

INDIA

A Record and Review of Indian Affairs

PUBLISHED MONTHLY

EDITED BY GORDON HEWART.

ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL.]

[OFFICES: 84 AND 85, PALACE CHAMBERS, LONDON, S.W.

VOL. VIII., No. 8.]
(NEW SERIES.)

AUGUST, 1897.

[Subscription, Post Free,
SIX SHILLINGS PER ANN.
IN INDIA, SIX RUPEES.

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Indiana.

A Case for
Enquiry.

WHATEVER else may be doubtful in regard to the murder of Lieutenant Ayerst and Mr. Rand, one thing at least is certain—there must be a public and judicial enquiry. "We cannot see," wrote the *Unionist Observer* on July 4 with reference to the allegations contained in the Poona Memorial of May 10, "we cannot see what possible objection there can be to a public enquiry into the truth of these complaints: nay, more, we consider that it would be ill-advised and impolitic to shirk or refuse such an enquiry. It is precisely because the Government allow an impression to grow up that they will never permit any investigation into the conduct of their own servants, that discontent, thus forced beneath the surface, finds an outlet in the commission of crime. The laws and policy of government in India are worthy of the highest commendation and fit to stand as a model to the world. It is not in these that the fault lies, but in the way that the orders are interpreted by subordinate officers and their subordinates. . . . We feel certain that a frank and open invitation to those natives who have any grievances to allege to bring them forward for examination, so far from discrediting the authorities, high or low, would provide a much-needed means of ventilation, and a solid proof of the irreproachable and even-handed justice by which our administrative

acts are inspired." That, we take it, is the opinion to which the majority of thoughtful observers have come now that the heated feelings excited by the crimes have to some extent subsided. What is wanted, above all things, is to get at the truth. To the readers of newspapers in the United Kingdom the foul assassinations of June 22 came as a bolt from the blue. To very many persons in India it is evident that they appeared rather as the climax of a state of panic induced by a widespread belief that grievous wrongs were being done, and that no redress could be obtained. Opinions may differ as to the value of the evidence contained in the Poona Memorial, in Pandita Ramabai's letter, and in the signed complaints printed in such journals as the *Mahratta* and the *Dnyan Prakash* of Poona. But these and similar complaints obviously call for careful investigation. If the European soldiers who at Poona were charged with the difficult and delicate duties entrusted at Bombay to native agency are innocent of the offences attributed to them, by all means let their innocence be established. But if, whether willfully or not, the domestic and religious susceptibilities of the inhabitants of Poona have been outraged, let the offence be proved, and let us not lightly attribute to political sedition crimes due to totally different causes. Lord G. Hamilton stated on July 1 that he had no reason to think that any enquiry "into the administration of Poona during the plague was necessary or desirable." We trust that he may yet see cause to change his opinion, if

indeed he has not already done so after the answer which he was compelled to give to Major Rasch in the House of Commons on July 26.

"Inspection" and "Examination." UNDER the heading, "Mr. Rand and the Deccan Sabha," the *Times of India* of April 24, printed this important letter:—

"The following is the answer received from Mr. Rand to the representation made by the Deccan and Anjuman Sabhas:

"N No. 684 of 1897.

"From Mr. W. C. Rand, I.C.S., Chairman, Plague Committee, Poona, to Rao Bahadur Vishnu Moreshwar Bhide, Chairman, Deccan Sabha, Poona.

"Poona, 9th April, 1897.

"Sir,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a letter, dated the 7th instant, from yourself and other gentlemen on the subject of certain matters connected with the plague operations in the city of Poona. The points raised in your letter have been considered by the Plague Committee:

"2. In view of the repugnance which, as you point out, is felt by certain classes of the community to the bringing of the female inmates of a house into the public street, it has been decided that for the future the female inmates of a house, to whatever community they belong, will not be sent into the street for inspection when they or the male members of their families object to this being done.

"3. Your remarks on the subject of the admission of native gentlemen to the General Plague Hospital appear to be made under a misapprehension of the rules in force, which allow of the admission of visitors under passes granted by the Inspecting Medical Officer. The rules relating to the General Plague Hospital so far as they concern the general public are in the press, and will be published shortly.

"4. I may inform you that it is the intention of the Committee that passes should be granted to representatives of all classes of the community, and they have full confidence that their intention will be given effect to by the Inspecting Medical Officer, Surgeon-Major Barry, to whom applications for passes should be made.—Yours, &c.,

"W. C. RAND.

"Chairman, Plague Committee, Poona."

With regard to the second paragraph of this letter, it will be seen from our Parliamentary report that on July 9 Lord George Hamilton laid stress upon the distinction between "inspection" and "examination," adding that Sir W. Wedderburn, on some occasion which is not named and is not apparent, had confused the two. According to the Government of Bombay, it appears that the practice which Mr. Rand promised to discontinue was merely the practice of taking women into some open place "that it might be seen whether they looked ill." This, we are assured, was a very different thing from "actual medical examination." The Government of Bombay is doubtless well-informed on this point. But it is to be noted that in the answer which Lord George Hamilton gave to Major Rasch on July 26, the official report speaks of immoral overtures to certain girls "in segregation huts at Khana plague inspection camp." Is it not a little odd to have a "camp"

where people might be taken merely "that it might be seen whether they looked ill"? This matter is, we cannot help thinking, one which is eminently suitable for impartial investigation.

"Soldiers and Plague Work." It is worth noting that the *Times of India*, writing in its issue of June 18 upon "Soldiers and Plague Work," says that the European soldiers employed at Poona "worked in all sorts of out of the way places, far from the cognizance of their officers."

Sir W. Wedderburn, as may be gathered from our Parliamentary report, sought to ask Lord George Hamilton on July 15, whether the statement contained in the *Times of India* was accurate. But the question, before it found its way to the Notice Paper, was somehow made to omit the reference to the *Times of India* and was therefore ridiculous. Sir W. Wedderburn accordingly stated that the question "had been so altered by the clerks at the Table that he did not propose to put it." The question, we understand, was mutilated on the ground that references to newspapers are not permitted—a reason which must seem a little odd to anybody familiar with the Notice Paper of the House of Commons, and which, during the past month for example, does not seem to have operated in the cases of Sir M. M. Bohnaggee (July 15), Major Rasch (July 26), and Sir W. Wedderburn himself (July 1).

In the first rush of excitement caused by the news of the Poona murders the less responsible organs of Tory opinion in London clamoured for restrictions upon the vernacular press in India. One hears less of this demand now, and, as will be seen from the newspaper extracts which we print elsewhere, the notion of "gagging" has been strongly condemned in all parts of the United Kingdom. On the other hand, Lord G. Hamilton has not yet retracted the words which he uttered, no doubt in the heat of the moment, on July 1: "The habitual dissemination of false intelligence and of appeals to religious animosities by a portion of the vernacular press is," he said, "a matter which has for some years past received the careful attention of the Indian Government; and if the result of the present enquiry is to show that this outrage was prompted by articles of this character, the question of taking measures to prevent the encouragement of crime through the press will undoubtedly be taken into consideration." By "the present enquiry" Lord G. Hamilton referred to a police enquiry into the causes and circumstances of the outrage. But when, on July 2, Sir W. Wedderburn asked him whether he intended to

propose press legislation for India as the result of a private enquiry, Lord G. Hamilton asserted that his words would not bear that interpretation. He added, in reply to Sir W. Harecourt, and amid loud Tory cheers, that it was the Indian Government which was responsible for the maintenance of law and order in India, and he protested against the "idea" that the House of Commons should have an opportunity of pronouncing an opinion upon the matter before a change was made in the press law of India. Anything more mischievous than a "Gagging" Act, it would be difficult to conceive. The authorities in India are not so well-informed as to the current of native opinion and sentiment as to the current of information as they possess. If Lord G. Hamilton proposes any such folly he will have the opinion of the best men in his own party against him. But these are not the men who cheer him to the echos in the House of Commons when he contradicts him and in the present temper of the House of Commons many things are possible. Lord G. Hamilton, however, would do well to consider the despatch which his colleague, the Duke of Hartington, forwarded to the Viceroy on January 28th, 1881, upon the expediency of repealing the Vernacular Press Act. The valuable document, which was followed by the repeal of a worse than useless measure, are as follows:—

"2. As your Excellency is aware, considerable doubts have from the first been entertained as to the expediency of the law in question, and it does not appear to me that there was any great weight of evidence for its necessity.

"3. While on the one hand it has provoked strong feelings of discontent and resentment, and is unquestionably open to the objection that it infringes the principle, which it is the object of the Government of India to uphold, of the equality before the law of all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in India, on the other, there is but little real language inimical to British rule, and the character of the vernacular press has since the passing of the Act undergone any essential change.

"4. I have nothing, therefore, before me to show that the original objections to the law of 1878 have been counterbalanced by increased security to Government, or other compensating advantages.

"5. Your Excellency is aware that the Vernacular Press Act applies not only to publications which are of a nature to excite disaffection and endanger the public peace, but also to those affecting private persons and public servants.

"6. As regards the latter object, I am of opinion that nothing short of the strongest evidence of a wide-spread system of extortion and intimidation, which the provisions of the Penal Code are inadequate to restrain, could justify such exceptional legislation. But if it proved to be indeed necessary, I should require special and peculiar reasons to satisfy me that, in any case, the exception should be permitted in favour of the English press.

"7. The defence of the Act in its application to seditious

writings is more plausible, but does not appear to be conclusive.

"8. I am aware that it has been represented by some whose views are deserving of the highest respect, that the criminal law of India applicable to seditious libel is practically unworkable, through the effect of the explanation appended to Section 124A of the Penal Code. If this be the case, I see no reason why the existing defect in the Code should not be remedied without recourse to such exceptional measures as those provided by the Act of 1878; and I would suggest, for the consideration of your Excellency in Council, whether, in the event of the repeal of the Act of 1878, it may not be desirable to propose suitable amendments in some of the provisions of the Penal Code relating to seditious and libellous writings.

"9. If, as I am disposed to infer, the Vernacular Press Act has been practically inoperative, whether such a result be due to the absence of seditious writings or to a reluctance on the part of the Government to exercise the invidious powers with which it invested them, the policy of its continuance may be considered apart from the question of any amendment of the Penal Code, especially as, in my opinion, the Act cannot be retained upon the statute book without being extended to the English press, and without some judicial check being interposed at some stage of the proceedings under it, upon the action of the executive Government.

"10. In any case, without desiring to fetter the discretion of your Excellency in Council as to the course which you may think it expedient to pursue on this important subject, I would invite your early consideration to the policy of the continuance of the Act of 1878. The question for your Excellency will be, not only whether repressive legislation of so exceptional a kind should be maintained at the cost of much irritation, but also whether the Act has succeeded in securing the avowed object with which it was passed."

It is not easy to make out either the facts or the precise meaning of the The Chitpur Riot. unfortunate rioting at Chitpur. Even

the ostensible bone of contention cannot, it would seem, be reported to this country with complete certainty. It seems that a piece of land had been taken possession of by a Hindu under an order of Court, and that certain Muhammadans offered opposition on the ground that the land contained a mosque. Reuter's correspondent says that "a mud hut at Entalla, which no respectable Muhammadan would claim to be a mosque, was demolished under police protection." The question of respectability is a matter of taste or opinion. But whether or not the hut was a mosque seems an odd point of doubt. In any case, it is plain enough that an order of Court must be obeyed, and that, if it be not obeyed, it must be enforced by the police, or, if need be, by the military power of the State. The one fact that is not doubtful in the matter is that keen feeling was widely aroused among the Muhammadan population. A policy of "divide and rule" tends to produce its own nemesis, and if it be the case that the Indian Muhammadans or some of them have inferred—wrongly, of course—from the conduct of responsible officers that for a Muham-

madan all things are lawful, some degree of contumacy is not difficult to explain. The sequence of events may be briefly indicated. On Monday, the police enforce possession. On Tuesday, 2,000 Muhammadans assemble to rebuild the dismantled "mosque." On Wednesday, the Entalla pumping station is attacked; the telephone wires are cut; "the rioters meanwhile indulge in fierce war cries, mingled with vile epithets and threats"; "many women are grossly insulted, a few being even subjected to violence." "For over 48 hours one-third of the town was in the hands of some 5,000 determined anti-European rioters." "One party of native police was surrounded by rioters, and all of them, to the number of 24, were seriously injured." "Scattered gangs infested the streets, hooting and stoning Europeans." The official report says "no shots were fired by the military." It does not say whether the police fired, but it admits "eight rioters reported killed and many wounded," while Reuter's correspondent says, "a low estimate places the number killed at 600." The discrepancies are sufficiently amazing. But the rioting was evidently "of a serious character," and naturally created "a good deal of uneasiness."

"Passive Sympathy." THERE is a great deal too much Simla, undoubtedly, but one is not inclined to suppose that the outbreak would have

taken a substantially different course if all Simla had been in Calcutta at the time. There was no lack of authority to deal with the disturbance. If the facts were somewhere between the official and the private report, the chief ground of blame would seem to lie in the prolongation of the trouble. The law ought to be enforced with promptitude and decision. It is preposterous that one-third of a town should be in the hands of 5,000 determined rioters for over 48 hours, and the military stand by and see the police mauled and "seriously injured" without firing a shot. In any case, the riot was too bad to be temporised with for a moment. Whatever be the true view of the administrative procedure, it is very justly "regarded as somewhat significant that the Hindus passively sympathised with the Muhammadan rioters"; and this significance is emphasised by the opinion of the native Press "that better-planned disturbances, or one more under the control of the leaders, were never known," as well as by the foolish vernacular "jubilation on the loss of respect for Europeans." We remark elsewhere on this ominous coalition of Hindu and Muhammadan sympathy of antagonism to Europeans and to the Government. It is perfectly within the power of the Government to break it up and disarm it before any substantial mischief comes of it, though one

acknowledges a feeling of hopelessness of any statesmanlike remedy in that quarter. The leaders, we take it, will be dealt with promptly and effectively, as the law directs. That, however, is merely in settlement of the present business. What we are specially concerned for is the general situation: the reasonable conciliation of just grievances, so as to remove the combustible materials that have been allowed to accumulate, and to prevent the generation of more. It is an elementary demand on statesmanship, and it is enforced materially by the obvious significance of recent events in various widely separated parts of the Indian peninsula.

Wanted: A Village Enquiry. ONCE more the debate in the House of Commons on the Indian Budget is to be taken at the fag-end of the Session, in spite of the number and the importance of the subjects which call for discussion. The handful of members who strive to do their duty by India will once more, it seems, have to address a listless and almost empty House. But they are not to be discouraged, and, in view of the approaching debate, Sir W. Wedderburn has issued to all members of the House of Commons a pamphlet containing the articles lately contributed by him to our columns upon the famine. In a brief introductory note the Chairman of the Indian Parliamentary Committee writes:—

"At the approaching Indian Budget, upon the Motion that the Speaker do leave the Chair, I propose to move the following amendment, 'That looking to the grievous sufferings endured by the people of India during the present year, this House is of opinion that a detailed and searching village enquiry should be instituted, in order to ascertain the causes which blight the industry of the cultivators, and render them helpless to resist even the first attacks of famine and pestilence.' I asked for this enquiry last January, as an Amendment to the Address; pointing out that the rural villages include 80 per cent. of the population, that the village community is the microcosm of all India, and that if means could be discovered to make one village prosperous a clue would be obtained to make all India prosperous. I further pointed out that no Imperial Commission was required, no one need be sent out from England, no one need be withdrawn from famine duty, and no cost worth mentioning need be incurred. In each Province the local administration should select typical villages, and appoint a representative Committee of experienced men, official and non-official, European and Indian, to make a thorough, impartial, and fearless diagnosis of their condition, the investigation to be of a microscopic kind to detect the microbes which blight the rayat's industry. The rayat is a small and humble person. He does not want any heroic action, but patient and detailed enquiry into his grievances, and remedies suited to his condition. I indicated briefly in my speech the nature of the grievances, and the nature of the remedies desired.

"Unfortunately this prayer for enquiry has (partly perhaps from a misapprehension as to its scope) been refused by Lord G. Hamilton; and I have been thus driven to lay before the House and the public some facts showing how the rayat has been brought to ruin. In the four articles herewith reproduced

from INDIA, I have detailed a few of the more prominent evils which afflict him, evils which have been officially admitted for the last thirty or forty years; and I claim to have proved (1) that these evils are the direct result of ill-advised and revolutionary changes introduced by our government, and (2) that when the proper remedies are pointed out the administration will neither apply them itself, nor permit others to do so. On the contrary, when, after years of patient labour, practical schemes have been matured for improving the condition of the rayat, such movements have been crushed by the authorities, even when (as in one case) the scheme had received the hearty approval and support of the Viceroy in Council. I challenge the authorities to deny any one of the statements upon which these conclusions are based. To any candid mind the wonder is, not that the people are in a state of economic collapse, but that they are able to exist at all. All these evils are quite unnecessary. With a rich soil, a fine climate, and peasantry skilful, industrious and frugal, India, if she gets fair play, ought to be a garden, not a place of desolation.

"By the kindness of the proprietors of the *Graphic* I am enabled, by way of frontispiece, to show the condition of the miserable beings for whom I plead. The unfortunate people of India have this year been suffering from almost every calamity to which a nation can be subjected. Their minds are distracted and they are almost driven to despair. How can any one find in his heart to regard them with anger, and advocate measures of harshness and rigour? Of all races in the world the Indians are the most gentle, the most docile, the most law-abiding; the easiest to govern, and the most grateful for kindness. Is there a talk of disaffection abroad? I say that if we are unable to gain the affection of such a race, we show ourselves unfit to be a ruling power. The first step towards gaining their affection is to make patient and careful enquiry into their grievances, and do our best to redress them.

The pamphlet is entitled "The Skeleton at the (Jubilee) Feast," and the frontispiece is a photograph of a group of famine-stricken Indian peasants.

"OTHER Finance Ministers when they present their statements have to defend the expenditure proposed against the representatives of the taxpayer. Here the position is exactly the reverse; the Finance Minister is the solitary representative of the taxpayers of India." Even to ears accustomed to the anomalies of Indian Government, Sir James Westland's pithy statement of his own remarkable position is sufficiently startling. Could one imagine Mr. Goschen uttering a similar sentence with reference to his relations with the taxpayers of England one might grasp in some measure the incongruity of our management of Indian finance with our national and hereditary notions of popular government. If Sir Henry Fowler's famous declaration that every member of the House of Commons is a member for India had been more than an ornament of a showy peroration, the debate on the Indian Budget in the Commons might compensate for the deficiencies of the discussion in the Viceroy's Council. To-day when, in spite of famine, plague, earthquake, and war, India has tried to join in the general rejoicing of the

Empire, surely her plight might arouse the sympathy and attract the attention of the House. If the opportunity provided for the discussion of India's many troubles by the introduction of the Budget is allowed this year to slip by in the ordinary way—and there is every sign that it will—even the most sanguine supporter of Indian reforms may be excused for feeling that short of a terrible disaster nothing can overcome the apathy of Parliament in all that concerns the welfare of "our greatest dependency."

A NOTEWORTHY contribution to the discussion in the Viceroy's Council was made by Mr. Sayani. His treatment

of the question of Provincial Contracts was discussed in our last issue. Referring to irrigation he called attention to the necessity of an enquiry into the causes of the comparative failure of some of the greater works. The tendency of late years is rather to press on railway construction than irrigation, even in districts where irrigation is likely to be profitable. The Hon. Rao Saheb Balwant Rao Bhuskute presented an interesting table showing that the unprofitableness of many of the works is due to excessive cost of maintenance, which, in some cases, equals annually the amount of the first cost, and in most cases exceeds 50 per cent. of the first cost. When, in spite of this, irrigation works pay 5 per cent. all round it seems odd to suspend them in favour of railway construction when money is scarce. The remark of the Famine Commission that "cultivators and landlords do something towards the improvement of their land" by sinking wells and so on, might be much truer if cultivators were not hopelessly fettered by debt. The remedy is indicated by Mr. Sayani. "Government will do well to devise some measure by which agricultural indebtedness may be gradually diminished and ultimately cease to exist. And in this connexion I will humbly urge that suitable agricultural banks may be established and a permanent settlement, with assessment in kind on a sliding scale, may be substituted in lieu of the present rigid system of payment in cash." Another important measure for the increase of production and the redistribution of population within the limits of India was urged by Mr. Playfair and the Mahārājā of Darbhanga. The typical case chosen was Assam, with its 21,000 square miles of "soil of the richest description" and its "scanty population of 2½ millions, importing instead of producing and exporting supplies of food." The plan suggested by the Mahārājā of selling tracts of land to syndicates and capitalists has received the approval of Sir William Hunter, and deserves the attention of the Government.

