRITISH PRESS.

### THE INDIAN FAMINE.

Subjoined is a telegram received on Tuesday by Lord George Hamilton from the Viceroy of India. It exhibits the startling spread of destitution over the Central Provinces, parts of Bombay, the Punjab, and Rajputana, and we should like to suggest that our pre-occupation with the conflict now raging in South Africa, and with funds for the sick and wounded, for the refugees from the Transvaal, for the families of our men fighting at the front and such things ought not to cause us to put out of sight the bitter necessities of many millions of the Indian people. In less than three weeks, if we mistake not, the numbers on the relief works have more than doubled, and now exceed 700,000 human beings. But the worst has not yet been nearly reached, and not only are the people starving and dying in multitudes, but their cattle also. Is the nation going to ignore this stupendous misery among our Indian fellow-subjects and their dumb four-footed dependents and allow the burden of taxation to be still further increased on the backs of those who survive? It is time to be up and doing:—

Prospects continue favourable in Burma, Bengal, eastern half North-Western Provinces, Madras, Mysore. Throughout North-Western Provinces spring crop sowings are being actively prosecuted, and no general distress is anywhere observable. Throughout Punjab outbreak of unirrigated rain crops very poor, and rain is much wanted for spring crop sowings. In Central Provinces the crops are a practical failure; rain is urgently wanted, and distress is extending. Prospects bad in North Bombay, North Deccan, Rajputana, and parts of Central India. Prices are high everywhere, wheat ranging from seven to eleven seers per rupee, millets from eight to fourteen. On relief—Bombay, 121,000; Punjab, 73,000; Central Provinces, 336,000; Berar, 33,000; Ajmere, 83,000; Central India, 9,000; Rajputana, 53,000—total, 708,000.—The *Investors' Review*.

### THE NEW GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY.

It might have been anticipated that the Government would have selected the strongest and most experienced man available to relieve Lord Sandhurst in the Governorship of Bombay in the beginning of next year. The *Pioneer* naturally thought of Sir Antony MacDonnell; failing him others turned to Mr. H. J. S. Cotton, the Chief Commissioner of Assam. But the official principle has prevailed, and the new Governor is Sir Henry Stafford Northcote, the second son of the late Lord Iddesleigh. Sir Stafford has had experience of official work in many departments, and has been a member of Parliament; so that, in a sense, he is far from being an untried man. Yet he has never been tried in any such fashion as he will be tried next February. It is a couple of months since the *Pioneer* anticipated that "it is quite possible that the province will be in a state that will make it a heavier charge upon the Governor than any province has been since the Mutiny." The famine is steadily going from bad to worse; the plague is recrudescing; the cotton mills are put on short time, running but four days a week; and the dislocations of business and society are tempting the passions of the disorderly elements of the population. Now, if ever, was the time to place at the head of affairs a man of local knowledge and experience, well seasoned in all the trials of such a complicated and difficult situation. A governor from home, like Sir Stafford Northcote goes out with everything to learn, and must necessarily be far more dependent upon the local officials than the theory of such appointments contemplates; and when an exceptional season of difficulty arises, it is all but impossible for him to exercise his own judgment, which is the very object of sending him out from Westminster. Apart from Sir Stafford's personal career, one must hope that he possesses a liberal share of the spirit of his distinguished father. Lord Iddesleigh—then Sir Stafford Northcote—was one of the very best Indian Secretaries we have ever had. He was conspicuously honourable in his respect for the promises made to the Indians in the Great Proclamation, and was always ready to go every reasonable length in adapting our administration "to the wants and the prejudices of each district, introducing our own ideas with great caution and forbearance." He was quite in accord with the Lawrence frontier policy, and he was keenly alive to the necessity of judicious finance. In his two years of office, he made a permanent mark most creditable to him as a man and a statesman. We must hope that his clear insight and his sympathetic spirit will live again in



his son. The note of sympathy will be particularly apposite in the existing circumstances; and, though probably Sir Stafford will lean for some time upon the judgment of Mr. Nugent, he will be able to lay an excellent foundation by a frank and judicious sympathy with the miserable people in their awful affliction. If the appointment might have been better, it might more easily have been worse; and, given a safe issue from the immediate trials of famine and plague, the new Governor may be expected to develop hereditary qualities that should render his term of office distinguished, if not memorable.—*The New Age*.