The Indian Debt. MORE technical and general remedies for the financial difficulties of the provinces were urged by Mr. Sayani and other Indian members of the Council. Mr. James, whose somewhat flippant speech received a well-merited rebuke from Sir Alexander Mackenzie, drew from the comparatively satisfactory condition of Bengal merely the inference that Bengal should be more heavily taxed to meet the deficiencies caused by ill-regulated taxes in the other provinces. It is hardly necessary to controvert so perverse a proposition. The obvious retort is that the Government would do well to follow the precedent established in Bengal and institute something like a permanent settlement of the land revenue. It is more necessary to reduce the contributions of the other presidencies than to increase the contribution of Bengal. An effort, too, is urgently needed to control the growth and provide for the extinction of the Indian debt. Mr. Stevens called attention to the entire absence of any sinking fund, if we except the Famine Insurance Fund, on which it is superfluous to dwell at this period. Meanwhile the increase of the debt steadily proceeds, and the least satisfactory feature of this increase is the disproportion between rupee and sterling debt. The Hon. Rao Bhaskute directed attention to the unwisdom of this course.

"In 1893 our rupee debt amounted to 102 crores, and our sterling obligations exceeded 106½ million pounds. The corresponding figures in 1896-7 were 107 crores of rupee debt and 116 millions of sterling obligation. The sterling loans, though nominally bearing as low a rate of interest as 2½ and 3 per cent., really represent, by reason of adverse exchange, a charge equivalent to 6 to 7 crores of rupees, while the charge on the rupee debt has been sensibly reduced by the recent conversions from 4 to 3½ per cent., and 3½ to 3 per cent. . . . Of course to meet the Home Charges there is a certain convenience in the Secretary of State's borrowing sterling loans in England. But this convenience is only temporary, while the risks are far more permanent and burdensome."

Such an opportunity of economic reform no English Chancellor of the Exchequer who valued his reputation would dare to lose. Certainly his political opponents would not let slip the chance for damaging criticism. The responsible criticism of elected representatives would prove the salvation of Indian finance.

Military Expenditure. A DEBATE on Indian finance without discussion of military policy would indeed resemble "Hamlet" shorn of the title-rôle. The native members are fully alive to the prime importance of the military factor, and the Commander-in-Chief himself makes some significant admissions with respect to the sharing of expenses between England and India. Mr. Sayani referred to the "costly foreign agency, the con-

sequent large annual drains from this country, Imperial military policy with its scientific frontiers and constant border wars." Mr. Ananda Charlu again emphasized his point of last year. "Within these ten years the forward policy alone has cost us, apart from the wars themselves, an aggregate sum of nearly seventy crores, and has added to our permanent expenditure no less a sum than six crores per annum." The admissions of Sir G. S. White are of the utmost significance:—

"We maintain that the Indian army does supply a great addition of military power to England, that a large part of the British army is trained at the expense of India, and that the whole of the men passed into the Reserve from India have been maintained out of Indian revenues. . . . The expenditure charged by England should be limited, not by arithmetical details, but by statesmanlike and broad appreciation of the conditions of the two countries."

The Commander-in-Chief rightly scouted the idea that India should be asked to pay a contribution towards the fleet which is optional in the case of our wealthy colonies, and would vote the reduction of the subsidy. He agrees with Mr. Sayani in hoping for much from Lord Welby's Commission, but the refusal of that Commission to discuss questions of policy makes us less sanguine. It is somewhat disappointing, after reading such honest and common-sense opinions, to find Sir G. S. White advocating the extension of British influence on the frontier, and to find him capable of the usual cant about the extension of that influence being in the best interests of humanity. That point one would willingly waive in the firm belief that if the House of Commons would do its duty and assume the responsibility for such expenditure as, being really Imperial, is imposed on Indian taxpayers, the forward policy would not survive a single Session.

A CORRESPONDENT writes: The details of the attack on a British force in the Tochi Valley afford a curious confirmation of the contentions of Colonel Hanna and other opponents of the Forward Policy. The dangers of the present system have been pointed out repeatedly, and yet in spite of numerous warnings based on past experience the plan of half-trusting half-coercing the border tribes continues. The Chitral incident is being repeated on a smaller scale. A political officer has been attacked while he was choosing a site for an outpost and attempting to collect a fine for past misconduct. Whether the fine was a just one, or the policy of menace implied in the choosing of sites for outposts a wise one, are questions which do not apparently enter into the calculations of the authorities. A number of valuable lives have been thrown away, and further waste of life will follow. For no one can doubt that the wild tribesmen will offer a

stubborn resistance to the advance of the punitive force, which in due accord with precedent has been sent forward. Telegrams from Datta-Khel inform us that four or five men succeeded in getting into the camp by night and again made good their escape, while the tribal marksmen are making exceedingly good practice at the sentries. A not unnatural inference is that there are amongst the enemy men with accurate knowledge of the arrangements of a British camp, and arms of great precision probably manufactured for the British Government. The suicidal nature of the policy of training tribal levies in British discipline while the insidious advance on the frontier continues has been frequently emphasized. All the indications point to a realization in Techi of the prophecies made in this connexion. Our intelligence shows that the tribesmen have not lost at any rate their command of the style of warfare which, if the writers of letters to the *Times* may be believed, proved so demoralizing to the Kandahar force in the last Afghan war.

THE unanimity with which the course taken by the Indian Government in extinguishing Jhalawar as a separate State has been condemned by the Indian press is worthy of note. The Allahabad *Pioneer* is, of course, excepted from the general chorus of disapproval, seeing that it could do no other than follow its implied obligation as expositor of the Political Department. The official journal's pleas on behalf of this arbitrary vivisection of a State which, as with the rest, had its political entity guaranteed by the British Government, were promptly met by both the Bombay dailies, notably by the *Times of India* (May 28 and June 26). These pleas mainly proceeded on the flimsy ground of economising administrative expenditure by amalgamation, and of convenience in "scientific" adjustment of boundaries. To his it is replied that quite different views of these matters will be taken alike by the people and the ruling classes of Jhalawar, while artificial symmetry will be a doubtful gain at the expense of extinguishing the local patriotism and individuality of the little State. Above all, it is pointed out that this new and insidious method of annexation—though not to British territory, and without even the sinister excuse of "lapse"—tends to unsettle the accepted position of Indian States, is a flagrant breach of Treaty rights, and does despite to that pacifying and conservative policy of Canning which was grandly confirmed by Her Majesty's golden Proclamation of 1858. It is in this light that the arbitrary extinction of Jhalawar and gratuitous aggrandisement of Kotah presents a grave and disturbing aspect. Let it be stated that this political

transaction has been carried through by a secret and irresponsible bureau, without so much as a reference to the High Court of Parliament or to the Queen in Council. And though, as stated in the official "Order," it has been "approved by the Secretary of State," that scarcely carries the process a step further; for he is only an executive officer without juridical responsibility or any true sovereign authority. This is mere bastard imperialism; and if there were any really live constitutional lawyers amongst us its exercise would be sharply challenged. In a very practical sense this episode in kingdom unmaking raises once more the unanswered question, "By whom is India governed?" It is also an illustration, from the inside, of the daring encroachments of the Political Department, alike at Simla and Westminster, which have already wrought such havoc on the territorial integrity and financial condition of our Indian Empire. Hence it is with some sense of relief that, notwithstanding distractions all round, the Indian press—Anglo-Indian journals included—have raised timely and intelligent protest in this typical instance.

THE condition of the Elavas, a low caste in Travancore, seems (writes an Indian correspondent) to be deplorable. In answer to a question asked in the House of Commons on July 19, whether the Elavas are excluded from all appointments in the State of Travancore on the ground that they belong to a low caste, the Secretary of State for India replied that he had no precise information. But the information placed at my disposal goes to show that there is no Elava in the service of the Government of Travancore receiving even such a small salary as Rs.10 *per mensem*, though the Elavas form 22.05 per cent. of the Hindu and 16.12 per cent. of the total population in the State. The compiler of the Travancore Census Report of 1881, himself a distinguished official in the service of the State, speaks of them as a "most numerous and industrious class," and an "able-bodied and hard-working race." They contribute largely to the revenue of the State, and there are many educated men among them—some of them graduates of Madras University. In June last year one of these graduates applied to the Travancore High Court for an appointment in the judicial branch of the administration, and received the following reply from the registrar:

"With reference to his application, dated the 27th ultimo, — is informed that the traditional State policy is against his employment, and that he should apply to Government." The applicant protested against this absurd "traditional State policy," and appealed to the Dewan, or Prime Minister, but the only reply was:

"The petitioner may apply for employment in the D.P.W.

Forest Department or any other like departments where it may be possible to entertain men of his class."

The Secretary of State says that there are "9,517 Elava boys and 1,368 Elava girls" under instruction. The reply is not to the point. It is notorious that only a few schools are open to Elavas in Travancore and that many poor boys are prevented from receiving any education as the Government schools near their homes are closed to them. In February 1891, in reply to a petition from some members of the Elava Community, the superintendent of district schools stated:

"The undersigned regrets that children of their community cannot for the present be admitted to the Government English school at——."

Again, in April, 1895, another petitioner was told by the inspector of schools

"that he cannot be admitted to the —— English school, as the people there object to have one of his class admitted in the school."

Popular objection is a myth encouraged by Government officials. It is surprising that in a native state like Travancore, ruled as it is by an enlightened sovereign, such restrictions should be placed on any community.

SIR J. WESTLAND'S FINANCIAL STATEMENT, 1897-98.

By H. MORGAN-BROWNE.

Sir James Westland concludes his summary of the principal features of his Budget Statement with these words:—"The Government of India are for the time in serious financial difficulties caused by the famine. When that calamity and the plague in Bombay and Sindh shall have passed away the Government will, it is hoped, be found to be in a strong financial position." The question is how far is this hope justified? Is the Government of India, apart from the exigencies of the present famine, in a strong financial position? I propose briefly to examine in the light of the official figures this claim of the Indian Finance Minister, which is none the less a claim to financial rectitude because expressed in phrases of judicious hope.

In order to appreciate the present position and future prospects of Indian Government finance it is necessary to make some comparison with a recent past. So progressive and so rapid is the increase of Indian Civil and Military Expenditure that almost any past year will serve as a date of departure for such comparison, inasmuch as it will provide sufficient contrast to enable the mind to detect clearly the trend of Indian finance. I have taken the year 1894-95 as possessing one or two advantages which seem to make it a convenient starting point. In the first place it relates to a time only three years ago, and therefore can hardly be considered an unfair standard to set up so far as the Government of India is concerned; and in the second place Exchange

was lower during that year than it has ever been before or since, consequently the Government cannot plead an increasing burden of Exchange during the last three years to account for any growth of expenditure which an examination of the figures may bring to light.

The following tables, then, show the changes in Indian Revenues and Expenditure in the Budget estimate for the current year, 1897-98, as compared with the closed accounts for 1894-95. The figures here given include exchange in every form, as it has been explained that such inclusion cannot operate in detriment of the Government's claims to sound and economical administration, but tends rather to hide the real growth of expenditure which has taken place. The figures are net in all cases, and are taken, for 1894-5 from tables in a return of net Income and Expenditure to the House of Commons (No. 127 of 1896) dated India Office, 26 March, 1896; and for 1897-8 from similar tables at pp. 80, 81 of the Indian Financial Statement, a Parliamentary Return (No. 193 of 1897), and dated India Office, 3 May, 1897.

FINANCES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

I.—NET INCOME.

	1894-5 (Accounts). Rx.	1897-8 (Budget). Rx.	Incr. (+) or Deer. (—) Rx.
I. Land Revenue, etc.:			
i. Land Revenue ..	25,358,400	25,601,800	+243,400
ii. Forest	1,623,200	1,753,000	+129,800
iii. Tributes	779,200	901,600	+122,400
TOTAL LAND, etc. ..	27,760,800	28,256,400	+495,600
II. Opium	5,702,600	3,156,200	—2,546,400
III. Taxation:			
i. Salt	8,628,900	8,698,800	+69,900
ii. Stamps	4,568,500	4,782,600	+214,100
iii. Excise	5,500,400	5,653,800	+153,400
iv. Provincial Rates ..	3,535,600	3,616,000	+80,400
v. Customs	3,774,900	4,375,900	+601,000
vi. Assessed Taxes ..	1,794,700	1,836,800	+42,100
vii. Registration	417,000	439,700	+22,700
TOTAL TAXES	28,220,000	29,403,600	+1,183,600
IV. Miscellaneous ..	470,800	366,800	—104,000
TOTAL REVENUE	62,154,200	61,183,000	—971,200

Before passing to Expenditure there are one or two points to note with reference to the above table. The Land Revenue proper (I i) for 1897-8, although showing an increase of nearly Rx. 250,000, is less by about Rx. 500,000 than it would otherwise be on account of the famine. The year which has just closed showed a deficiency of about Rx. 2,500,000 under this head. The chief receipts from Land Revenue are from January—March. The increase of Rx. 600,000 in Customs includes an increase of about Rx. 500,000 due to the modified Cotton Duties recently imposed. Very noteworthy is the loss of Revenue on opium. This source of revenue is notoriously fluctuating still it is startling to find that only five years in 1892-3, the net receipts were Rx 6,381,000, more than double the estimated net receipts for the present year. This decrease is in all probability transitory, as dependent not on policy

but on the character of the seasons and the course of trade. Under taxation the estimated loss due to the famine may be put at about Rx.250,000. On the Revenue side of the account, therefore, the position may be considered fairly strong. In three years there has been an increase of nearly Rx.1,700,000 under land and taxation, which, but for the famine, might have been nearly Rx.2,500,000. The only set-off to this is the fact that half-a-million of it is due to increased taxation (*i.e.*, the Cotton Duties), and the severe but temporary shrinkage of the opium revenue. It is quite possible, should the famine not extend over the current year and should the foreign demand for Indian opium revive, that in 1898-9 the Revenue should be about Rx.2,000,000 larger than it was in 1894-5.

FINANCES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

II.—NET EXPENDITURE.

	1894-5 (Accounts). Rx.	1897-8 (Budget). Rx.	Incr. (+) or Decr. (—) Rx.
I. Collection of Revenue:			
i. Land	4,048,100	4,166,700	+118,600
ii. Forest	913,400	1,076,100	+162,700
iii. Other Heads	1,357,500	1,474,900	+117,400
iv. Assignments	1,501,300	1,553,300	+52,000
TOTAL	7,820,300	8,271,000	+450,700
II. Debt Services ..	4,309,000	2,708,700	—1,600,300
III. Civil Services:			
i. Departments	13,206,200	13,778,600	+572,400
ii. Miscellaneous } Charges	5,326,300	5,242,400	—83,900
iii. Works	3,712,000	3,919,300	+207,300
TOTAL	22,244,500	22,940,300	+695,800
IV. Military Services:			
i. Army	23,085,900	23,314,200	+228,300
ii. Military Works ..	948,300	1,181,200	+232,900
iii. Special Defence ..	217,900	19,400	—198,500
TOTAL	24,252,100	24,514,800	+262,700
V. Commercial Services:			
Total Net Cost ..	2,766,200	2,728,700	—37,500
VI. Famine Relief ..	610,200	3,666,200	+3,056,000
VII. Railway Con- } struction	19,600	7,300	—12,300
TOTAL EXPENDITURE ..	62,021,900	64,837,000	+2,815,100

The main features of the progress of expenditure may be summarised as follows:—

	Rx.
Increase in Civil and Military Ex- penditure (I, III, and IV) ..	+1,409,200
Decrease in other Expenditure (II, V, and VII)	—1,650,100
Cost of Famine Relief	+3,056,000
Total Net Increase	+2,815,100

But these figures conceal far more than they reveal of the true state of the case. For the last three years Exchange has been rising, with the result that the Government of India have received from this source a gift of no less than Rx.3,082,700

in reduction of expenditure, made up as shown in the following table:—

NET COST OF EXCHANGE.			Decrease of Burden in 1897-8 Rx.
	1894-5 (Accounts). Rx.	1897-8 (Budget). Rx.	
Shown in Exchange Column	12,899,100	10,504,200	—2,394,900
Sterling Pay of British Troops	1,134,300	† 777,200	—357,100
Exchange Compensation	*1,236,000	† 838,300	—397,700
	<hr/> 15,269,400	<hr/> 12,119,700	<hr/> —3,149,700
Profit on Remittance Transactions	—227,000	—160,000	+67,000
	<hr/> NET TOTAL	<hr/> 11,959,700	<hr/> —3,082,700

This three millions has to be distributed over the various heads of expenditure; but, without unnecessary detail, it may be allocated as to Rx.1,100,000 to the Railway Account, as to Rx.400,000 to the Debt Services, and as to the balance, say, Rx.1,582,700 to Civil and Military Expenditure. This will give the true state of the account as follows:—

INCREASE OF EXPENDITURE.
(Excluding Exchange.)

	Rx.	Rx.
Increase in Civil and Military Expenditure (I, III, and IV)	1,409,200	
Add for reduction in cost of Exchange, say	1,582,700	
True increase in Civil and Military Expenditure, say	2,991,900	
Decrease in other Expen- diture (II, V, and VII) }	—1,650,100	
Less savings effected by lower Exchange, say .. }	+1,500,000	
True decrease in other expenditure, say,	—150,100	
Cost of Famine Relief	3,056,000	
True Net Total Increase of Ex- penditure	Rx.5,897,800	

Therefore, making allowance for the cost of the Famine, there would be but for the fortune of a lower exchange an addition of Rx.3,000,000 in Civil and Military Expenditure, whereas under the most favourable conditions there could only be an increase of Rx.2,000,000 in the Revenues to meet it, while a quarter of this increase is due to additional taxation and *pro tanto* represents a further weakening of the financial position. Under these circumstances it would not seem reasonable to contend that on the expenditure side of the amount, the financial position is anything but deplorably weak. The matter may be put most strikingly in this way. So far as expenditure is concerned, the improvement in exchange since 1894-5 will pay for the cost of the famine in 1897-8, as it has practically done in 1896-7, and as a similar but smaller improvement

* Revised Estimate, 1894-5.

† See para. 47 of Indian Financial Statement, 1897 (Parl. Return).

‡ See para. 161 of Indian Financial Statement, 1897 (Parl. Return).

paid for the cost of the Chitral expedition in 1895-6. In these three years Exchange, formerly the bugbear, has become the stand-by of Indian Finance. It is only fair to Sir James Westland to say that when exchange was falling he was minute and explicit, loud and tabular in his complaint against the evil thing, but that now that Exchange is rising and that the evil has become a good and a godsend, he does not unduly advertise the fact. He recognizes that the public are tired of hearing about Exchange, and for the present at any rate shares their feelings. Here, however, it must be pointed out with all necessary insistence that if no blame attaches for the cost of the famine no credit belongs for the millions set free by Exchange, and that the evil and the good exactly balance each other on the expenditure side.

There remains that addition of three crores to civil and military expenditure (excluding Exchange) in three years—a million a year. Now every allowance may be made for the loss of revenue due to the famine, to the sudden if temporary loss of Opium Revenue, but that three crores remains a striking witness to the fact that however disastrous the times, be it through a fall in exchange or be it through a widespread famine, Indian Civil and Military expenditure continues to increase faster than the revenues, even when aided from time to time by fresh taxation. No amount of explanation and excuse can absolve the Government of India from the charge of persistently living beyond its normal and regular income.

The evidence of financial weakness disclosed by these figures is further emphasized by a consideration of the balancing of the account. During the three years there has been a change from a surplus of Rx. 693,100 to a deficit of Rx. 2,464,000, or a deterioration of Rx. 3,157,100, *although the cost of the famine has been almost covered by a diminished cost of Exchange*. Nor is this all. Even in 1894-5 the surplus was largely fictitious, as the provincial governments had been obliged to meet more than half a million of expenditure by reducing their balances—this means that whatever the Imperial Government was doing, the Provincial Governments were living beyond their incomes. But in 1897-8, this mischievous expedient is carried further; the provincial balances are to be reduced by Rx. 1,190,000 during the year. Apart from this "provincial adjustment," to give it its technical name, the real change in the financial position is from a surplus of Rx. 132,300 to a deficit of Rx. 3,654,000 or a deterioration of over three and three-quarter millions.

FINANCES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

III. SURPLUS OR DEFICIT.

	1894-5 (Accounts). Rx.	1897-8 (Budget). Rx.	Better (+) or Worse (-). Rx.
Net Revenue	62,154,200	61,183,000	-971,200
Net Expenditure	61,021,900	64,837,000	-2,815,100
Surplus (+) or Deficit (-)	+132,300	-3,654,000	-3,786,300
Add Drawings from Provincial Balances }	560,800	1,190,000	—
Net Surplus (+) or Deficit (-) }	+693,100	-2,464,000	-3,157,100

The fact, however, which overshadows all others is this: That in years of financial stress and calamitous famine Indian civil and military expenditure (excluding exchange) increases at the average rate of a crore of rupees a year, outstripping as it has done these last twelve years both the natural increase in the revenues and the additions due to fresh taxation. Explanations matter nothing. No sane man charges the Indian Government with dishonesty or with reckless extravagance. But making every possible allowance for misfortune and accepting as fact every allegation of usefulness in the growing expenditure, it is impossible to believe that there is any real strength in the Indian financial position, or that a constant tendency to live beyond one's means can be fraught with anything but grave peril for a government persisting in such a course.

THE FAMINE AND THE FINANCES OF INDIA.

BY W. M. J. WILLIAMS.

The Famine, the Plague, and the Earthquake—these have been three all-sufficient reasons why India could not jubilate this year. These, however, seem to be quite insufficient to make Indian officials depart from their habit of writing as though most things were *couleur de rose*. True the famine appears prominently in the Financial Statement recently placed before the Government by Sir James Westland, but a buoyant tone pervades the whole, and this is even detected in the figures submitted to the whole world. Yet the famine figures published as late as July 14 last, nearly four months later than the presentation of the Financial Statement to the Viceroy in Council, are of a most serious aspect. Bombay, at this last report, had on *gratuitous* relief, in addition to the great crowds on relief works, as many as 45,565: Madras, 136,714; Bengal, 403,999; N.-W. Provinces, 406,977; Punjab, 11,404; Central Provinces, 110,683; Burma, 1,314; and Berar, 6,659.

"Including Native States (says the report) numbers on relief 3,303,968 against 4,240,337 last month. Up to June 25th ordinary monsoon conditions appeared well established. Agricultural operations had generally commenced and numbers on relief were declining. West coast monsoon then died away, and, excepting scattered showers, weather throughout the country has been fine. Burma still receives good rain. Good rain is now falling again on west coast to the south of Bombay and in Mysore, and fair rain has fallen last three days throughout Central Provinces and parts Bengal and N.-W. Provinces. Bombay, Deccan, and Madras still without rain. If there is renewed advance of the monsoon now damage will not have been very great, but present situation serious in districts where sowings on large scale have been made. Elsewhere sowing operations suspended and persons returning to relief works. Great scarcity of fodder felt in Bombay, Madras, Haidarabad, Berar, and parts of Central Provinces. Prices are rising, but not rapidly . . . grain supplies sufficient generally for three months, except Betal, Bhandara, and other isolated tracts in Central Provinces and elsewhere."

However gratifying it is to perceive any—the slightest—improvement, it is obvious that the position is still one of the gravest anxiety. All over the country some alleviations are known, but all over the country also, as the above figures show, great crowds are being kept and fed at the public expense. The

anxiety about the monsoon, which the above telegram shows, will have been in great part relieved since, for have we not heard of the rains and plentiful rains? For our present purpose, however, it is sufficient to notice the fact that the Financial Statement had been submitted before this relief could have been foreseen, when it was only the desire of hard-driven officials.

The following is the official summary of the current cycle of accounts of Revenue and Expenditure.

THE ACCOUNTS OF 1895-6.

Revenue—

	Revised Estimates.	Accounts.
India	Rx. 97,509,000	97,977,005
England	£210,300	223,417
Exchange	Rx. 158,600	169,745
TOTAL ..	Rx. 97,877,900	98,370,167

Expenditure—

India—Imperial, Provincial and Local ..	Rx. 69,003,000	68,998,722
Adjustments of Provincial and Local ..	Rx. +383,000	+379,109
NET ..	69,386,000	69,377,831
England	£15,701,000	15,603,370
Exchange	Rx. 11,838,600	11,854,968
	96,926,500	96,856,169
SURPLUS ..	Rx. 951,400	1,533,998

The surplus of Rx. 1,533,998 thus shown on the closed accounts of 1895-6 is not by itself very important, though it may be observed that taking the years 1884-5 to 1894-5 together the surpluses and deficits of the period show a *surplus* balance of Rx. 465,326. The surplus for 1895-6 does become significant when we look at it in connexion with the following two summaries.

THE REVISED ESTIMATE OF 1896-7.

Revenue—

	Budget.	Revised.
India	Rx. 97,316,800	93,273,600
England	£174,100	319,400
Exchange	Rx. 129,800	210,800
TOTAL ..	Rx. 97,620,700	93,803,800

Expenditure—

India—Imperial, Provincial and Local ..	Rx. 70,274,900	70,659,400
Adjustments of Provincial and Local ..	Rx. —886,400	—1,228,500
NET ..	69,388,500	69,428,900
England	£15,909,400	15,880,600
Exchange	Rx. 11,859,700	10,481,200
TOTAL ..	Rx. 97,157,600	95,790,700
Surplus (+) Deficit (—)	Rx. +463,100	—1,986,900

Here is an estimate worse by Rx. 2,450,000 than that originally submitted, an estimate which converts an estimated *surplus* of Rx. 463,100 into an estimated *deficit* of Rx. 1,986,900. But it is necessary to remember that this also is but an estimate and we cannot hope that the account will be an improvement upon it. The Revenue shows a decline upon the original estimate of no less than Rx. 3,817,000, which, however, has been balanced in some measure by the rise in the rate of exchange which the Budget had taken at 13½d., but which averaged about 14½d. the rupee. The final result is a deficit of about two crores.

In this state of things Sir James Westland's faith is equal to setting forth the *Budget Estimate* for 1897-8, as follows:—

Revenue—

	1896-7	1897-8
India	Rx. 97,316,800	95,389,000
England	£174,100	173,000
Exchange	Rx. 129,800	114,200
TOTAL ..	97,620,000	95,676,800

Expenditure—

India—Imperial, Provincial and Local ..	Rx. 70,274,900	72,623,900
Adjustments of Provincial and Local ..	Rx. —886,400	—1,190,000
NET ..	Rx. 69,388,500	71,433,900
England	£15,909,400	16,088,500
Exchange	Rx. 11,859,700	10,618,400
TOTAL ..	Rx. 97,157,600	98,140,800
SURPLUS ..	Rx. 463,100	—2,464,400

This shows a system of account-keeping which throws the burden of finding a balance on Providence. It is also somewhat lacking in simplicity and directness. It should be observed that in this Budget Estimate for 1897-8 the comparison is between the original Budget Estimate of 1896-7 which showed a *surplus* of Rx. 463,100, instead of with the revised estimate for the same year which shows a *deficit* of Rx. 1,986,900. Such a proceeding is very hazardous and time only can show whether the Indian Finance department was warranted in departing from the true basis of estimating, viz., the result of the previous year. But let it be noted that the revised estimate for 1896-7 looked to a *deficit* of Rx. 1,986,900, and now again the Budget Estimate for 1897-8 looks for another of Rx. 2,464,400.

But here emerges the indomitable optimism, (or a quality which might be denoted by a less euphonious term) of Indian officialdom. We have seen the last report of the Famine and the crowds which must be dependent on the public funds for a long season yet. The official however is bent upon an amelioration of the position, and from a subjective point of view much may be said in favour of such an attitude, though it may be also necessary to remember the tradition that a British official is superior to a Hebrew prophet in that he can contemplate a future

for five minutes or so and yet not confuse it with the present. These estimates however make a rush out of the famine condition, and if the revenue does not improve rapidly, nay, at once, and come up to this tabular expectation, so much the worse for Providence, for it ought. And yet progressive governments in modern times are not conducted so, when they are successful financially. How necessary it is to recollect this in the present case may be shown from two or three facts. There is the direct expenditure in famine relief amounting to Rx. 2,000,000, in 1896-7, the Revenue under several heads in 1896-7 fell seriously, e.g., Land Revenue Rx. 2,432,100, Railway Revenue Rx. 1,420,000, the Opium brought in Rx. 508,600 less and is still falling, and only the rise in Exchange can be put against all this. It is admitted that in 1897-8 the Famine Relief will cost Rx. 3,641,200, and that the loss on Opium will be Rx. 1,079,100. Still more, the capital expenditure is still going on and the Budget estimate does not really disclose the nakedness of the land. For instance, it has now been arranged that the Secretary for India shall not draw for all the Home Charges, but that he shall raise a sterling *Loan* of £3,500,000 by issuing India Stock, and also a temporary loan of £2,000,000. In addition to this, it is proposed to raise a loan in Rupees in India amounting to Rx. 4,000,000. In short, the result on a balance will be that an addition to the debt will be created during the year amounting to Rx. 8,000,000 or so. That is to say, this roseate Budget estimate is based on a rapid improvement of the economic and social condition in India, to be realised within the fiscal year, but even then the position indicated by the tables put forward is got by a process of cancellarial legerdemain by quietly dropping the humdrum and costly process of paying debt, and by the much more easily achieved process of adding some Rx. 8,000,000 to the capital of the debt. There is not among our readers one who does not heartily desire a very speedy resumption of prosperity in India, but nothing is gained by an ingenious covering up of ugly facts such as the above. A brave show is made of an apparent slight decrease in army expenditure. We should be thankful even for an appearance of virtue; this however is an estimate and will the reduction be a fact when the accounts are closed? Of a certainty there is a problem requiring courage and, indeed, hope before those who undertake the administration of Indian affairs; nor can the recent eruptions in certain districts make the task less onerous. In such a position is it too much to expect an increase of candour in the presentation of Indian affairs, both to the native Indian and the despised home reader? It will be better in every way, better for those who so ingeniously and cleverly contrive the accounts now so wonderfully made up, better because the ingenuity is futile and wasted, and better because the governed ones will thereby increasingly learn to place full confidence in those who govern them.

Mr. Alfred Webb, formerly President of the Indian National Congress, contributed to the *Weekly Freeman* (Dublin) of July 17, a valuable article upon the present position in India.

CALCUTTA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION.

The following Memorandum has been forwarded to the Secretary of State for India by the Indian Parliamentary Committee:—

To the Right Honourable Lord GEORGE HAMILTON,
her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for
India, India Office, S.W.

MY LORD,—The Indian Parliamentary Committee desire to submit, for the earnest consideration of your Lordship in Council, the accompanying Memorandum on the proposals of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal for altering the constitution of the Calcutta Municipality so as to strengthen the power of the Executive and curtail the authority of the Commissioners. The question is one which excites great interest in Calcutta, and the proposals of the Bengal Government appear open to serious objection.

The Calcutta Municipal Corporation consists of a Chairman and 75 Commissioners, of whom 15 are nominated by Government, 10 are elected by various public bodies, and the remaining 50 are elected by the resident ratepayers of the town. The people of Calcutta are strongly attached to this municipal constitution, under which all interests and classes are fairly represented, and important sanitary improvements have been made.

It will be seen from the Memorandum that the present proposal of the Government would withdraw from the Commissioners in Meeting the right to appoint the higher officials of the Municipality; and (a matter of still greater importance) it would abolish the supervision now exercised by the Commissioners over the proceedings of the Executive. Municipal affairs in Calcutta are at present under the control of a representative body, mainly elected by the ratepayers. Under the new scheme they would pass into the hands of an irresponsible nominee of the Government.

It is urged that the scheme merely proposes to introduce into Calcutta a system which is already in force in Bombay. But that would be a retrograde step. There are serious defects in the Bombay Municipal Act, against which protests have been made from time to time since its enactment. It is precisely similar defects that the Bengal Government now seeks to impose upon Calcutta.

For these reasons, which are more fully set forth in the Memorandum, the Parliamentary Committee desire to express an earnest hope that your Lordship will take the necessary steps to prevent the new proposals from coming into force.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your obedient Servant,

W. WEDDERBURN.

Chairman, Indian Parliamentary Committee.

House of Commons,

July 15, 1897.

MEMORANDUM.

The Calcutta Municipality is perhaps the most important representative body in India entrusted with the management of local affairs. It received its present constitution, with slight modifications to

which reference will presently be made, under Act IV. of 1876. This Act was again amended by Act II. of 1888. Both under the Act of 1876 and the Act of 1888, two-thirds of the members of the Calcutta Municipality were to be elected by the ratepayers. Under the earlier enactment the remaining one-third used to be nominated by the Government. The Act of 1888 represented an advance upon this state of things. Instead of one-third of the members being nominated by the Government, the Act provided that only one-fifth of the members (15 out of 75) should be nominated by the Government, and that of the remaining ten, four were to be elected by the Chamber of Commerce, four by the Calcutta Trades' Association, and two by the Commissioners for making improvements in the port of Calcutta (Section 8 of Act II. of 1888, B.C.). Both under the Act of 1876 and the Act of 1888 the Government reserved to itself the power of appointing a proper person to be the Chairman or the chief executive officer of the Corporation. The Chairman of the Corporation has always been a member of the Covenanted Civil Service. Practically, therefore, the present constitution of the Calcutta Municipality has been in force for the last twenty years, and on the whole has been attended with very good results. It will not be, perhaps, altogether out of place to quote the opinions of two or three high official authorities, with a view to show that the administration of the municipal affairs of Calcutta by the elected Commissioners working under the present constitution has been highly successful, both from a financial and from a sanitary point of view. In 1885 a Commission, appointed by Government to report upon the sanitary condition of Calcutta, observed with regard to the work done by the elected Municipality:—

"ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF WORK DONE.—Before proceeding, however, to detail the results of our enquiries into these matters, and to set forth the conclusions at which we have arrived, we think it right that we should in this place acknowledge and place prominently on record the improvements that have been carried out in the town during the past few years. If much still remains to be done—if the sanitary condition of the town is not yet such as we should like to see it—is, on the other hand, a mistake to suppose that the Commissioners have been idle during the past few years, and that they have altogether neglected the trust that has been reposed in them by the Legislature. On the contrary, our inspections have satisfied us that real and solid progress has been made in the path of sanitary improvement, and it is, as we conceive, our duty to report this fact to the head of the Government from whom we derive our Commission. One of our body, Mr. Beverley, can speak from personal experience on this matter. In 1876, shortly before the present municipal constitution came into being, Mr. Beverley was charged with the duty of taking a census of the town, and in the course of these operations, there was almost no part of the town that he did not visit. In 1880, again, he acted as a Chairman of the Corporation for upwards of seven months; and in the following year he was again employed to take a census of the town. Mr. Beverley is thus in a position to compare the state of the town at the present day with what it was eight and four years ago respectively, and it gives him great pleasure to be able to place on record his personal testimony as to the great improvements that have been made, more especially within the latter period. That these improvements have benefitted the town from a sanitary point of view, cannot, we think, admit of doubt, though the fact may not be capable of easy demonstration from the mortuary returns. Whether the sanitary improvement has been as great and as rapid as it might have been—whether the Corporation have done all that they might have done with the

means at their disposal, and whether they have carried out their improvements as expeditiously as possible—are, of course, large questions, upon which room may exist for a difference of opinion. We think it sufficient to say that we are agreed that there has been great and solid improvement."

And, again, the Commission observed:—

"DETAILS OF IMPROVEMENTS EFFECTED.—Holding this opinion as we do, it may not unfairly be expected that we should set out in some detail the particular improvements to which we refer; and we venture to think that this course will be attended with considerable advantage. Calcutta covers an area of about eight square miles, and few of its European residents at any rate are intimately acquainted with the northern portion of the town. Still fewer, perhaps, are acquainted with the history of the town and of its sanitary condition in the past. Persons read a description of some noxious bustie or tank in the Health Officer's reports, and are amazed to find that the entire city is not like Chowringhee and Dalhousie Square. Ignorant or forgetful of what Calcutta was no longer than twenty or thirty years ago, they perhaps jump to the conclusion that the insanitary conditions brought to notice are due to laxity of administration on the part of the present Corporation, instead of being to a great extent the legacy of past neglect. For the information of such persons, then, we think it will be useful to indicate in some detail, without going into minute particulars, some of the principal improvements that have been effected within the last few years."

The Hon. Mr. Colman Macaulay, late Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal, thus observed from his place in the Bengal Legislative Council, in 1888, when the Bill amending the Act of 1876 was being considered:—

"To guard against misunderstanding, I wish to state my distinctive opinion that the working of the elective system in Calcutta has been a decided success. I cannot agree with my hon. friend, Sir Henry Harrison, in thinking that if we were beginning to legislate for an elective system we might take the Hon. Mr. Irving's proposal for electing only one-half. I think that, looking to the experience we have had of the working of the system as a whole, we should be fully justified, were we in the position of our predecessors, the legislators of 1876, in taking the proportion of two-thirds elected by the ratepayers. For this reason I will certainly oppose my friend the Hon. Mr. Irving's amendment. The elective system has brought forward men like my friend the Hon. Babu Kally Nath Mitter, men of ability and business habits, who have done excellent service to the community, and I think that all friends of self-government must rejoice that these men owe their positions, not to the voice of nomination, but to the suffrages of their fellow-townsmen." (4th February, 1888.)

There was no higher authority upon the municipal affairs of Calcutta than the late Sir Henry Harrison, who was for a number of years Chairman of the Corporation and the author of the amending Act of 1888, which it is now proposed to amend. This is what he said in 1888:—

"In the first place, by the elective system we have attracted to the Corporation a number of Commissioners who have taken the greatest possible interest in the work—Commissioners who have been most assiduous in their attendance at meetings—who have looked into matters with care and scrutiny such as is hardly found in any other department. They have set their face resolutely against all extravagance; they have thrown the light of discussion on every detail. In fact, it has led to the administration of the Municipality being carried on much more in the light of day than it would have been as far as other members are concerned. On questions of contracts and expenditure in detail, they have paid an attention to the work which was hardly paid before. In the next place, the system has had the advantage of bringing in a number of men who owe their position entirely to something outside Government, not to nomination. They feel that they depend for their position on those who have returned them, and who naturally look to them to represent their views, and therefore they bring

with them the light of real public opinion of a certain class—a comparatively small class in numbers, but a very influential class indeed—and it has been a great advantage that we should have the opinion of a class of this kind pressed upon us, so that we know what they want and what they object to. Thirdly, we have persons who represent local areas. This has led to many good results. Previously the town was looked upon very much as a whole, and the wants of the town as a whole were considered. Now the desire for large improvements has decreased, and the Commissioners are more interested in local wants. This has to some extent worked well, and the large increase in the value of property is in no small degree due to the way in which local improvements have been attended to. Fourthly, the elective system has been successful in this, that people know that they have a Commissioner who represents them, and when they have a complaint, if it is not immediately attended to by the Executive, they appeal to get the assistance of their Commissioner. This has some beneficial results; it causes some degree of self-reliance in the people when they know that they have someone to whom they can go if they do not get immediate redress. The last and most important result is this. The elected Commissioners, who have taken so much interest in the affairs of the Municipality, have themselves improved much by experience in the work. I have seen very great improvement in the tone and method and manner of doing work by the Commissioners who have become familiarised with their labours. In this review I think that I have given a very fair account of the work of the elective Commissioners; but after all is said, is not the rôle which I have described precisely the rôle of opposition? We all know that administrative affairs suffer if there is no effective check; and, whether we look at the official world as it exists in India, or at the Government as it is in England, worked by party, it is a well-recognised fact that, if there is no adequate check, there is danger either of the work going on too fast, or there is danger of its not being as economical as it might be. The rôle which the elective Commissioners for the native wards had at once assumed is precisely that of checking, watching and controlling in every way, in seeing either that no expenditure is incurred without sufficient reason, or that projects of improvement are not undertaken which cannot fully be justified." (*4th February, 1883.*)

Since the Corporation has been constituted upon a popular basis it has spent Rs. 24,702,357 upon works of sanitation, and yet its financial position is so assured, and its credit has so improved, that whereas before 1891 it could borrow only at the rate of 5 per cent., it now borrows at the rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

It is now proposed by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, to alter the constitution with a view to strengthen the Executive and to diminish the authority of the Commissioners. No complaint has ever been made that the Executive was weak; and it is remarkable that when the Act came up for amendment in 1888, the member in charge of the Bill, who was the Head of the Executive of the Corporation and had the largest experience as its Head, did not think it necessary to alter the Act upon the lines now suggested. It is proposed to assimilate the Calcutta Municipal Act to the Bombay Municipal Act. If the statute-book were a *tabula rasa*, upon which the legislator might inscribe what he liked, there might have been less objection to the procedure. But the people of Bengal have a legitimate grievance when they find a law which had, on the whole, worked well replaced by what must be regarded, in relation to the Calcutta Municipal Act, as a retrograde enactment. In illustration of this remark, one or two facts may be cited. Under the Bombay Municipal Act, the Head of the Executive, or Municipal Commissioner, as he is called,

appoints all officers of the Corporation except the Deputy-Commissioner, the Executive Health Officer, the Engineer, and the Municipal Secretary. With the exception of the Municipal Secretary, who is appointed by a Standing Committee, the other officers named above are appointed by the Corporation. Under the Calcutta Municipal Act, all officers drawing a salary of Rs. 200 a month and under are appointed by the Chairman (the Head of the Executive). In respect of appointments carrying a salary of over Rs. 200 a month and below Rs. 500 a month, the Chairman nominates three persons and the Commissioners appoint one of them; the Commissioners cannot appoint anyone except from among the persons nominated by the Chairman. All appointments carrying a salary of Rs. 500 and upward are made by the Commissioners in meeting. The Calcutta Commissioners as a body have thus, in regard to their appointments, much more authority than that which the Bombay Corporation possesses. The result has been that a large number of Indian gentlemen fill the more responsible offices in the Municipality. If the Lieutenant-Governor's proposals were given effect to, and the Acts assimilated to the Bombay Act, the power possessed by the Calcutta Corporation in this respect would be withdrawn. Then, again, under the Calcutta Municipal Act, the Corporation exercises a general power of supervision over the proceedings of the Executive; and the Executive is held responsible to the Commissioners. The Bombay Act does not provide for this general power of supervision. The Head of the Executive is independent of the Corporation in many respects. If anything, this is a defect in the Bombay Act. Where there is financial control and responsibility, all other kinds of control should follow as a matter of course. In Bombay it was an Indian medical practitioner, who was a member of the Corporation, who first brought the occurrence of plague cases to the notice of the Executive, who, however, did not take adequate notice of the matter for some little time.