## THE PUNJAB LAND ALIENATION BILL.—II.

[FROM THE "LAHORE TRIBUNE"]

Mr. Rivaz, in the course of his speech on the occasion of the introduction of the Punjab Alienation of Land Bill, distinctly recognised the useful function performed by the money-lender in the social economy of village life in India. He said:—"The fact is that the money-lender must continue to exercise his profession and the agricultural community must, under the rural conditions of this country, continue to constitute his principal *clients*. The money-lender plays a most useful, and even a necessary, part in the social economy of village life, and no one wishes to eliminate him or to place unreasonable restrictions upon his transactions. If our proposed scheme is made of general application, he will have to adapt himself to the new conditions, and will be easily able to do so. If, on the other hand, the scheme is applied only to selected and scattered areas, the money-lender will clearly be master of the situation as regards such localities." Well, it cannot be too carefully borne in mind that without the money-lender's help the whole machinery of revenue administration in this country would come to a dead-lock in a short time. The average Indian *rayat* who has no resources beyond the current harvest must have advances to enable him to cultivate his land. Without seed-grain he cannot sow his fields, and the village *saukar* not only advances him seed-grain, but also helps him to feed his bullocks and to maintain himself and family until his crops are gathered. The *rayat*'s necessity for obtaining the money-lender's help does not cease with the harvest. The agriculturist must, under the scientific revenue system introduced by the British Government, pay his rent or revenue in cash, and he cannot meet the inexorable tax-gatherer's demand without the village *saukar*'s assistance. Our rulers do not attach sufficient importance to these hard facts which cannot be gainsaid. Should the money-lender withhold his help, it will be absolutely impossible for the *rayat* to cultivate his fields or for the State to realise its revenue demand. It is a matter for deep regret that Government in dealing with agricultural indebtedness do not care to attack the evil at its root. They will not condescend to consider the real causes of this indebtedness. They deliberately shut their eyes to the fact that the revenue system introduced by them is chiefly responsible for producing the great evil which they seek to remedy.

In the whole course of his lengthy speech the hon. member had not a single word to say on this point of vital importance. It is a truism that a disease must be thoroughly diagnosed before a proper remedy can be prescribed; and that the application of mere palliatives does not radically cure the malady. It may for a time relieve the sufferings of the patient; but his complaint is not effectually removed. Mr. Rivaz spoke of the report of the Commission which was appointed by Government in 1875 to enquire into the condition of the agricultural population of the Bombay Presidency, and to the passing of the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act of 1879. But he carefully avoided all reference to the discussions which took place on that occasion about the necessity of modifying the revenue system. He cannot be ignorant of the fact that Sir Auckland (then Mr. Colvin, who was a member of the Deccan Riots Commission, wrote a separate minute, in which he clearly showed that the revenue system of the Government had something to do with the serious agrarian disturbances which had occurred in the Deccan. Then he must also be aware of the fact that in the debate upon the Bill, which was the outcome of the Commission's report, more than one member of the Imperial Legislative Council who took part in it pointed out the necessity of modifying the revenue system if the evil of agricultural indebtedness in the Deccan was to be attacked at the root. Sir Theodore Hope, the member in charge of the Bill, and Sir John Strachey, the then Finance Minister, who was the *de facto* Governor-General, in all matters relating to the internal administration of the country in Lord Lytton's time, admitted the desirability of effecting changes in the revenue system, and the question was commended to the consideration of the Bombay Government. But, strange to say, the hon. member in his interesting historical retrospect of the case did not mention these facts for the information of the Council. And it is still stranger that the Committee of selected Punjab officers, over which Sir William Mackworth Young himself presided and which formulated the proposals embodied in Mr. Rivaz's Bill, did not discover any connexion between agricultural indebtedness and the scientific revenue system which has been introduced by the British Government.

After explaining the plan which the Government of India put forward with the object of checking the transfer of land from the agricultural classes in the Punjab, Mr. Rivaz observed:—"After all, it must be borne in mind that we are aiming at reverting to some extent to a state of things which prevailed in the Punjab before it came under British rule. It is an arguable question whether the free transfer of land was recognised under Native rule, or whether it is what has been called the fatal gift of the British Government, but, in any case, the question is for practical purposes one of mere academic interest, for it is an undoubted fact that in former times the exercise of the right of transfer, at all events in favour of money-lenders or other outsiders, even allowing that such right ever did exist in theory, was for several reasons exceedingly rare, and we know that