The serious change of the law which is proposed is altogether independent of any apprehension with regard to the outbreak of the plague in Calcutta. As a matter of fact the plague has broken out in Bombay, where the Executive is strong; it has not broken out in Calcutta, where the Executive is supposed to be weak. To meet the crisis caused by the plague, a Medical Board has been appointed in supersession of the Municipality. As this is only a temporary organisation which has been devised to meet a temporary emergency, not much can be said for or against it. But what is objected to is that the constitution of the Municipality should be permanently altered for the worse, when as a matter of fact the plague has not broken out in Calcutta, and when the Municipality has been relieved of all responsibility in regard to the plague by the formation of a distinct body, the Medical Board, which is to direct all preventive measures in connexion with the plague. It may possibly be argued that without denying that the existing system has worked well, and that much improvement has taken place in Calcutta and its suburbs since popular control has

been introduced, still admittedly a good deal remains to be done—perfection has by no means been attained; and the Government may be right in asserting that the weakness of the Executive of which they complain is chiefly responsible for this, and that the strengthening of the Executive, which they now contemplate, may very probably expedite those further improvements which are admittedly desiderata. What, however, are the facts? For nearly a hundred years the entire control of the administration of Calcutta rested with the Executive, and the result of this was that Mr. (now Sir) J. Strachey declared Calcutta to be the filthiest and most insanitary city in the world, a permanent source of danger to the Province, and a disgrace to any civilised Government. It was then gradually realised that some popular element must be introduced into the administration of the city—that the people who with their families had to live, and most of them sooner or later to die, there must have a really potential voice in the management of affairs in which their interests were paramount; and in view to carry out this reform, the Municipal Acts which have worked so well were passed. It is to give greater powers to the Executive that the Bengal Government now propose to modify these Acts. And why. Because, despite the constant efforts of the Commissioners, they have not in twenty years been able entirely to repair the errors of omission and commission with which the former unchecked Executive had afflicted the city and converted it into a pest-house. In other words, instead of moving forwards and increasing the strength of the popular element to which all progress has been due, it is proposed to diminish this and revive to a certain extent the autocratic power of the Executive. Properly understood, the argument is too absurd to be seriously considered; and all who wish the people of Calcutta well, and all who have any care for the credit of British rule, will strenuously oppose this retrograde proposal.

The following reply to the above memorandum has been received by the Chairman of the Indian Parliamentary Committee:

"India Office, Whitehall, London, S.W.
"July 26, 1897.

"SIR,—I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 15 July, 1897, concerning proposals, which you describe, for reforming the Calcutta Municipality.

"In reply, I am directed to state that no report on these proposals, and no copy of a Bill for amending the Calcutta Municipality Act has as yet reached the Secretary of State for India. He will, however, make enquiry, and when such report or Bill reaches him, Lord George Hamilton will give due weight to the remarks contained in your letter and its enclosure.

"I am, Sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"Sir Wm. Wedderburn, M.P."

"A. GODLEY.

Sir W. Wedderburn has given notice of motion as follows:—East India (Village Enquiries).—That, looking to the grievous sufferings endured by the people of India during the present year, this House is of opinion that a detailed and searching Village Enquiry should be instituted, in order to ascertain the causes which blight the industry of the cultivators and render them helpless to resist even the first attacks of famine and pestilence.

THE QUEEN AND HER INDIAN SUBJECTS.

SPEECH BY MR. JUSTICE RANADE.

ON Tuesday afternoon, June 22—the day, it will be remembered, of the assassinations at Poona—the Principal and the Professors of Elphinstone College, Bombay, gave an "At Home" to past and present Elphinstonians by way of celebrating the Diamond Jubilee. We reprint from the *Times of India* of June 25 the following admirable speech delivered on the occasion by that distinguished Indian and Congress-wallah, Mr. Justice Ranade:—

"The Hon. Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade said: Mr. Principal and Professors, Ladies, and Fellow-students,—The only claim I have to speak at this gathering on behalf of the students both old and new is that I am perhaps the oldest Elphinstonian present here to-day, having joined the College nearly forty years ago. If not the oldest, I can certainly claim to be one who stayed longest within these walls; for, as student and as teacher, I was associated with the College for nearly fourteen years, with one slight interruption. There are times, ladies and gentlemen, when our hearts are too full to permit of our giving adequate expression to the feelings which move us. This is just one of those occasions when all over the world, and notably in this country, in all our towns and villages, as well as in these busy Presidency centres, there is one central dominating idea exciting the imagination of millions in a way that cannot be easily compared to any similar event in our past history. Of course our past history furnishes parallels of Sovereigns ruling over vast territories for more than half a century, and ruling over many millions of subjects with beneficence and wisdom. But nowhere except in the remotest part of mythical story was there a commemoration so unique and universal as that which we witness before our eyes, not merely in the British Isles, but in all the great colonies and dependencies, in the four great continents, which own allegiance to the rule of our Empress-Queen. As students of history we should try to understand what lies at the root of all this wonderful manifestation of the devotion of millions and millions of men of all creeds and races to a ruler whom they perchance have never seen and will never see. Mere length of life cannot explain this phenomenon, for after all long life is an accidental advantage which it is not given to man to command. The possession of power and of a world-wide empire by itself, whatever fear it might inspire, can never succeed in winning the hearts of millions over whom that power is exercised. There is something deeper than these possessions and accidents which at the present time have thrown a spell over all of us, and brought us together here to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of her Majesty's reign. There is a moral element at the base of all this display of force, and it is the triumph of this moral principle which alone has the power to move the hearts of millions in one unison of loyal and grateful sentiment. The Queen-Empress typifies in her person the ascendancy of the reign of law in all departments of State activity. Herself a woman, she sits enthroned as the responsible head of the mightiest empire the world has yet known, and her personal character has enabled her to realize her responsibility as a constitutional ruler in a way which no mere paper constitutions, however skillfully framed, can ever secure. Some of you might think that after all law is but the expression of the Sovereign's will, and there is nothing in such an expression of the Sovereign's will which differentiates it in degree or kind from other expressions of her will which we distinguish as orders and rules meant for executive convenience. To those who feel this difficulty I would suggest that they should turn their eyes inside into the recesses of their own hearts and see, if they can, if there is any law which is enthroned in their own hearts with authority if not power to rule over their own multifarious nature, passions, appetites, loves, hatred. Their weakness is greatest when they yield obedience to these lower powers and disown the command of the law imprinted on their hearts. Their strength is irresistible when they regulate and subordinate their faculties and possessions to the rule of the Sovereign law enthroned in their hearts. The difference between man and man is a difference between obedience and disobedience to

this law. What is true of the individual is if possible still more true in the case of collective bodies of men known as nations and empires. The British nation has its own faults and foibles, but there can be no question that in spite of these faults and foibles their national character has been formed by ages of struggle and self-discipline in a world which illustrates better than any other contemporary power the supremacy of what I have characterized as the reign of law. Just as in the individual the will when counselled and perfected by discipline and struggle becomes the law for the man who listens to it, so in the collective nation it is when the Sovereign's will is similarly counselled and perfected by the advice of the estates and the free expression of public opinion becomes the dominant power in the land to which every other subordinate power has to yield obedience, and which it has to carry out ungrudgingly. This is the secret of the moral force which sanctifies the sway of Britain over one-fifth of the globe and its entire population. In the absence of such a discipline mere power and fortune has a tendency to make men feel giddy till oftentimes their very greatness helps to precipitate them into ruin. It is this moral principle which is the source of British greatness and its armour and protection. It is also this same moral element which inspires hope and confidence in the colonies and dependencies of Great Britain that whatever temporary perturbations may cloud the judgment the reign of law will assert itself in the end. The long reign of her Majesty has tended to strengthen the hold of this principle on the national mind, and her great personal ascendancy is never so keenly appreciated as when she announces her determination to hold fast to this source of strength and to sympathise with the weaknesses, sorrows and sufferings of all her subjects. There have been in our own country good and beneficent sovereigns, but their good and beneficent work dies with them. It is otherwise where impersonal law presides and rules over the destinies of men. There are of course ebbs and tides and temporary disturbances and even storms, but these only serve to bring into greater relief the calm majesty of the law overriding power and possession more especially when this law is administered by the womanly instincts of one who has known sorrow and affliction herself. This is the moral secret of the charm which has endeared her name to millions and millions who have never seen her. This is why all the colonies and dependencies join with the British Isles in this commemoration, and this is the lesson which on an occasion like this I would ask the students of this college to take with them as the memory of an event which cannot fail to be remembered as a red-letter day in our country's annals. On behalf of the students I have great pleasure in thanking the Principal and Professors of the College for their kindness in inviting us all to take part in this commemorative gathering, and I hope such occasions will be far more frequent than they have hitherto been." (Loud cheers.)

INTERFERENCE WITH NATIVE DOMESTIC CUSTOM.

The native newspapers only expressed the general feeling in stating that never since the establishment of British rule had there been so widespread an attempt to interfere with native domestic custom. This feeling found its wild outburst in the resolve to assassinate the chief officers charged with the task of stamping out the plague in Poona. A Hindu of good caste prefers death itself to an irretrievable breach of caste and to the loss of the purifying funeral rites, which, in his imagination, is involved by removal to a hospital. So far as Lord Sandhurst's statements enable us to judge the officials perfectly appreciated this feeling and did their utmost to assuage it. By associating the search parties with lady-doctors, with Hindu's of good caste, and with responsible European officers, they endeavoured to give every guarantee that legitimate prejudices would be respected in the execution of a harsh duty. But the duty had to be done if the plague was to be kept under control. It is one of those painful conflicts which must from time to time arise between the dictates of modern humanity and the traditions of Hindu life. On two former occasions—the abolition of widow burning and the suppression of infanticide—the same conflict arose. But in those days there were no telegraphic agencies or special correspondents, and the local opposition received neither countenance nor support from the outside world.—*The Times* ("Indian Affairs"), July 19.

NOTICE TO OUR READERS.

WEEKLY ISSUE

OF

"INDIA."

We have the pleasure to announce that on and after Friday, January 7th, of next year (1898) INDIA will be published weekly.

The Annual Subscription in India will continue to be six rupees (Rs. 6) post free.

It is hoped that by this important change the usefulness of the journal as an advocate of constitutional reform will be greatly increased and that, arriving in India by every mail, and bringing the latest news from London, the journal will appeal to a much larger number of readers than is likely to be reached by a monthly publication.

Further particulars will be given later. Meantime it is hoped that readers of INDIA will make known to their friends the proposed change by which, without any increase of the Indian subscription, 52 weekly issues will be substituted for 12 monthly issues.

NOTICES.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.

The Editor of INDIA cannot hold himself responsible in any case for the return of MS. He will, however, always be glad to consider any contributions which may be submitted to him; and when postage stamps are enclosed every effort will be made to return rejected contributions promptly.—Address: Editor of INDIA, 84 and 85, PALACE CHAMBERS, WESTMINSTER, LONDON, S.W.

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Cheques and Post-office orders should be made payable to Mr. W. Douglas Hall.

Copies of INDIA can be obtained from the Offices of the Paper; from Mr. Elliott Stock, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON, E.C.; from Messrs. Deighton, Bell and Co., TRINITY STREET, CAMBRIDGE; and to order at any Railway Bookstall.

TO ADVERTISERS.

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INDIA.

LONDON, AUGUST, 1897.

WANTED: A JUDICIAL ENQUIRY.

LITTLE by little one is coming to learn the marks of the true Imperialist. Even the average man occasionally permits himself a *non sequitur*, and becomes the victim of groundless fears. Your true Imperialist, it would seem, raises these errors to the rank of a political system, founded upon the capacity of rushing to conclusions and losing one's head. We have lately had an object-lesson in this system on the grand scale. Two British officers, engaged in stamping out the plague in Poona, are assassinated. A week later there is a riot in a suburb of Calcutta. One would have thought that in these circumstances the business of statesmanship was carefully to ascertain the circumstances which had led up to two separate occurrences in two widely sundered parts of India, to weigh all available evidence, and, when a reasonable conclusion had been obtained, to act with calmness and decision. But that is not your Imperialist's way. Is there assassination? Then the native Press is solely to blame. Is there a riot? Then we must abolish education in India. The riot and the assassination are promptly assumed not only to be due to one and the same cause, but also to be symptoms of general unrest. Thereupon the true Imperialist falls into a great panic, talks and writes about the imminence of a second Mutiny, clamours for repression on the instant, and, by way of smoothing matters a little, describes Indians as niggers and

tigers. So impatient is he, through mingled wrath and apprehension, that anybody who dares to speak of evidence is denounced as an insolent traitor, and anybody who hints that enquiry should precede coercive measures is stigmatised as a weakling ignorant of the maxims of statecraft. Needless to say, it is mere folly to argue with the Imperialist when the fit is upon him. The best treatment is to give him scope until his fever wears itself out, and then he may come to be a little ashamed of himself, a little distrustful of his hasty arrogance, and a little inclined to admit that evidence is not such a bad thing after all. There are signs that the Jingo Press in London is cooling down somewhat after the high fever which raged during the last week of June and the first fortnight of July. One hears rather less now of the proposal to gag the native Press in India, and to confound innocent and guilty in a common punishment. The anonymous traducer is, no doubt, still at work in the columns of the journal which owes so much to those twin pillars of literary Imperialism, Mr. Houston and Mr. Pigott. But on the whole the London Jingoese seem at last to be rather on the way to perceive that vituperation is not a good healer of unrest, that the trial should come before the verdict, and (especially, perhaps) that where the methods and the manner of a section of the Indian Press are in question, the English Press, from the *Daily Mail* upwards, does not set a good example if it abandons itself to an orgie of scurrility and unproved allegation.

We discuss the Chitpur riot elsewhere. Here we are concerned with a totally distinct matter—the murder of Mr. Rand and Lieutenant Ayerst at Poona, a cowardly and revolting crime as to which, if we may borrow the words of “Loyal Indian’s” admirable letter printed in the *Daily News* of July 2, “every friend of peace and order, be he Englishman or be he Indian, hopes that the perpetrators of the ‘foul deed will be hanged.’” So far it does not appear that any trustworthy clue to the assassin or the assassins has been obtained—a fact not devoid, perhaps, of a significance of its own. But a Reuter’s telegram dated Bombay, July 22, mentioned a report that “certain editors of the Poona papers” were to be tried at Bombay before the chief magistrate, whose departure for England on furlough had been suddenly cancelled, and that the Government contemplated offering a free pardon in return for the evidence of any one who was privy to the murders but not the actual perpetrator or instigator of them. This proposed trial of Indian journalists under the ordinary law, presumably for incitement to murder, is a sufficient answer to the short-sighted busybodies who, so soon as news of the crime reached London, rushed into print with a panacea for troubles in India in the form of a proposal to gag the press. The telegram of July 22 reminds us that, where an offence is proved, the Penal Code is capable of dealing with it. Whether the offence will be proved in the present instance is, of course, another matter. One can only say that the series of “elegant extracts” from the native press which were lately printed in the *Times*, and which were no doubt the most offensive passages that the zealous compiler could at the moment discover, came very

far short of incitement to murder though they undoubtedly contained extravagant and deplorable balderdash. If, however, articles have been printed in the Poona newspapers which bring their authors and publishers within the law, proof of the offence will be easy, and the punishment will not be, as it ought not to be, lacking in severity. But the duty of the authorities in this matter will not end with the detection and the punishment of the murderers and the instigators of murder. It is imperative that full enquiry should be made into the circumstances which led up to the crimes, and especially into the detailed allegations which were made in the Poona memorial of May 10. The importance of this document, which we print on another page, is beyond question. If anybody believes that 2,000 of the citizens of Poona—Hindus and Muhammadans alike—and the presidents of the leading Hindu and Muhammadan associations in the Deccan, could be induced to unite in the presentation of a fictitious memorial to the Government of Bombay, he is capable of believing anything. The memorial was accompanied by detailed statements regarding each complaint, and these statements were signed by the persons aggrieved. This fact is specially important as some of the offences in respect of which complaint is made are such as to involve the sufferer in loss of caste. It is no small thing that the aggrieved parties should have testified personally to grievances which also meant profound and lasting disgrace. Certain writers in the London *Jingo* press have permitted themselves to describe the allegations brought against some of the British soldiers at Poona as anonymous. This is a piece of misapprehension, if it be not a piece of misrepresentation. It is "*Scrutator*" of the *Times* who is anonymous. The Poona complainants, both in the memorial and in the Poona newspapers, have given their names.

When Sir W. Wedderburn, in the House of Commons on July 1, called Lord George Hamilton's attention to the Poona memorial, Lord George expressed his confidence that Lord Sandhurst had been and was most careful to confine the action of the authorities to what was absolutely necessary for checking the plague and to show all possible consideration to the religious opinions and customs of the inhabitants. Lord George's confidence in this connexion is well merited, and we share it to the full. Lord Sandhurst, as we have testified on more than one occasion, has won golden opinions in Bombay as a just and sympathetic governor who is anxious to appreciate the wishes and sentiments of the people. For an illustration of his carefulness and tact one need not go further than the Blue-book on the plague which was issued a fortnight ago. There one sees Lord Sandhurst resisting, in the case of Bombay, certain drastic measures against the plague which the Government of India recommended and insisted upon without adequate knowledge of local difficulties. Lord Sandhurst wrote, for example, on February 12, to the Government of India:—

"Great difficulty has attended all attempts at the segregation of healthy inmates of infected houses hitherto made, and very limited success has been achieved. From the beginning of the outbreak of this disease it has been found that the native inhabitants of the city are very reluctant to leave their houses or to allow any member of their family afflicted with

the disease to be taken away. Indeed, their dread of the disease appears to be hardly so profound as their horror of being removed from their houses. They are far more easily moved by fear of the municipal and police authorities than by any realisation of the benefits that will accrue from a sensible course of action. It is estimated that not less than 300,000 persons have already fled from Bombay, moved so to do not only by fear of the plague, but quite as much if not more by an unfounded and unreasonable fear of what might happen to them at the hands of the police and municipal authorities were they to remain."

These remarks were provoked by the suggestion that the inmates of infected houses in Bombay should be removed to health camps in the open. It is worth noting that this strong measure was enforced in Poona, and that the Poona memorial complains of the hurrying of relatives and neighbours of plague patients to the segregation camps before they had made proper arrangements for the custody of property in their houses. The important point is, however, that the alarm observed by Lord Sandhurst in Bombay must have been greatly increased in Poona through the employment of European soldiers. In these circumstances there was abundant room, if not for offence, at least for misapprehension, for even the most devoted admirer of Tommy Atkins would hardly describe him as a model of thoughtfulness and tact. Now, we do not say that the Poona memorial and the complaints published in the Poona newspapers are proof that offences were committed, but we do say they are conclusive proof of a widespread belief that offences were committed, and that they constitute an irresistible case for full and impartial enquiry. The pity of it is that enquiry was not immediately undertaken. Lord George Hamilton stated on July 15 in reply to Sir W. Wedderburn that the Government of Bombay, on receipt of the memorial, directed Mr. Rand to report upon the allegations. That was a rather curious proceeding in view of the fact that the memorial was addressed to the Government of Bombay for the avowed reason that remonstrances addressed to the Plague Committee at Poona had produced no effect. There is also an odd discrepancy in the dates. The memorial was dated May 10. The Government of Bombay states that it was not received until May 21. Mr. Rand was shot at on June 22, but "the report was still incomplete at the time of his murder." We may add that on July 7 we learned by telegram from Poona that no reply of any kind had been received by the memorialists, and that, so far as the memorialists are aware, no enquiry was made with reference to their allegations. It is obvious that the matter cannot be allowed to rest here. Lord George Hamilton, it is true, telegraphed early in July to the Bombay Government for a "categorical reply" to each series of complaints, and on July 5 read to the House of Commons what he was pleased to call a "full reply." We analyse this remarkable document on another page. Here we need only observe that the epithet "full" was not applied to it by its authors, and is not likely to be applied to it by any candid reader. It appears from more than one of Lord George Hamilton's statements that the police are now enquiring into the "causes and circumstances" of the murders. But a police enquiry, necessary though it may be so far as it goes, is by no means adequate. What is wanted is

obviously a judicial enquiry, and the need for enquiry of this kind is immeasurably increased by the lapse of time since the presentation of the memorial. Let us not forget (i) that the memorial was dated six weeks, and is admitted to have been received by the Government of Bombay four weeks, before the assassinations took place, and (ii) that the memorialists had up to a fortnight ago received no reply. These, it seems to us, are facts of paramount importance, and the authorities here and in India will not meet the necessities of the case unless a strictly judicial enquiry is forthwith instituted.

THAT BLESSED WORD—"PRIVATION."

THE further papers regarding the Famine and the Relief Operations in India (No. III), which have recently been issued as a Parliamentary Blue-book, have a special interest as affording some tardy official information with respect to the mortality attendant upon the present famine. Doubtless the phrase "mortality attendant upon famine" is one which will commend itself to the officials, some of whom, though death-rates have been doubled and trebled, still strangely persist in asserting that there are only very few deaths from starvation—"directly or indirectly due to privation" practically represents the utmost in this connexion that official lips can bring themselves to pronounce. It may be well, therefore, to examine briefly the state of affairs disclosed by the Blue-book. In the Central Provinces the years 1894 and 1895 were very unhealthy. In each of those years there were 30,000 or 40,000 deaths in excess of the average for the ten years 1885-1894. The year 1896, however, shows an excess mortality of about 120,000 when compared with the two preceding bad years, or something like 150,000 deaths above the normal. The mean death-rate of the year reached the alarming figure of 49.05 *per mille*. Even for the early months of 1897 general figures are not available, but the figures for the districts of the Jubbulpore Division continue to be appallingly high. If one omits decimals, the following are the monthly death-rates *per mille per annum* from August, 1896, to February, 1897. In order to appreciate the magnitude of the figures, it should be remembered that in normal years the death-rate for these districts during these months ranges between thirty and forty, only occasionally and for a brief period reaching fifty or over.

DEATH-RATES *per mille per annum*.

District.	1896.				1897.		
	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.
Jubbulpore ..	91	97	89	61	59	107	83
Saugor ..	98	99	97	75	67	63	59
Damoh ..	129	138	129	94	70	64	52
Seoni ..	88	71	73	51	56	63	53
Mandla ..	140	108	72	42	48	46	85
Murwara ..	99	103	91	71	75	?	198

With regard to the Central Provinces, the Secretary of State for India sums up the position a few months ago in the following words:—

"The death rate in some parts of the Central Provinces was very high; I observe the monthly famine statement gives the 'deaths due directly or indirectly to the effects of privation'

in the whole of the Central Provinces as 4,886 during the month of January."

In the Jubbulpore district alone (the worst) the deaths from starvation were 2,052 for December, and 2,708 for January. In the Bilaspur district there were in February "four hundred and seventy-eight deaths from starvation . . . as compared 'with 160 in January.'" It is tolerably certain that all these figures are serious under-statements. How far they may be so vitiated one cannot say, but one cannot place much confidence in the completeness of reports which contain remarks of this character:—

"Deaths from starvation—Hoshangabad—None reported. Eighty-four deaths from privation" (at p. 75 of the Blue-book).

and again on the same page:—

"Narsinghpur.—Three hundred and ninety-six [*i.e.*, deaths from starvation] outside poor-houses. Number said to be exaggerated."

Said to be exaggerated!

And again:—"excluding deaths in poor-houses 'which cannot be described as 'from starvation.''" Yet it is just in the poor-houses that the wretched people, when they can reach them, come to die. It seems to us that these evasive distinctions between "privation" and "starvation" are all beside the mark. It is trifling with the question to display this sorry zeal for a misleading appearance of precision when the people are dying through famine in hundreds. But what can one expect when the highest officials of Government by their telegraphic orders to the district officers practically discountenance, and it would seem almost prohibit, the reporting of deaths as due to starvation? This refusal to see and recognise the worst, which has characterized the attitude of the Government of India from the beginning of the famine, is not creditable to the authorities concerned.

In the North-West Provinces the situation is quite as grave. The following figures taken from tables at pp. 92 and 203 of the Blue-book, show how heavy the mortality has been in some of the distressed districts during the three months of December, 1896, January and February, 1897:—

DEATH-RATE *per mille per annum*.

District	Three Months ending February, 1897.	Average Ten Years previous.	Excess Deaths per Million of Population.
Fatehpur ..	15.86	9.09	6,750
Banda ..	14.62	7.96	6,660
Hamirpur ..	14.02	8.69	5,330
Allahabad ..	10.37	6.99	3,470
Jhansi ..	14.37	8.39	5,960
Lucknow ..	10.40	7.57	2,830
Rai Bareilly ..	12.90	7.80	5,100
Hardoi ..	7.88	4.62	3,260

As the population of these eight districts was nearly six and a-half millions at the census of 1891, the figures given above represent an excess mortality during three months of 30,000 to 35,000 persons. In the month of February last, out of thirty-seven famine districts throughout the North-West Provinces, no fewer than seventeen showed a death-rate exceeding the normal by 50 per cent. and upwards, while in six of these the death-rate was more than double the normal. In the other provinces of

¹ Two months—December, 1896, and January, 1897.

India affected by the famine the death-rate up to January and February, 1897, was normal or below normal on the whole. But it is to be noted that in the distressed districts, even in those provinces which are enjoying an exceptionally healthy season, the mortality is above the normal; though perhaps not more so than might reasonably be expected in a time of famine. It is the unusually healthy conditions prevailing in other respects which produce this favourable result. Now, it is not contended that epidemic diseases are peculiarly prevalent in the North-West Provinces and in the Central Provinces. The question therefore arises, why has the death-rate in these two provinces reached such alarming proportions? To answer that in these two provinces distress has been most severe, does not get rid of the fact that the relief operations in these provinces have partially and in some cases seriously failed. There are two—and, so far as one can see, only two—alternative explanations of the fact. Either the severity of the famine is such that this high mortality is, humanly speaking, unavoidable; or the authorities, imperial or local or both, were wholly unprepared to meet a calamity for which they had been preparing for at least fifteen years, and of which they had had ample warning. In the first alternative it is obvious that the Government of India at the first egregiously under-estimated both the extent and the intensity of the present distress, a failure which could not fail to militate against a successful campaign with the famine. In the second alternative, the sole question is, Why were the Government unprepared? There is, of course, this wider question—how it comes about that the people of India are unable to withstand even the first assaults of famine. But whatever may be the causes underlying this phenomenon, there remains this unfortunate fact of the heavy mortality in the Central Provinces and the North-West Provinces, confronting the Government and calling for an explanation.

It is necessary to add a word or two about the famine statistics, and the method of their reluctant presentation. A perusal of the tables in the Blue-book leaves the impression that the officers of Government, whatever their gifts, have not the gift of clear expression. Anything more confusing and heterogeneous than the various tables of mortality sent in by different officers it is difficult to conceive. Sometimes the death-rate is calculated in one way, sometimes in another way; sometimes for the same place and period of time it appears to vary on different pages of the Blue-book; sometimes for different districts of the same province diverse periods of time are taken. In some places the figures are months behind the figures for other places. In some the comparison is made with a ten years' average, in others with the previous year, while in others a distinction is drawn between the distressed area in a district and the whole district. Nor are clerical blunders wanting. Thus on pages 24 and 29 there seems to be a hopeless muddle about the month to which certain figures refer. Is it November or December, 1896? or January, 1897? Presumably the month is December, 1896, though the figures are given in a return for January, 1897.

This reading involves the correction of "December" in a certain line to "November" in order to make sense. [And see p. 65.] And so forth, and so on. What one cannot understand is why there should be all this confusion and concealment, for that is what it seems to amount to. Apparently the Government of India receive the monthly death-rates from the various districts within six weeks. For instance, the figures for January in the Central Provinces are contained in a report dated 16 March. Why cannot all these returns be dealt with on one uniform plan and published in a form which would be intelligible to the public? What is wanted is very simple. A monthly return containing the following five columns would make everything clear:—(1) The name of the district; (2) The normal number of deaths for the month calculated from the average death-rate for the past ten years; (3) The actual number of deaths; (4) The number of deaths in excess of the normal; (5) Remarks. Unless the Government are bent on withholding the facts from the public one fails to see what possible objection there can be to such a return. If it be pleaded that the officials in India have not time to spare for such work, there would seem to be a two-fold answer. For the return which we have suggested might well take the place of many other elaborate and uninforming documents, and it might easily be compiled at the India Office from data that lie ready to hand.

NATIVE OPINION AND THE POONA OUTRAGE.

[FROM "THE TIMES."]

The arrival of the mail enables us to judge of the attitude of the Indian Press towards the recent murders at Poona. It is clear that for some months back certain Bombay native journals have used wildly-excited language in regard to the measures taken to stamp out the plague. A house-to-house visitation by Europeans, and their unavoidable intrusion on the privacy of women and the sanctity of domestic shrines in infected dwellings, could not be stripped of its terrors even by associating Indian gentlemen and English ladies in the harsh duty. Nor could any argument soften the pangs of parting with a wife or daughter forcibly carried off, by however humane hands, to a public hospital. The conflict between caste traditions and the imperative demands of public safety was sufficiently acute even in semi-European capitals like Calcutta and Bombay. In Poona, the ancient centre of Brahmin influence, it reached its climax and broke out in a wild act of protest or revenge.

The most excited of the native editors only represented the excitement of the communities whom they served. Some of their expressions, when read by the light of the subsequent tragedy, perhaps acquire a significance which they did not at the time possess. Anglo-Indian journalists have brought together a collection of the worst specimens. The *Bombay Gazette* writes:—

One paper early in April told the public that "oppressive

régimes are overthrown by agencies sent by God." Another expressed astonishment that people should be so meek as to bear the oppression of "bands of Pindarees"—meaning thereby the soldiers employed in stamping out the plague—and adjured them to "make a movement" to deliver themselves and their kindred from outrage. A third stigmatised the authorities as "butchers," and predicted a renewal of the scenes of the Mutiny. A fourth—which, indeed, in many respects stood first in this connexion—informed the Poona public that they were under a "Reign of Terror," and enumerated all the horrors they were compelled to undergo.

¶ All this, and other perilous stuff of like nature, had been circulated in certain of the native journals throughout the long struggle of the local authorities with the plague. No words more cruel could have been spoken of the Englishmen and Englishwomen who at the peril of their own lives were seeking out the unfortunates whom the malady had stricken, and were striving to give them the best chance of recovery. The task of succour and rescue amid hotbeds of infection, and face to face with all the loathsome horrors of the bubonic plague, was left in mediæval Europe to the most devoted orders of the Church. In India it has been performed simply as a matter of duty by our countrymen and countrywomen, from high officials and delicate ladies down to police inspectors and private soldiers. Words such as the *Bombay Gazette* quotes were a poor return for heroic efforts to save the people from themselves. But they were the words of terror and ignorance; most of them probably written in a despairing hope that the authorities might be frightened by abuse or vague threats into leaving the stricken ones to die in the old fashion, in their own homes. Some, perhaps, may have had a deeper meaning—a meaning which once again reminds us of that seething surface, of discontent which the over-production of a clerkly class, for whom there is no adequate career, has spread over the centres of Western education in India.

There can, however, be no question as to the genuine reprobation with which the news of the tragedy has been condemned by the leading members of the native Press. We make it our duty week by week to look through the principal organs of native opinion in the three Presidencies. They are necessarily but a few out of hundreds, but they were impartially selected to keep us informed of the views and feelings of the chief recognised sections of the Indian people who read newspapers. If any of the obscurer vernacular journals have used this outrage as an occasion for parading sedition, the Government will know how to act. We propose to summarise the terms in which the acknowledged organs of Indian opinion in each Presidency speak of the crime.

The *Hindu Patriot* is the recognised representative of the well-to-do section of the educated natives of Bengal; the *Indian Mirror* of the younger and more advanced generation. The *Hindu Patriot* describes the murders as a "shocking and fiendish outrage." But it asks for a calm investigation, and protests against the panic-haste to identify large classes with a crime which may have been the act of individual ferocity. We must remember that two days before, at the opposite extremity of the peninsula, a similar murder took place. While the Commissioner of

Peshawar and his chief clerk were driving home from the Jubilee preparations on the 20th of June, a Mussulman shot at them at so close a range as to burn their clothes. The chief clerk, Mr. Ross, died in the evening. The assassin was a Ghazi from a Pathan village, who had deliberately made up his mind to obtain martyrdom by the slaughter of an infidel. The crime is one with which we are familiar when committed by a Mussulman fanatic in Northern India, under the promptings of uncontrolled religious fervour. The Indian Government has long since given up the idea of saddling any large class of its Mussulman subjects with the responsibility for such a deed. Our Simla Correspondent simply telegraphed that "a case of Ghazi-ism occurred at Peshawar yesterday." The *Hindu Patriot* asks that we should deal in an equally just spirit with the "shocking and fiendish outrage at Poona," until such evidence of class co-operation is obtained as would satisfy an impartial judge.

The *Indian Mirror*, the organ of the advanced section of educated Bengalis, takes a more vivid view of the crime. "The news of the ghastly tragedy that has just been enacted at Poona," it writes, "will have been received everywhere with feelings of horror. The crime admits of no palliation, and its authors are entitled to no mercy." But the *Indian Mirror*, while accepting the statement that some of the Marathi vernacular papers have allowed their protests against the drastic plague measures to reach the point of disaffection, points out the injustice of accusing the whole Maratha people with disloyalty. "It has yet to be proved that the criminals are Maratha Hindus"—a point which can be settled "only by a full and open investigation."

Among the Bombay papers the *Indian Spectator* represents the social and the *Champion* the political party of reform. Both have spoken out firmly and frankly in condemnation of the crime. But even the loyal editor of the *Spectator*, Mr. Malabari, while denouncing the assassins and their cruel and stupid revenge, protests against the hasty assumption of certain Anglo-Indian journals that it was prompted not by individual ferocity but by class disaffection. The condemnation of the deed by the *Champion*, which represents the most advanced party of the educated Indians in Bombay, is equally severe. One paper, however, the *Rast-Gofstar*, takes the conspiracy-view of the occurrence. "The only thing that is now desired on all hands," it writes, "is that the murderer or murderers of Lieutenant Ayerst be apprehended and brought to justice without loss of time. There is no longer any mystery as to the motive which inspired the foul deed. It is quite clear as daylight that the assassins sought the blood of those who, they thought, carried out the segregation operations in the city with oppressive severity." This feeling "was the result," the *Rast-Gofstar* goes on to say, "of inflammable writings which appeared in the Deccan papers for some time past against plague officials." It thus comes back to the two causes from which we started—the irreconcilable conflict between ancient caste restrictions and the imperative demands of modern science, worked up to a climax by excited articles in certain of the native papers.

The leading native journals in Madras take practically the same view as those in Bengal—condemnation of the deed and a demand for a full and fair enquiry before the guilt is shifted from individuals to a class. "The news of the outrage at Poona," says the *Hindu*, "will be received everywhere with the utmost sorrow and with no little indignation. . . . Assassination, it has been well said, never changed the course of history even when it had a ruling Sovereign for its victim, and he must have been a madman indeed who thought that by killing Mr. Rand any political object could be gained or any grievance redressed. We have to make this remark because some of the Anglo-Indian papers are trying to connect the intellectual Brahmins of Poona with this most cowardly outrage. Whether the Poona Brahmins were or were not implicated in the affair is a question which must be decided by the proper tribunals and not by prejudiced Anglo-Indian scribes. The attempt to make political capital out of this incident is as cowardly as the assassination itself. . . . Our sympathies are all with the unfortunate victims, and we abhor the unspeakable atrocity of the deed. It is an un-Hindu deed, and one which will call forth the execration of the whole civilised world." "When we last wrote on the subject," says the other leading native paper of South-Eastern India, the *Madras Standard*, "we condemned it as a dastardly act planned and executed by some black characters, and attributed the crime to the bad feeling created by the strict carrying out of the plague regulations." It again insists on this view, and, while admitting that there had been a good deal of strong writing in the Deccan journals, it denies the likelihood of any connexion with a class conspiracy. Two sentences may be taken as summing up its conclusions. "We of course admit that the tragedy itself should not be classed with common cases of murder. It is something more than that; but it has no political significance."

The foregoing extracts may be taken to represent the views of the English educated classes of Indians in the three presidencies. But, after all, the English-speaking natives are but a handful compared with the 280 millions who do their life's hard labour and never see a newspaper. The opinion of this great solid mass would probably be that the plague measures were a cruel interference with their religious obligations and domestic life, but that it was the will of the Government, and so must be obeyed. Nor do our extracts touch the vernacular press. But it is right that the British nation should understand the attitude of the class who are accustomed to express their opinions on political subjects. We may be sure that the Government of India will get at the truth, and that if there was anything approaching to a class conspiracy it will be dragged to light. Till then the crime stands in the same category as the assassination two days previously at Peshawar, and of the Mussulman riots in Calcutta—a crime prompted partly by religious or caste fanaticism, partly by lawless ferocity; one of a series in the long conflict between Indian traditions and Western civilisation.—"Indian Affairs," July 26.

THE POONA ASSASSINATIONS.

A CASE FOR JUDICIAL ENQUIRY.

I.—JOINT MEMORIAL OF HINDUS AND MUHAMMADANS.

The following is the text of the joint memorial signed by 2,000 Hindus and Muhammadans of Poona, and forwarded to the Government of Bombay by the Presidents of the leading Hindu and Muhammadan associations of the Deccan. We print the text of the memorial first, and, after it, the covering letter to the Secretary to the Government of Bombay.

It may be added that on July 26, too late for inclusion in the present issue of INDIA, we received from the Deccan Sabha at Poona copies of the appendices referred to in the memorial. These appendices, which we have examined, contain under each head of the allegations the statements of individuals, whose names and addresses are given. Judicial enquiry can alone deal satisfactorily with this categorical statement of substantial grievances:

To His Excellency the Right Honourable William Baron Sandhurst, G.C.I.E., Governor and President in Council.

May it please your Excellency,—The undersigned inhabitants of Poona beg most respectfully to submit for the consideration of Government that for the last eight weeks they have been subjected to a reign of terror, due to the irregular and oppressive high-handedness of the special agency employed by Plague Committee for the inspection, fumigation, and lime-washing of houses, for searching out plague patients, and for the segregation of healthy persons. We have but little fault to find with the rules made by the Plague Committee under orders of Government, but unfortunately, owing to the nature of the special agency employed, these rules are often violated, and when parties injured apply for redress to the Committee, they fail to find it.