even in these days in most Native States alienations of land are either absolutely prohibited or largely restricted. We know, too, that in the Punjab the custom of transferring land did not gain a footing for several years after the annexation of the Province, but that as land has increased in value and become more attractive as a profitable investment, the number of transfers has increased correspondingly and is still increasing." We are ready to admit that under Native rule the right of transferring land in favour of money-lenders or other outsiders was exceedingly rare; and that even in these days in most Native States alienations of land are either absolutely prohibited or largely restricted. But Mr. Rivaz and those who think with him conveniently forget or overlook the fact that under Native rule the land revenue assessment, speaking generally, is collected in kind. When an agriculturist is not obliged to pay his rent or revenue in cash, he does not feel the same necessity for borrowing in order to meet the demands of the taxpayer he undoubtedly does under the revenue system introduced by the British Government. Take, for instance, the Deccan. Its Marhatta rulers took half the actual produce of the land in kind. The assessment was certainly a high one, but the Kumbi did not find it necessary to have recourse to the money-lender, in order to pay it. In a year of drought when the crops failed he had to pay nothing to the Sirkar, and in bad seasons when the harvest was less than a full one, the actual yield of the land was divided equally between the cultivator and the Government. This system under which there was not much room for the village *saukar* worked, on the whole, satisfactorily. And we have the testimony of a high authority like Mountstuart Elphinstone to show that when he assumed charge of the Peshwah's dominions on their annexation, he found the condition of the people to be generally good. But the introduction of the scientific revenue system of the British Government, it is well known, obliged the Kumbi to largely resort to the village *saukar*, and his indebtedness gradually increased until, in sheer despair, he rose against the money-lenders whom he naturally looked upon as the immediate cause of his miseries, and caused those disturbances, which led to the appointment of the Deccan Riots Commission of 1875 and the subsequent passing of the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act of 1879. Even now in most Native States where the administration has not come under British influences, the land revenue assessment is collected in kind. In such States the agricultural classes do not find it necessary to convert the produce of their fields into cash in order to meet the demands of the tax-gatherer. Not much harm is done by the imposition of restrictions upon the transfer of land, or even by its absolute prohibition. But the position of the cultivator under British rule is widely different. He must pay the fixed assessment in cash whether his fields have yielded a full crop or not. It is, therefore, absolutely impossible for him to get on without resorting to the village *saukar*.

In the concluding part of his speech, Mr. Rivaz remarked:—"The Punjab is pre-eminently a land of yeoman and peasant proprietors, and the expropriation by the money-lending classes of these sturdy landholders—men who furnish the flower of the Native Army of India and who look forward amid all the hardships and glories of a military career, to spend their declining years on their ancestral acres"—under the influence of conditions which have sprung up under British rule, but, progressing, as I have shown, in different degrees of rapidity in all parts of the Province. The sole and entire object of the measure which I have been explaining is, while affording ample facilities and a sufficient market for unobjectionable transfers, to arrest the further progress of this mischief and to check, by remedial action, an ever-increasing political danger; and I venture to express a confident hope that our scheme will be received in this spirit by those in whose interests it has been devised." Well, sound statesmanship demands that if the progress of the mischief is to be checked and the increasing political danger is to be averted, our ruler should go to the root of the evil and apply the proper remedy.

## PUBLIC MEETINGS ON INDIAN QUESTIONS.

### THE WORK OF THE BRITISH COMMITTEE.

On October 6 Miss Alison Garland gave a lantern lecture on "India and its People" at Aspataria. Mr. Wilfrid Lawson, jun., presided over a large attendance.

On October 7 a public meeting was held at Maryport, when an address was given by Miss Garland on "The Industrial Condition of the Indian People." Mr. Alfred Hine, J.P., presided, and made a sympathetic speech on Indian affairs.

On October 8 Miss Garland lectured on "The Indian National Congress: its Aims and Justification" at the Liberty Club, Cockermouth. The room was filled with an attentive and appreciative audience. Mr. Harris, J.P., took the chair, and an interesting discussion followed the lecture.

Speaking at the Accrington Liberal Club on "Current Politics," on November 9, Miss Garland was requested by the chairman to give the meeting an account of the Indian National Congress. In the vote of thanks following the address a hearty wish for the success of the Congress at Lucknow was cordially expressed, together with the hope that, on her return to England, Miss Garland would address another meeting at Accrington, giving her impressions of India and describing the efforts Indians are making for their political emancipation.

Meetings have been addressed during the present week at Attercliffe (November 13), Sheffield (November 14), and Exeter (November 16).

Among other prospective meetings which will be addressed on behalf of the British Committee are the following:—

November 17—Plymouth.

„ 20.—Leamington.



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