The complaints of oppression and irregularity were lately represented on our behalf by the Deccan Sabha and the Anjuman Association, but the letter addressed in that behalf received no other reply than that "the representation has been considered by the Committee." Meanwhile there has been no change in the methods followed by the search and fumigation parties. We have been therefore compelled to submit this representation to Government, and we request that Government will be pleased to take such steps as they may deem necessary to remove all causes of complaint by adopting the several suggestions made on our behalf in the letter addressed to the Committee by the Deccan Sabha and the Anjuman Association.

In substantiation of the complaints made, we have authorised the associations above named to append to this petition certain statements made and signed by the parties aggrieved, which will serve as samples of many more similar acts of oppression from which we suffer. We shall mention some of the principal points to which these complaints relate:—

(a) People are often sent to the plague hospital without a proper medical examination being previously made to satisfy the authorities that persons removed are suffering from plague. As some instances of this complaint, we beg to request Government to refer to the cases marked a in the appendix.

(b) Relatives and friends of plague patients, and even passers-by, are at times taken to the segregation camp, with-

out being allowed time to make proper arrangements for the custody of the property in their houses. As instances of this irregular procedure, we refer to the statements marked *b*.

(c) In the inspection of inmates of houses sometimes persons are subjected to the indignity of being forced to remove all the clothes from their bodies in the presence of the members of the search parties and other people. We refer to the statements marked *c*.

(d) The native gentlemen who volunteered to accompany search parties, and were appointed by the Committee to that duty, are slighted, and their suggestions are disregarded. In support of this, we beg that reference may be made to these gentlemen, who, feeling that they are not properly trusted, decline to accompany the search parties.

(e) In the inspection of houses no respect is shown to the religious sentiments of natives, in regard to the sanctity of the kitchen and of rooms where worship is offered. In some cases the idols in Hindu temples have been polluted. We refer to the statements marked *e*.

(f) Notwithstanding the injunctions of the Committee in that behalf, much mischief is done in regard of property in burning or destroying, though the rules of the Committee require that only the bedding and the clothing of the deceased should be burnt. As instances we refer to the statements marked *f*.

(g) Persons occupying houses are threatened, and in some cases assaulted, when they remonstrate against the procedure followed by the search parties in the matter of forcibly opening locks and destroying property. Instances may be found in the statements marked *g*.

(h) In a few cases the modesty of native ladies has not been respected. We refer to the statements marked *h*.

(i) Complaints were made to the Committee, but the persons injured have failed to obtain redress. The parties injured have no means of finding out the names of the soldiers who misbehave, and who thus bring discredit on the whole body. It may be that all the members of the search and other parties do not misuse the power conferred on them, but it is not possible to find out the names of such as do misconduct themselves or to identify them.

In these and many other ways the whole town is virtually treated as if the men employed in the inspection and other work were absolute masters of the person and property of the inhabitants, and that for the time the protection of law was withdrawn from them. Such a state of things has driven away thousands of the population from the city and those who cannot afford to go out feel that to the horrors of plague and famine from which they are suffering a worse terror has been added which leaves them no peace of mind either by day or by night. Since British rule commenced, the people of this city have never had such experience, and they accordingly pray that, as suggested on their behalf by their leading associations, Government will take steps and relieve them from their present anxieties and sufferings. We do not object to the inspection of houses for finding out plague cases, or to the removal of patients to the hospital, or to the segregation of healthy persons; but we request that the agency and methods employed in Bombay may be followed in Poona.

And for this act of kindness we shall as in duty bound ever pray.

To John Decourcy Atkins, I.C.S., Secretary to Government
General Department.

Sir,—We beg to forward herewith a petition for the consideration of Government, signed by nearly 2,000 inhabitants of the city, complaining of certain irregular and oppressive proceedings of some members of the agency at present employed for the inspection, fumigation, and lime-washing of houses, for searching out plague patients, and for the segregation of healthy persons. We append, also, copies of letters addressed by our Association to the Plague Committee, and the replies received thereto. Attached to the petition are statements, each duly signed, showing particulars under different heads of the cases in which complaints have been made. Such statements could be multiplied to any extent, but only a few of them under each head will admit of easy verification, have been appended. The replies received from the Committee will show whether or not disposed to give

redress, or that even if they were so disposed they are unable to secure on the part of the different parties engaged in the work the observance of their own rules, we request that Government will be pleased, in view of these complaints and the panic and demoralisation which they indicate, to take such steps as they may deem necessary to substitute, in place of the agency at present employed, such other agency as will be more amenable to control, on the plan followed in Bombay with such success. For a fuller statement of our reasons we beg to refer Government to our second letter to the chairman of the Poona Plague Committee, where we have suggested this change.

We also beg to point out to Government that the inspection of villages by British soldiers is wholly uncalled for, inasmuch as the district statistics do not show that villages around Poona have been affected by the plague. Only a few cases were reported in two or three villages, but these were imported from affected parts, and as such do not warrant the subjection of all villages about Poona to the stringent operations of the Plague Committee. The panic and the other evils that were the direct result of the plague operations in the city would be far more disastrous in the villages. We would therefore suggest that the duty of inspecting the villages should be entrusted to the Mamlatdars and the village doctors.

Lastly, we have to request that Government will be pleased to order the immediate discontinuance of the night searches in suspected houses by soldiers, which have been recently instituted. Such searches lead to great abuses, without their yielding any good results.—We have the honour to remain, Sir, your most obedient servants,

VISHNOO MORESHAR BHIDE, President Deccan Sabha.

ABDUL FEROUKHAN, President Anjuman Association.

KOOTPOOSWAMY MUDLIAR, Sirdar, Deccan.

HARI NARAYAN APTE, Honorary Secretary Deccan Sabha.

Deccan Sabha Rooms, Poona, May 10, 1897.

On July 26 we received the following telegram from an esteemed correspondent in Bombay:

"Memorial 10th May sent, as stated by Lord George Hamilton, on 21st May. Collecting signatures. But on the 20th April similar memorial was sent to Mr. Rand. Memorial 10th May was sent to Lord Sandhurst because Mr. Rand gave unsatisfactory reply. Has Lord Sandhurst seen first memorial? Two memorials causing confusion."

A Poona correspondent writes, under date July 8:

"The appendices accompanying the memorial of the Deccan Sabha and of the Anjuman-i-Islam were forwarded to Government on 10 May last in original, and up to this time no enquiry to our knowledge and in the presence of the complainants has been made, nor has any reply been up to this day vouchsafed to the memorialists. The signatories to the appendices are respectable men, and we have every confidence that the complaints were made in good faith.

"The English abstracts of the original appendices (which were in Marathi) have been sent by the mail, which takes this letter. The complaints forming the appendices are only a few out of hundreds made to the Poona Plague Committee by the people. All these are doubtless on the Committee's files.

"Government within a week of the lamentable murders of Lieutenant Ayerst and Mr. Rand has imposed a punitive police on the Poona city for

two years, costing nearly three lacs of rupees. The murders were apparently the work of a few miscreants, for whose misdeeds the whole city is to be punished. Government promises soon to specify the section or sections of the populace from whom the cost will be recovered.

"Up to the present Government does not know who have committed the murders. Notwithstanding this they have pronounced judgment and inflicted sentence."

A Bombay correspondent writes under date, July 9:—

"I want to put you on your guard about the Poona business, sensational telegrams about which have evidently been wired home. I have seen a number of the Poona leaders, including Mr. Tilak, and I have read with care the papers charged with sedition. I have also seen the memorials sent to the Government by the Deccan Sabha. (i) As to the leaders of the people; they know as much about the outrage as you do, and they are as distressed as any honest man should be in consequence of the murders of Lieut. Ayerst and Mr. Rand: (ii) As to the papers charged with sedition; all their complaints are directed against the Plague Committee, not against the central Government, and surely it is not seditious to complain concerning a public committee, even though it be appointed by a Government and officered by its officials? and (3) the memorials contain serious charges against the soldiers who visited the houses of the people when searching for plague cases. These charges are made over the signatures of respectable Hindu and Mussulman gentlemen, and the Government merely, in answering (an answer after two or three days' consideration) say, 'your memorial has been recorded.' Further Pandita Ramabai (you must know of her) has brought definite charges against the Plague Administration. These charges appeared in a public letter written in May last, and, with our present knowledge, one wonders why no notice was taken of this lady's statement. As to the punitive force in Poona, the municipality have no funds. Plague and famine have depleted their treasury. We here are quite in the dark as to the motives or reasons which prompted the Government to take this foolish and cruel step. However, I think the storm of rage will blow over. Already the Anglo-Indian press are moderating their language, and I think they are a little ashamed of their outburst. Could not there be an enquiry into the whole plague administration of Poona?"

II.—THE "FULL REPLY" OF THE BOMBAY GOVERNMENT.

On July 5, Lord George Hamilton read in the House of Commons, amid loud cheers, what he described as a "full reply" from Lord Sandhurst to the Poona memorial of May 10. In the present temper of the House of Commons it is easy to provoke cheers from Tory members below the gangway, and Lord Sandhurst's reply proves on analysis to be considerably less "full" than Lord G. Hamilton's excited hearers were ready to think.

The reply, which is given at length in our Parliamentary report, may be analysed thus:—

ALLEGATION OF POONA MEMORIAL.

(a) People were often sent to the plague hospital without proper medical examination;

(b) Relatives and neighbours of plague patients were hurried to the segregation camp;

(c) Inmates of houses were subjected to indignity in inspection;

(d) Native volunteers, being slighted, refused to accompany search parties;

(e) Religious sentiments were offended by pollution of kitchens, and places of worship;

(f) Property was, contrary to rule, destroyed or burnt;

(g) Inmates of houses were threatened or assaulted when they remonstrated against forcible opening of locks, and destruction of property;

(h) In a few cases modesty of native ladies was not respected;

(i) Complaints were made in vain, and no means of finding out the names of the offenders.

REPLY OF LORD SANDHURST.

People were not so sent.

The greatest care was taken.

I have not heard of any allegations of indignity being substantiated.

Native volunteers accompanied search parties to the very end.

Search parties were instructed to have regard to religious feelings.

Special care was taken to avoid needless destruction.

No unnecessary violence was used in entering houses.

I do not believe the possibility of indignity to native women.

Officers were in plentiful attendance, and it was made known that complaints should be made to them.

Is this a "full reply"? It seems to us to be a point-blank denial of the allegations, and little more. There is, of course, no question as to the instructions given. The point of the memorial is that the instructions were disobeyed. Lord Sandhurst, as we remark elsewhere, has won golden opinions in Bombay as a just and sympathetic Governor, and no human being will question his word. But we submit, with great respect, that in this matter expressions of personal opinion (as distinguished from actual knowledge) are as little conclusive as references to orders which are alleged to have been broken. As for the answer to allegation (i) we refer our readers to the statement of the *Times of India* which we print in "Indiana."

Lord George Hamilton says that he telegraphed to Bombay for "a categorical reply to each series of accusations." Now, obviously a reply is of little value if it is not based upon enquiry. Upon what sort of enquiry, we ask, was Lord Sandhurst's reply based? It is hard to say, because ten days later (July 15) Lord G. Hamilton said (i) that on receipt of the Poona memorial the Bombay Government desired Mr. Rand to report upon it; (ii) that the reply of the Government was postponed until his report should be received; and (iii) that the report was still incomplete at the time of his murder and consequently no reply had yet (July 15) been given.

It is plain, therefore, that the Government of Bombay had not a complete report from Mr. Rand upon which to base the "full reply" read to the House of Commons by Lord G. Hamilton.

But did they make a full and full enquiry on receipt of Lord G. Hamilton's telegram asking for "a categorical reply"? It is plain that they can hardly have

been the case. The dates here are important. It was on July 1 that Sir W. Wedderburn called Lord G. Hamilton's attention to the Poona memorial, and until that time (see Parliamentary report) Lord G. Hamilton had not seen a copy. Four days later (July 5) he read out Lord Sandhurst's reply, having telegraphed to him after seeing the memorial. Lord Sandhurst's reply is dated July 4. On an outside estimate, therefore, there were only three days in which enquiry could be made. Will it be suggested that full enquiry into the Poona allegations could be made, and was actually made, between July 1 and July 4? If not, upon what sort of knowledge was the "full reply" of the Bombay Government based?

These considerations serve, we think, to emphasise the demand for a full judicial enquiry.

III.—THE ATTACK ON PROFESSOR GOKHALE.

If the question asked by Sir J. Fergusson in the House of Commons on July 13 were to convey the impression that Professor Gokhale (an accomplished Indian gentleman, whose reputation cannot be impaired by scurrilous and anonymous scribbles in the *Times*) had originated the allegation that two women were violated by British soldiers employed on plague duty in Poona, the impression would be totally wrong. What Professor Gokhale said, in an "interview" reported in the *Manchester Guardian* on July 2, was:—

"My correspondents, whose word I can trust absolutely, report the violation of two women, one of whom is said afterwards to have committed suicide rather than survive her shame."

The following letter from Professor Gokhale was printed in the *Manchester Guardian* of July 15:—

To the Editor of the MANCHESTER GUARDIAN.

Sir,—With reference to the questions asked yesterday in the House of Commons about a statement contained in the report of the interview which your representative had with me some time back, I hope you will allow me to say a word. Sir James Fergusson's question reads as though he thought that the allegation of the violations originated with me. The facts, however, are these. In the month of May last I received several letters from Poona from different individuals complaining bitterly, among other things, of the violation of two women (one of whom was reported by one correspondent to have subsequently committed suicide). Among these letters there were two from two friends whom I have known for years, and who are incapable of consciously misleading me. They not only corroborated the allegation about the violation, but gave me some particulars about one of the two women. I have shown these two letters to some of my English friends. The alleged outrages were also referred to and commented upon in severe terms in some of the vernacular papers, copies of which were sent me. I mentioned all these facts to your representative, and he has reported me correctly.

I see from a Reuter's telegram that the Bombay Government have directed Mr. Lamb to enquire into the allegations. Under these circumstances, is it not rather premature that Lord Sandhurst should stigmatise them as a malevolent invention? I do not say that because these allegations are made, therefore they are necessarily true. But I think they ought to have been promptly enquired into at the time when they were first made in Poona, so as to prevent a general belief in native circles that there was some foundation for them.—I am, etc.,

G. K. GOKHALE.

28, Gauden Road, Clapham

Manchester Guardian—that they had seen some of the letters referred to.

As Professor Gokhale left London *en route* for Bombay on Friday, July 16, he could not possibly reply at once to attacks made upon him in London newspapers subsequent to that date.

Two abusive and grotesquely inaccurate letters, signed "Scrutator," appeared in the *Times* of July 17 and July 23.

The following incorrect statement, in a tissue of incorrect statements, appeared in the letter of July 23:

"Mr. Gokhlee was the bearer of the memorial to which Sir William refers, truly dated May 10th last . . . and he also brought over a variety of other documents dealing with similar allegations."

We can affirm from personal knowledge that this statement is absolutely false. Professor Gokhale left Poona on March 5, being deputed to give evidence before the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure. As he is joint secretary of the Deccan Sabha, a copy of the memorial of May 10 was forwarded to him by his colleague, Mr. Apte, one of the signatories of the memorial, for his information. This document and the newspapers and letters referred to were received by Mr. Gokhale in London some time after his arrival.

IV.—SIR W. WEDDERBURN'S LETTERS TO THE "TIMES."

The following letter to the Editor appeared in the *Times* of July 8:—

Sir,—In to-day's issue you refer to the telegram from Lord Sandhurst as an emphatic repudiation of the charges contained in the Poona memorial of the 10th of May, adding that it is open to me and my friends to impugn the credibility of the statements made by the Bombay Government. All that I have hitherto done in the matter of this memorial has been to ask Lord George Hamilton whether he has received a copy of it; whether enquiry has been made into the truth of the allegations contained therein; and what answer was given to the prayer of the petitioners, the prayer being that the system followed in Bombay should also be followed in Poona. I propose to show that from the circumstances of the case I was justified in asking these questions, to the two latter of which I have as yet received no answer.

No one denies the genuineness of the memorial, and the known facts regarding it are as follows:

1. Two thousand Hindus and Muhammadans of Poona, acting jointly, presented this memorial, couched in moderate terms, to the Government of Bombay complaining of ill-treatment and oppression.

2. To the memorial was added an appendix containing specific charges signed by the parties aggrieved; and

3. The memorial was forwarded to the Government by the presidents of the leading Hindu and Muhammadan Associations of the Deccan.

With regard to these facts I have the following observations to make:—For the last three or four years the relations between the Hindu and Muham-

Sir W. Wedderburn's interview both stated—on

madan communities in Poona have been much strained. When, therefore, we find them acting jointly, it is a matter of no small significance, and seems to indicate that there must have been some substantial grievance common to both communities. Then as regards the persons who signed the memorial. The first name is that of Mr. Bhide, president of the Deccan Sabha. I have known this gentleman well for some 25 years, and he bears the very highest character for independence and uprightness. He is now 70 years old, and, after serving Government in high judicial offices for about 40 years, he has retired on the *maximum* pension allowed by the regulations. He is the head in Poona of the moderate party which advocates social as well as political reform, and regards the stability of British rule as the basis of all its hopes. It is simply absurd to suppose that he would have engaged in a conspiracy to bring false and malicious complaints against the authorities. Similarly as regards Mr. Mudliar, another signatory, who is one of the wealthiest men in Poona, who is well known in Anglo-Indian society, and who has recently been raised to the rank of First Class Sirdar, that being the highest grade among the Deccan nobility. A memorial making definite allegations, and vouched for by gentlemen of such a position, was clearly entitled to careful attention and enquiry.

Also it is to be noted that the complaints regarding Poona plague administration were not confined to extreme journals or to those published at Poona. Take, for example, so moderate a paper as the *Indian Spectator*, published at Bombay, and edited by Mr. Malabari, the well-known social reformer. This is what he says in his issue of May 30 with regard to the employment of European soldiers in house visitations at Poona:—

“While General Gatacre and his colleagues may well claim to have given an object-lesson in administration by very nearly succeeding in reconciling people, by means of patience, tact, and conciliation, even to measures for which they have an inborn dislike, the Poona Plague Committee seemed to do things, from beginning to end, in a manner in which they ought never to have been done. The unwisdom of intrusting the delicate and responsible business of house-to-house visitations to soldiers, and of turning a deaf ear even to verified complaints of wanton damage to property and of injury to body and mind, is now pretty well known.”

Looking to these considerations I again repeat my questions, What enquiry was made into the allegations in the memorial, and what reply was given to the memorialists?

I have, etc.,

W. WEDDERBURN.

House of Commons, July 6.

The following letter, dated July 14, appeared in the *Times* of July 17:—

To the Editor of the *Times*.

Sir,—As I was not present in the House at question time yesterday, when (on private notice) some enquiries were made regarding Professor Gokhale and the statements put forward by him respecting the plague at Poona, perhaps you will allow me to state that he is a professor at the Fergusson College at Poona, and was one of the four representative

Indian witnesses delegated to give evidence before the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure. I have known him for many years, and can state that he bears the highest character for integrity; and his public spirit is shown by the fact that he and his colleagues, who are life members of the college, have voluntarily devoted twenty years of their lives, on a mere pittance, to the cause of education. As he had recently come from Poona, I invited the members of the Indian Parliamentary Committee to meet him and the other Indian witnesses in the conference room of the House, and he then stated what he knew about the plague administration. As regards the violation of women, what he said was that he had received private letters from friends whose word he could trust absolutely, in which the allegation was contained. Further than this he did not go, and in this statement he was certainly correct, as he showed me some of the letters. That the belief was generally prevalent in Poona is shown by similar allegations which appeared at the time in the vernacular Press; and the important question is: What enquiry was made by the authorities at the time regarding these allegations? The Government were clearly put upon enquiry by the responsible memorial of the 10th of May, signed by 2,000 Hindus and Muhammadans of Poona, in which it was stated that in a few cases the modesty of native ladies was not respected. In support of this allegation statements made and signed by the parties aggrieved seem to have been appended to the memorial; but, from information I have received by telegraph, it appears that no enquiry was made upon this memorial, and that no reply was given to the memorialists. Until enquiry is made, the truth or otherwise of these serious allegations cannot be ascertained. If the allegations are shown to be false, by all means let punishment be awarded. The Indian Penal Code makes ample provision for such cases. All I desire is that full enquiry should be made, and that the truth should be known.

I have, etc.,

W. WEDDERBURN.

House of Commons, July 14.

V.—REPORTED OUTRAGES ON NATIVE WOMEN.

The following question, which was too late to be reported in our Parliamentary Supplement, was asked in the House of Commons on Monday, July 26:—

Major RASCH asked the Secretary of State for India whether his attention had been called to a paragraph in the *Daily News* of Thursday last embodying a statement from the secretary of the Indian Association to the following effect:—“Two gross cases are reported of attempted outrage on Hindu girls in the Khana plague inspection camp by two European officers, who have been suspended by the Government. Pandita Ramabai writes to a newspaper of the seduction of one of her girls in the Poona plague camp, utterly demoralising the arrangements there. These cases have created a great sensation all over the country”; and whether there was any truth in either allegation.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The allegations alluded to consisted of two charges, one of attempted seduction of a girl in the Khana, and the other of attempted seduction of a girl in the Poona plague camp. The first case was reported in the *Daily News* of Thursday last, and the second in the *Daily News* of Friday last. I have no doubt that the Government are fully aware of the facts.

Governor of Bengal reports that police-sergeant and military assistant-surgeon were charged with making immoral overtures to two Hindu circus girls and a Japanese prostitute in segregation huts at Khana plague inspection camp. Japanese consented, and left with police-officer; circus girls declined, and, on assistant-surgeon pressing, one of them raised alarm. Police-officer dismissed; assistant-surgeon suspended. His case being further investigated. Both are of European parentage; police-sergeant born and domiciled in India." As regards the second case, the Governor of Bombay telegraphs:—"Pandita Ramabai's assertions had attracted my notice, and I enquired into them early in June. The girl she mentions was not seduced in the plague camp. She was a plague patient, and was discharged cured. What became of her afterwards is not known. The assertion about utterly demoralising the arrangements in Poona camp absolutely untrue. From first to last somewhere about 500 female patients were admitted; nearly all had relatives or friends attending them; no complaints of violated modesty were ever made. Officer in charge saw Pandita Ramabai herself on several occasions in the hospital, but she never made any complaint to him."

In this connexion it may be of interest to add the following telegram, which was printed in the *Daily Telegraph* of Friday, July 23, under the headings: "Reported Outrages on Native Women. A Ridiculous Story":—

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

BOMBAY, Thursday.

An extraordinary story has appeared in the *Bangobasi*, a disreputable paper which is published at Chandernagor, in French territory, and which the British Post Office authorities refuse to allow to pass through the mails.

In the course of this narrative it is alleged that two Bengali circus-riders were ordered to descend from the train at Khana, and that a young doctor and a hospital assistant invited them home. On the women's refusal, the doctor is stated to have ordered them to the observation camp, where an attempt was made to assault them.

It is added that the screams of the women attracted attention, with the result that they were rescued.

The whole story is perfectly ridiculous, as these circus girls belong to a notorious class.

On the following day, however—Saturday, July 24—the *Daily Telegraph* printed the following:—

FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

BOMBAY, Friday.

The Governor of Bengal has ordered an enquiry to be instituted into the Khana case, and meanwhile the assistant-surgeon, a subordinate in the Medical Service, and a sergeant of Railway Police have been suspended.

Notwithstanding this, the native Press accuse the Government of hushing up the affair.

The private secretary to the Governor writes that the authorities took action on an allegation current in the Amrita Bazaar at Calcutta. A native paper says that the story is more like a romance than a reality, for it cannot conceive the sergeant acting in the way in which he is reported to have done with so many girls, and considering other circumstances.

In view of Lord Rasch, the following columns of the *Daily Telegraph* are of certain interest:—

One of our morning correspondents has written to a ridiculous story. A telegram from the Secretary of the Government says that gross cases of attempted seduction in the Khana plague hospital have been reported by two European officers to the Government. On the responsible London journals, the propagation of rumours like this, when every body knows the truth, is an unpardonable offence to attack our administration with impunity, if not the utter worthlessness.

VI.—LETTER FROM PANDITA RAMABAI.

The following is the text of Pandita Ramabai's letter dated May 18, to the *Bombay Guardian*, which was referred to by Lord George Hamilton in his answer to Major Rasch in the House of Commons on July 26, with reference to the plague operations at Poona. Pandita Ramabai—an accomplished Christian lady—is so well known to the religious and philanthropic public in the United Kingdom that anything which she says on such a subject is likely to receive attention:—

DEAR GUARDIAN,—I have come here to live in the Plague Hospital, but am safe and sound, thank God. I have come here to take care of one of my babies, who was sent here by order of the doctor on plague duty on the railway station; I dare not send anyone else to this dangerous place. It is a truly dangerous place, though it looks all nice and clean as far as the hospital arrangements are concerned. There are so many doctors and nurses and servants to look after the patients here, but the internal state of affairs is questionable. The higher authorities do not know much about it, I suppose. Some of the doctors on plague duty act very strangely on the railway stations.

A young man was sent here last night. He is as fat and healthy-looking as anyone can be, but he is living here because he was sent here by the doctor. One day when I was taking my girls from Talegaum to Kedgaum, the doctor on duty examined all the girls in the train. One of the girls was very ill from the effects of heat and hardships which she had to bear at Talegaum. The doctor let her go, but made another girl who had nothing the matter with her to get down from the railway carriage and frightened her out of her wits. She got very much excited and began to cry. After examining her the doctor was obliged to let her go as she had no fever. Yesterday, however, the same doctor I think found a little child in a party of our girls who returned home from Kedgaum. The child is suffering from itch. She is a famine baby and had slight fever. He ordered us to send her at once to the plague hospital. This morning she had no fever, but the surgeon says we have to stop here for two or three days. However, this is not a matter of grief to me.

About two months ago, when Mr. Plunkett paid his first visit to my school, some famine girls were suffering from various diseases, such as itch, mumps, disorder of the stomach, etc. Mr. Plunkett told me to send all the girls to the Sassoon Hospital, even though they should not have much to suffer from. He assured me at the same time that all the girls would be safe and well taken care of at the Hospital. So I sent many of my girls there, and most of them returned home soon. One of those girls, a famine widow, had strong fever on her. She was taken for a plague case, and was sent to this Plague Hospital. We were told that none of us would be allowed to come here unless we stayed as long as the doctors thought fit. I could send no one to take care of the poor girl, and could not come myself, as I had to look after 180 girls, and remove them from Poona at the order of the magistrate.

By the time I had a little time to come to Poona and make enquiries, nearly six weeks had elapsed; and when I enquired for her at the Sassoon Hospital on last Saturday, the surgeon informed me that the girl had died long ago. Would to God she had died instead of living as she lives now. After my arrival here last night I enquired for her, and found out that she was well and living here. I desired to see her, but this morning I was told by the servant and watchman that the girl was "kept" by a watchman of this Hospital. This man says she has gone away, he does not know where. Two medical practitioners and two women servants told me last night that the girl was well, and I should see her this morning. The same persons change their word this morning, and say she is not here; she was discharged some time ago, and "they did not feel bound to inform me of her discharge from the hospital." Strange management is this. Now the girl is gone to the devil, lost, lost for ever! O dreadful thought! My heart aches for her, for she was a good child. I wished I had died before anything of this kind had happened to one of my girls. I owe all this grief and other troubles to the Poona city authorities. God knows how many young girls of good character have been separated from their friends in this

way and was obliged to go to the Plague Hospital and Segregation Camp and be ruined and lost for ever. The Lord knows how many heart-broken mothers are weeping for their lost children. The City Magistrate with other people living in style, know little and care less for the hundreds of poor unfortunate victims of their careless rule.

The sahibs and memsahibs occasionally visiting segregation camps are very pleased with the outside cleanliness of these places. They seem to think that we poor "natives" do not suffer from heat and other inconvenience. There are no proper bathrooms and resting places here. The people who come here to take care of their sick friends have to suffer much. I had to lie down in the open ground all night. The pricking stones, bugs, mosquitoes, and fleas made it impossible for me to go to sleep. They told me to sleep in the ward, a miserable shed with five beds in it. One patient who looks very much like a plague-stricken woman is lying down on a *charpai*. She vomits very often; my little child is obliged to be next to her. Her son slept on the ground near her *charpai*, and I was told to sleep near the child, about six feet apart from him. What do you think of this? I suppose the hospital authorities think that Indian women are lost to all sense of shame and propriety. I have to be baking here in the heat and must write, for I have much writing to do. The surgeon told me I had bad eyes, and must take care of them. I requested him to let me go into a separate room with my child where I could have a little shaded place. He kindly consented to let me go into a vacant ward, but I hear now that it had been occupied by plague-stricken people. I must choose between either have my eyes blinded by the sun, have sunstroke or headache, or consent to breathe in the plague germs by going into the ward formerly occupied by plague patients. The filthiness of the only bathroom assigned for women living here is indescribable. Women who come here to take care of their sick relations, must give up all modesty or suffer pains. Never before have I felt so mortified and put to shame, but now this evil has come on me, and I have to thank the city authorities for it. I am writing this with my sore eyes to warn parents and friends of young women against the moral evils of the plague hospitals and segregation camps, that their young women are never safe in these dreadful places. Some of my girls offered to come and stay here to take care of the child, and now I am glad I did not allow them to come here. I shall never let a girl come alone to this dreadful place while I have a little strength in me. God help the young women who may be obliged to come to such a place as this, and may He open the eyes of our city magistrate and his colleagues to see the evils resulting from their heartless, unjust rule. I am mourning over my lost child as much as ever a mother mourned, and wish death had put an end to all this. May mothers protect their girl-children, even though it may be at the cost of their own lives.

Believe me,

Yours in the Lord's service.

RAMABAI.

Government Plague Hospital, Poona,
May 18th, 1897.

VII.—THE NATIVE PRESS.

"There can," said the writer of "Indian Affairs" in the *Times* of July 26, "be no question as to the genuine reprobation with which the news of the tragedy has been condemned by the leading members of the native press;" and, in an admirable article, the writer proceeded to "summarise the terms in which the acknowledged organs of Indian opinion in each Presidency speak of the crime." In view of the demand which is still being made (though less vehemently than three weeks ago) for special restrictions upon the press in India, it may be interesting to quote two authoritative opinions upon the subject. Sir William Markby wrote to the *Spectator* of July 17 last:

"I should like to add one word on behalf of the native Indian press, which is, I think, just now getting more abuse

than it deserves. I have for years read regularly extracts from a large number of native newspapers. The criticisms I have met with are sometimes severe, but for the most part respectful. There is occasionally strong 'disapprobation,' but very rarely 'disaffection.'"

And here is what Sir Richard Garth, Q.C. (late Chief Justice in Bengal), wrote in the *Law Magazine and Review* for February, 1895:

"I can only say I read native papers myself week after week, and never see anything there at all approaching sedition or even disloyalty or disrespect to English rule. What I do find there, and what I rejoice to find, is thoroughly well deserved censure of the arbitrary conduct of many of the Government officials. I am afraid this is exactly what the Government would wish to repress. I consider it a most wholesome and salutary means of bringing the misconduct of Government officers to the notice not only of the Indian people but of the Courts of Justice."

We take the following passage from a notable sermon preached by the Bishop of Bombay, at St. Paul's Church, Poona, on Sunday, June 27:—

At a time like this it behoves us to be specially watchful of ourselves. To say nothing of anything higher, how much is at stake at such a time; how much of our character for humanity, how much of the confidence in our justice—which after all is what keeps India peaceful. It is impossible to go about Poona and not be convinced of two things; first, who-soever and manysoever the guilty persons may be, still the bulk of our Indian neighbours are just as much horrified and distressed as we, whose fellow-countrymen have been attacked. Nothing, therefore, could be more unjust than to lump all Natives together in our loathing for those who are guilty. And, next, the uneducated may believe us to be capable as a body of exacting indiscriminate vengeance for the crime of which some have been guilty. As I look at the shamed, cowed groups which have gathered at the corners of the streets and look askance at European passers-by, I have read in the glances that they cast no hatred, racial or otherwise, no glorying in that which had been done, but first an appalled sense of shame that such things should have been done on their behalf, and, secondly, a feeling of uneasiness as to what may ensue to the community as the consequence of guilt in a few. And I have thought, as I read this last, is it possible that they know us so little? After all these years of our rule, do they suppose us capable to-day of letting loose a military vengeance, indiscriminately for the shedding of Christian blood.

VIII.—SOME OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

We add a selection of extracts from the numerous articles which have appeared in British newspapers of all shades of opinion:—

WANTED: ENQUIRY BY A PROPER BODY.

There are two ways of looking at an event like this. The one is to make up one's mind at the outset that the Indian Government is a bureau served by angels, so that there can be no wisdom of its way of stamping out the plague, and delicacy, judgment, and self-restraint is carried out by British rule. The other is to start with the assumption that if other men, and their error ought to be on may be avoided. The first now with our Jingo for "reprisals," as one expression of any Indian sentiment dislikes. The Government must stop of its motives and representations of motives which, in so many words, charges its opponents in India the *Times* and those

who are no wiser propose that Government should be empowered to run away from whatever they choose to think a lie instead of facing it, and from what Lord George Hamilton said on Thursday there is some reason to fear that he has lost his head too. People who are able to keep their heads must be on the alert to prevent the Indian Government and the India Office from playing Russian or Turkish tricks with the freedom of the press in India under the delusion that they will make it any the easier to govern the country. With a free press—which, of course, does not mean a press exempt from the obligation to refrain, like individual citizens, from incitements to criminal offences—the Indian Government has some little light thrown on the sentiments of the peoples it governs, and may receive timely warnings of dangerous discontents. It must not be let blow out such rushlights of this kind as it has to light its way. It would be more to the purpose if a proper body were appointed to enquire into the circumstances preceding the Poona outrages. There is a strong presumption that a bad mistake was made, and unless the whole truth is brought out it will be felt that the same mistake may at any be committed again, perhaps with even more tragic results.—*Manchester Guardian*, July 3.

"THE PROPAGANDA OF TREASON."

It is full time, and a bit over, for the Indian Government to adopt stringent measures against native journals which systematically incite the population to rebellion. When we lately commented upon this vital matter we had before us only a few extracts from the disloyal prints, but to-day many additional samples of a still viler sort come to hand. Almost all taut the inhabitants of the Western Presidency with lack of courage in not forcibly resisting the measures taken by Mr. Rand to stamp out the plague, and with hardly an exception lying representation is made that the soldiers employed in this work of humanity, at the peril of their own lives, are habitually guilty of the lowest blackguardism. In some instances, all disguise is thrown off, and the Government receives warning that the awful scenes of 1857 are likely to have early repetition. In one instance, it is even charged against Lord Elgin and his colleagues that they are taking revenge for the tortures inflicted by Tantia Topi on Europeans, an evident attempt to revive and accentuate those racial and religious animosities which culminated in the Mutiny. And so the propaganda of treason goes on day after day, week after week, without, apparently, any remedial steps being taken. We have not heard of a single prosecution from first to last; the result is, of course, that these vile defamers of British rule, believing themselves safe from punishment, go from bad to worse in their campaign of calumny. Nor does the seed of murderous treason always fall upon sterile soil; the late assassination of Lieutenant Ayerst, the simultaneous attempt to kill Mr. Rand, and the attack on a native detective, were unquestionably the first fruits of the intended harvest. But surely the Indian Penal Code must provide some means of dealing with incitements to rebellion and murder; there is not a civilised country in the world where Press licence would be permitted, for a single day, to proceed to such perilous lengths. Half-a-dozen successful prosecutions would probably suffice to stamp out an evil which, in its far-reaching consequences might be more terrible than the plague itself.—*Globe*, June 30.

WANT OF TACT AND DISCRETION.

There has been murder at Poona. The matter will naturally engage the attention of Parliament, and to-day an attempt will be made to beg the whole question of the remedy by suggesting the suppression of the liberties of the native Press. It would be a great mistake. If false reports are spread in the Press, the Government of India must find out how to spread true ones. It has ample means of every sort at its command, and it ought not to have to confess that it cannot meet the native scribes on their own ground. It will be much more to the point to enquire into the nature of the practices of which the people complain, and to ascertain if they cannot be modified in such a way as to remove the local prejudice against them. It is more than probable that the whole difficulty arises from a certain want of tact and discretion on the part of some persons in authority. The greased cartridge seemed too contemptible a grievance to require the display of those qualities—but we know what came of that.—*Daily News*, July 1.

THOSE WICKED RADICALS!

The latest news from India is like most of the evil tidings

that come at intervals from our remote Dependencies. It makes one wish most vehemently that the electorate had never at any time been prevailed on to instal a Radical Government at Westminster, for it proves anew that the Party of peace-at-any-price is the Party that does most to involve us in the trouble of war. There is no doubt that the existing disturbances in India—which enable us to realise the possibility of that second Mutiny on which our enemies are said to count—is due to the fact that for twelve years all sorts of discontented Babus have been allowed, by special permission of Lord Ripon, to scatter broadcast whatever venomous lies it occurred to them to utter. It has been all too clear for many a day that the granting of this license has had disastrous results. Their outward and visible sign has been murder, and we have learned since then, through the medium of copious quotations from the native Press, how it was that the crime came to be committed. We have rejoiced at Lord George Hamilton's assurance that Poona will be made to understand that Imperial Britain will not always be fettered by the errors of those who have served her from time to time according to the measure of their abilities.—*Morning Post*, July 3.

"A CATEGORICAL DENIAL."

We would draw attention to the character of the reply of the Bombay Government to the memorial of the Deccan Sabha complaining of the plague administration in Poona, and to the circumstances under which that reply was telegraphed. Lord Sandhurst's answer is chiefly a categorical denial; it was telegraphed in haste in reply to the Secretary of State's telegram. Upon what kind of enquiry is that answer based? We do not imagine that any reasonable man will, upon reflection, regard the bare denial of indignities as a sufficient answer to allegations signed by 2,000 persons, and corroborated in the startling letter which we have quoted at the head of this article. Nor can these two thousand persons, their statements and their feelings, be waived aside in the off-hand manner which a certain portion of the Press affect. Some of the signatories, at any rate, are representative men, some Government pensioners, some holding responsible positions. Moreover, those who have put their names to statements alleging specifically the pollution of their homes cannot in any case be lightly brushed aside. To these men that pollution is a grievous shame, even though they be not responsible, and, as reluctant witnesses to their own degradation, they claim with special force an attentive hearing. But above all stands out this admitted fact. Unless the letter from Mr. Rand is a forgery, women have been inspected for bubonic plague in the public streets of Poona by search parties containing men—and this, if nothing else, calls for vigorous enquiry at the hands of the Government. Do not let us be misunderstood. We are for stamping out rebellion promptly and sternly, though we are not for changing our general policy in a panic, and because of a special emergency. But we do not like haste or petulant anger directed not against special offenders, but against a whole people who have grievously suffered.—*Daily Chronicle*, July 7.

THE POONA BRAHMIN.

Poona, of course, has long been notorious as the hotbed of Southern India fanaticism; a town and district where the crafty, mutinous, semi-educated Brahmin walked at large, and freely propagated in newspaper and bazaar his faith in the liberation and regeneration of India on high-caste lines. . . . The Poona Brahmin sees the redcoats of the Poona garrison, and concentrates his fanatical intelligence on the the simplest method for their extermination. Stagnation was his birthright, stagnation is his creed, and stagnation is the only coffin he requires. All that we have done for India is but oil on the flames of his revenge. And yet it is this man, whether as a Government official or a newspaper editor, who persuaded Lord Ripon and Lord Ripon's school of chicken-hearted philanthropists to give him an unbridled press, invite him to Government House and christen him a martyr. . . . The Brahmin fanatic is most powerful and hurtful in his press. There is no censorship in India. In fact, a censorship on Russian lines there never will be. But it is to-day very generally conceded that something must be done to teach the native editor the difference between press liberty and press licence; and the expurgation of the seditious and palpably lying articles against Queen, Government, and army is the one thing wanted. This form of censorship is indeed absolutely necessary, now and at once, if we wish to

save the contented and law-abiding portion of Hindus and Mussulmans from pitting themselves against our bayonets, at the instigation of the high-caste fanatic. Evidence goes to point that the Brahmin editor is responsible for the Poona outrages, and assassins by the pen may, in the long run, prove a deal more formidable to British rule in India than assassins by the sword.—*Daily Mail*, July 1.

"OUR LEAST REFLECTIVE JINGOES" AND THE GAG.

No sooner had the news been telegraphed from Poona than our least reflective Jingoes began to talk about a free press like mediaeval cardinals and about education like Shakespeare's Jack Cade. The Indian press, they discovered on the spot, had too much freedom and too many natives of India were being educated. It is certain, or nearly certain, that the murders were due to ignorant and superstitious resentment of measures taken by British officials for the stamping out of the plague. Yet our wiseacres hold that superstition is best combated by suppressing the expression of free thought, and that you can eradicate ignorance most effectually by closing schools and colleges. One of Mr. Rudyard Kipling's stories describes the murder of an Englishman in India. He had petted the child of his Indian servant, and when the child died soon afterwards of fever the Indian attributed it to the Englishman's exercise of an evil eye, and so cut his throat quietly and secreted the body. The story leaves a striking impression of the gulf which mutual ignorance places between Europeans and natives of India and of the consequent dangers. Yet the moment they are reminded of those dangers these wild writers in England cry out that the gulf must be widened by every means in our power—native newspapers suppressed in order that the Indian Government may know less of what India is thinking, native colleges closed in order that young Indians may learn nothing of our ways and our literature. John Bright once said that the people of this country were a very good people, and that if it received wise advice democracy would be a success, but if it received bad advice then "God help it." It is receiving a marvellous amount of bad advice in detail, most of which may be summed up in the general counsel that it is to place material above moral interests, and to think more than it has done hitherto of being rich and strong, and less than it has done hitherto of suppressing slavery, of protecting peoples whose safety is guaranteed by British treaties, and of giving the people of India any good things of European civilisation that they care to receive. If those counsels were followed, no fleet could do much to delay our decadence.—*Manchester Guardian*, June 28.

SHALL THE PRESS BE GAGGED?

A good many Englishmen in India seem to be of opinion that the time has come for checking the licence of the vernacular Press by an act of the Legislature similar to that passed in Lord Lytton's time, and incontinently repealed by Lord Ripon. It may be necessary; but perhaps there is still time to attain the desired end by some less sensational device. The truth is that the internal peace of India is more effectively ensured by the individual experience and personal efforts of local officials than by the best-intentioned and most carefully-devised precautions invented at Simla or Calcutta for universal application. Some few years ago, in a famous and thickly-populated city in Upper India, the authorities had reason to anticipate a violent collision between Mahammadans and Hindus. Acting on his own responsibility, the English official in charge of the district sent formal letters to all the notabilities of the place requiring them, without exception, to appear and show cause why their dignities and privileges—seats at the Lieutenant-Governor's *darbar*, titles of honour, and so forth—should not be summarily cancelled. The hint was taken, and with one accord they used all their influence to prevent the threatened *émeute*. There was no riot at Delhi on that occasion. This precedent could scarcely be prescribed for imitation throughout India; but the moral, that an experienced district officer can sometimes find ways of his own for maintaining order, is well worth recording.—*Standard*, July 1.

PRESS CENSORSHIP "MADLY FOOLISH."

No doubt the Government of India must be allowed to deal in their own way with any sudden emergency, as with the ordinary requirements of the day. But interference with the liberty of the Press is a grave matter of public policy which cannot be settled without the decision of the Cabinet under their responsibility to the House of Commons. To anyone

acquainted with the history of India the suppression of native newspapers must seem sheer midsummer madness. Incitement to crime is punishable in India, as everywhere else, by the ordinary law. No quotation has been produced in this country from any Indian journal which could possibly be twisted into a suggestion that Mr. Ayerst or Mr. Rand, or anybody else, should be murdered. But, as "Loyal Indian" says, in his second and most excellent letter which we print to-day, "criticism of government action when rightly understood, is a help to good government." "If," adds our correspondent, in words which Lord George Hamilton would do well to learn by heart, "if I were plotting against the Government of India, the first thing I would hope for, wish for, ask for, would be the gagging of the vernacular press and of all newspapers conducted by my countrymen. The suppression of such papers would be like extinguishing of street lights to the burglar." It is not too much to say that if there had been a real vernacular press in India forty years ago there would have been no Indian Mutiny, because those whom it concerned would have been warned in time. The chupatties passed almost unnoticed. There were popular rumours and religious rites which meant nothing to a British officer, even if he saw or heard them. An article in a native newspaper can be read by everyone who does know Hindustani, and translated for everyone who does not. The only restrictions ever imposed upon the Indian Press were the work of the late Lord Lytton, whose example no one, except perhaps Lord George Hamilton, would desire to follow. Sir William Harcourt will be supported by the whole Liberal party in resisting any step so madly foolish as the establishment of a press censorship in India.—*Daily News*, July 3.

A PLEA FOR THE GAG.

Our complaint against the Government is that it is tempted to give too much deference to those who shout aloud for "Freedom of the Press" and "Home Rule for India." Lord George Hamilton's statement that the question will have to be considered if the vernacular Press of Poona be proved to have been directly implicated in the recent outrages is welcome, and it is all we can expect in the meantime. But unless something is done immediately to prune to the quick that pernicious plant of so-called freedom which was sown some twelve years ago in soil not suited for healthy growth, and hailed with so much rejoicing by the Radical Press in this country, we may have dire reason to regret at no distant date our lethargy and self-confident belief that we are never too late to mend anything.—*Morning Post*, July 2.

THE REAL DANGER—TORYISM RUN MAD.

The fuller details of the Indian disturbances and the evidences of continued unrest are disquieting enough, but it is questionable if in themselves they are one-half as disquieting as the persistent Tory refusal to consider and face their meaning and menace. Denials from the Governor of Bombay as to the truth of native grievances at Poona and explanations as to the trivial origin of the riots at Calcutta from the Viceroy of India are taken, in conjunction with the assertions of natives of the Mancherjee Bhownaggee type, as disposing of the entire business. English or Anglo-Indian officialism can do no wrong; and if the natives, out of sheer diabolical perversity, choose to construe its acts into grievances, they must take the consequences at the muzzles of the rifles of an armed police, backed by a reserve of soldiery in case of need. This is, in brief, the burden of columns of Tory comment upon the official versions of the unhappy condition of things in Bombay and Bengal; and any suggestion that further enquiry and discussion is necessary is dismissed as originating in the Radical tradition which believes evil of none but its own countrymen. At the bar of those who believe that at any given moment English rule everywhere is always as perfect as possible we stand condemned as "the trained apologists of disloyalty and sedition seeking to find some excuse for a crime." We say, that this mad dog on the part of the representatives of the Tory and official mind is vastly more disquieting than a murder here and a riot there, even though these are significant of a widespread spirit of revolt; for it is in every respect typical of the mood which has lost thrones and ruined empires since thrones and empires began to be.—*Bradford Observer*, July 7.

THE BLACK MAN.

The black man is the black man after all. You can train a

tiger to perform tricks, you can even make a pet of him; but he is a tiger all the same, and one day you will know it. Let those who write and speak in London against the English in India remember that their words are telegraphed out to the worst press in the world almost as soon as they are uttered. We look to Lord George Hamilton for much more determined action than he has taken at present, and we are amazed that Lord Elgin should remain at Simla when his duty obviously calls him to Calcutta.—*Daily Mail*, July 5.

WANTED: JUDICIAL ENQUIRY.

It looks as if events were conspiring to attract the attention of the public at home, though it be only for a moment, to the condition of India. A cynic might perhaps draw an unpleasant conclusion if he compared the excitement provoked here by the recent assassinations at Poona with the rather general indifference to the deeper problems suggested by the famine and the plague. But the Poona affair, deplorable as it is, will not have occurred in vain if it sets our optimists thinking about the great, and, we fear, growing, gulf between Indian and Anglo-Indian. The majority of our Jingo writers are no doubt prepared to assume off-hand that the murders of Lieutenant Ayerst and Mr. Rand are directly due to inflammatory writing in the vernacular press. They probably forget, by the way, what a colossal object-lesson in bad citizenship is offered by their own angry diatribes at such a crisis as this. What most people would like to see in this matter is full and impartial enquiry—by which we mean, of course, judicial enquiry. At present there is a direct conflict of testimony on the all-important question of the behaviour of the European troops employed in the plague operations at Poona. We must, of course, accept Lord Sandhurst's denial of the charges contained in the joint memorial forwarded on May 10th to the Bombay Government by 2,000 Hindus and Muhammadans of Poona, so far as these denials represent personal knowledge. But the greater part of the document read by Lord G. Hamilton in the House of Commons was mere generality. It will perhaps be difficult to get aggrieved persons to come forward and give evidence under present circumstances. But that fact, if fact it be, does not get rid of the Government's duty. On the contrary, it makes it all the more necessary that the enquiry which ought to have followed close upon the heels of the allegations, should now be conducted with the most scrupulous care and impartiality.—*Progressive Review* (August).

FIRMNESS AND FORBEARANCE.

In the second extract which we publish from Lord Roberts's book is a significant commentary on the license accorded to the native Press, and the influence which this license has upon the minds of all classes of the community. The native Press, as he says, is not an indigenous growth, but an exotic. It is a draught of the strong new wine of the West poured into the old bottles of the East. No doubt it has its uses, if only as a safety-valve. Grievances find a vent which otherwise might assume a more dangerous form if kept in a state of suppression. Equally true, however, it is that the native Press grossly abuses its privileges. The most utterly unfounded charges are made against officials honestly doing their duty, with no other object than that of bringing British rule into contempt and dislike, or of pandering to the secret societies with which parts of India are honeycombed. We are no advocates of muzzling the Press, but it is obviously the duty of the Government in India, as in England or Ireland, to proceed rigorously against publications which deliberately incite to sedition, outrage and assassination. That was Cromwell's advice: "Do not withhold rights because they are abused; punish those who abuse them." Firmness and forbearance judiciously blended may be trusted to quell these disturbances in India, which, after all, are only comparatively small additions to the great burden of Empire.—*Daily Telegraph*, July 5.

"SOME SORT OF PALLIATION."

The Poona affair certainly looks very unpleasant, and there is bad news, too, now from Chitpur. We have, we need hardly say, no sort of sympathy with the unscrupulous agitators who have stirred up the ill-feeling, but is it quite certain that we have done all we could to prevent giving them a handle? Have we sufficiently consulted the very keen religious scruples of the population? All honour to the British troops who have voluntarily undertaken work which must have been as dangerous as it was certainly disagreeable. But we doubt if it is wise to use Tommy Atkins for work of this kind. If our

information is correct, in other parts of India it is native troops which have carried out the sanitary precautions necessary to fight the plague. At Poona this was not done—it may be because it could not be. But if the facts are as we have stated them, this should both reassure us about India as a whole, and at the same time furnish some sort of palliation for those at Poona who were misled into outrage—though not for those who misled them, since they certainly know enough of the facts to know that the British authorities were only acting in the interests of the people.—*Westminster Gazette*, July 1.

"PERILOUS SELF-SUFFICIENCY."

Sir M. M. Bhownaggee, rather amusingly eager to show that he means to render a *quid pro quo* for his unearned decoration, tells us in the *Morning Leader* without much circumlocution that the Indian National Congress, and the British Committee of the Congress, are at the bottom of the whole trouble. The casual observer might well think that the Congress is to Sir M. M. Bhownaggee what King Charles's head was to Mr. Dick. It is that and something more. Sir M. M. Bhownaggee, politically speaking, lives and thrives upon the Congress—that is upon his opposition to it. But a man in his position with regard to the India Office must not expect sensible people to accept his account of the Congress. They are much more likely to accept the account, both of it and of the vernacular press, which is given by Sir Richard Garth—a Tory, a Privy Councillor, a Q.C., and a former Chief Justice of Bengal. Sir Richard Garth finds the Congress a loyal and patriotic body, specially valuable to Government as a source of information. He finds the vernacular press, not seditious, but full of useful and moderate criticism which is dangerous only to those who contumaciously ignore it. Men like Sir M. M. Bhownaggee, while the authorities in India are so often groping in the dark, would extinguish such rushlights as are afforded by the Congress and the press, and remove the influence of education in dispelling superstition and ignorance. Such a policy is merely idiotic and suicidal. The outrages at Poona seem to us to illustrate nothing more remarkably than this—a wilful refusal on the part of our countrymen in India to pay heed to complaints, to appreciate warnings, and to take advice. What is the meaning of this temper? It has, at any rate, all the appearance of a fatuous and perilous self-sufficiency.—*The Star*, July 5.

SELF-COMPLACENCY AND CONTEMPT.

Self-complacency and enormous contempt for the natives mar a good deal of our administrative work in India. The health of the Indian army is a standing proof of the carelessness and inefficiency of many of our officers. The disturbance, at Chitpur, and the still more dangerous sedition at Poona, must have been due to some serious blundering. Of course, the official telegrams read by Lord George Hamilton simply states that the official conduct of affairs was faultless. We are accustomed to official perfection. The Royal Irish Constabulary were never admitted to have made a mistake. But Lord George Hamilton really seems to overdo it altogether. A memorial signed by over 2,000 leading citizens of Poona, and confirmed from numberless other sources, cannot be altogether wrong. We should have been much more inclined to believe that Lord Sandhurst's administrators in Poona had been practically blameless if he had not rebutted in detail every single charge made against them. Red tape is becoming far too plentiful; nothing is more fatal to good government. As for the Tory journals which advocate the suppression of the Indian Press, one cannot help regarding their attitude with a good deal of contempt. The suppression of the freedom of the Press has been compared to cutting out a rattle-snake's rattle. The danger-signal disappears, but the danger remains. The freedom of the Press is indeed one of the greatest securities of Indian administration. It publishes all grievances imaginary or real, and enables our administrators to judge popular feeling and to humour popular foibles in a way which would otherwise be impossible. Of course incitement to outrage, whether in the Press or anywhere else, is a crime in every country and must be punished. But you have no right or reason to prohibit the ventilation of grievances even if 75 per cent. of them are wholly imaginary. We advise our readers to look at Lord George Hamilton's reply to Sir William Wedderburn, and to ask themselves the question:—"Is self complacency a criterion of good government?"—*Leeds Mercury*, July 6.

“SOWING THE WIND.”

Unquestionably, a very dangerous spirit of insubordination is growing up in India and spreading through the land. How is it proposed to be dealt with? In the usual British fashion, of course—by Coercion. India is to be treated as Ireland would be treated, indeed as Ireland has been treated, under similar circumstances. Lord George Hamilton has retracted the half promise which he gave to Sir William Harcourt, that no repression of the native Press will be attempted without the express sanction of the House of Commons. The *Times*, of course, approves, in its customary truculent style, of the abandonment of this pledge. The House of Commons, it argues, has no privilege to interpose between the high mightiness of Anglo-Indian officialdom and its victims. The policy of suppressing the native press, as might be expected, finds a strenuous advocacy in the *Times*. How entirely unjustifiable from the impartial standpoint is the contemplated policy of the Government may be judged from their refusal to submit it to the House of Commons, where they command so enormous a majority. It can be easily imagined what will be the inflammatory effect in India of measures too violent and indefensible even for a Tory House of Commons. If the British Government will persist in this fashion in sowing the wind in India the harvest of the whirlwind cannot be long delayed.—*Freeman's Journal*, July 6.

The complaints of the people of Poona about the manner in which the search for plague patients was carried out are evidently not entirely without foundation. Sir Lepel Griffin, one of the last men to show any sympathy with agitators, condemns the employment of British soldiers for this purpose as certain to give offence. It is all very well to say that decency was observed. Decency is purely a matter of custom, and what would be strictly decent according to European notions might seem grossly indecent to Orientals. Instead of treating such complaints as seditious, the authorities, if they were wise, would meet them with the most careful and patient attention.—Professor E. S. Beesly in the *Positivist Review*.

A mistake may have been made in employing British soldiers instead of natives in enforcing laws which are distasteful to the prejudices and customs of the native population; but it is probable that the Indian Government will have to decide, and that right soon, whether or not it is worth while risking a rebellion in order to save the lives of people who would much rather die than be kept alive by European methods of sanitation. If the natives have made up their minds, as they appear to have done, that life is not worth living if sanitary inspectors are to be free to poke their noses into their domestic arrangements, we had much better let them die and be done with it. There is a zeal for sanitation which leads men to sanction a kind of persecution that is every whit as indefensible as the Inquisition.—*Review of Reviews* (July).

It is necessary to check the absurd tendency of successive Indian Secretaries to regard the friends of India who are connected with the Indian Congress as enemies, who tell untruths, and who must be put down. Lord George Hamilton likes to gibe at these representatives, who are often better informed than he is. By raising a general debate, the Liberal leader will cover with his ægis this relatively small body of members, and, for the time being, act on the same line of policy—that of frank and patriotic criticism.—*Western Mercury*, July 9.

The so-called Indian Congress is another source of trouble. In regard to this, again, a parallel is to be found in organisations in this country, for it is the professional politician who works the oracle in many of our political movements, just as it is by the same class of persons that the same thing is done in India. But there is obviously a greater danger when a war of caste is set on foot, and subject races are incited to rebel, than when it is simply one social class or one political party that rails against another. The Indian Congress does not truly represent any Indian interests—it is an organisation of mere agitators, who thrive on the profits of their agitation.—*Yorkshire Herald*, July 9.

The fact is, we have a weak and incompetent Secretary for India, and that fact is recognised both in India and at home. The Legislative Council in India has given Lord George Hamilton an unprecedented slap in the face in connexion with the Contagious Diseases Acts. The home Government have sent out certain suggestions. The Indian Government has

decided to ignore these suggestions, and not only so, but to act in an absolutely opposite direction. It is absurd to suppose that all these troubles in India and the fact that Lord George Hamilton is at the India Office are to be regarded as a mere accidental coincidence. Directly the Anglo-Indian out there recognised the fact that at this end there was a Secretary who could be played with, they naturally began to do as they liked.—*Morning Leader*, July 10.

It would be unpardonably silly if the Government were to import some of those Continental methods of Press censorship which we are never tired of decrying from a distance, when we have no personal experience of the inconvenience and danger resulting from too great liberty of the Press in an ignorant and inflammable community. At the risk of appearing inconsistent, though, we trust that the utmost tolerance will be shown towards the native newspapers, even when they may appear to overstep the bounds of freedom and reason. Many years ago Lord Salisbury remarked with truth that the natives of India were politically dumb, and an unceasing effort ought to be made to teach them how to give coherent utterance to their wants and feelings.—*Observer*, July 4.

That the people of India are in a very irritable and disheartened mood, and disposed to believe that heaven is angry with their rulers is unhappily too true, but some allowance ought to be made for their ill-temper. They have been very much harassed. The worst effects of the great famine, which is not yet over, have fallen upon the people of the North-West, who are everywhere in all the cities the roughest class, and upon those of the Central Provinces, who are allied in every way by blood and language and creed with the Mahrattas. The plague, which has been a terrible visitation, has fallen upon the latter first of all, and upon the people of Bombay, and it is they who have to bear the loss of property, the cruel panic, and the flight which is its consequence, and the harassing sanitary regulations which are to the majority unintelligible, and because they compel violations of privacy and of what natives consider decency are almost intolerably offensive. It is right as well as expedient to make allowance for such feelings, and, as far as possible, to avoid violence leading to sanguinary scenes.—*Economist*, July 10.

With regard to the dissatisfaction we are strongly under the impression that we have given sufficient cause for it, and should be thankful that the uproar is not more serious and widespread. The situation is simple enough. Our London contemporaries, clever and influential as they are, should endeavour to understand it, and repress the facile tendency of sneering at the Brahmin. The Brahmin is—poor soul—painted a great deal blacker than he is.—*Manchester Evening Chronicle*, July 3.

Mr. Samuel Smith has given notice that he will, at an early date, call the attention of the House of Commons to the great loss and suffering caused to India by plague, famine, and earthquake, and to the desirability of the Home Government endeavouring to mitigate that distress by making a grant to the Indian Government for additional relief to the sufferers; and also to the need of more effective representation of Indian opinion in the Government of the Country, so that greater economy may be practised in Military Expenditure, and more attention paid to internal reforms, especially in the direction of larger irrigation works and more extended elementary education.

GUARDIANSHIP.—MR. C. C. ORD, M.A., of Magdalen College, and Secretary of the Appointments Committee in the University of Oxford, acts as Guardian to persons coming to England for Education, and gives information as to the methods available of Education, General and Professional. Address Secretary, INFORMATION OFFICE (opposite Examination Schools), 44, High Street, Oxford, England.—(Advt.)