

THE
BENGAL RENT BILL

FOR
LAY READERS:

BY
CASSANDRA.

Calcutta:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY S. N. BANERJI, "ENGLISHMAN" PRESS,
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PREFACE.

THIS short pamphlet as its title implies, is meant for the information of those who have neither the time or opportunity to study the history of the Rent Bill.

It does not profess to be an exhaustive examination of the measure. The aim of its author is to place before the general reader in a few words, unburdened with technical terms, the bearings of a question which is calculated to have an effect upon these provinces, the importance of which cannot be over-rated.

CASSANDRA.

THE BENGAL RENT BILL.

A Rent Bill, more especially one relating to India is, we admit, a subject which ordinarily presents but few attractions to the general reader.

The ill-fated Ilbert Bill has had, however, one good effect. It has attracted the attention of the people of England, and has indirectly been the cause of interesting many in the affairs of India which up to the last year interested but a few. "Out of the eater hath come forth meat."

The bitterness and ill-feeling which that ill-omened measure stirred up have, now, it is to be hoped, subsided for ever. We trust, however, that its one good effect will remain, and, that the interest excited at home regarding the well-being of the Indian Empire will not die away with the death of the excitement, which gave that interest birth. We are, therefore, in this hope, emboldened to make an appeal on behalf of a number of our fellow-subjects whose proprietary rights are about to be taken away, and handed over to others who have expressed no desire to attain them, and are absolutely and entirely ignorant of the quasi good fortune which is in store for them.

Now that the angry passions and feelings of race antagonism which have distracted the province for the past year are happily at an end, we would ask our fellow-countrymen in India to follow us, whilst we endeavour to lay

before them the nature and scope of a measure which in our opinion is fraught with evil consequences to these provinces. We appeal to them not only in the name of justice and fair play, but also in the interests of the well-being of the country in which their lot is cast, and in the prosperity of which their own interests are involved.

Had our concern been, however, merely to appeal to our fellow-countrymen in India, it would have been needless to have written this pamphlet.

The subject has been before the Indian public in the columns of the press. It has been ably and eloquently argued upon the platform by men well versed in the question and well able to plead the cause which we are now about to advocate. No words of ours would, therefore, have been necessary to enlist the sympathies and appeal to the reason of the Anglo-Indian community on behalf of the landlords of Bengal, aye, and on behalf of the tenants and cultivators, to whom this measure means nothing short of ruin. Our main object is to state our case for the information of the English public. We wish to appeal to that public to look upon this question as apart from the strife of party politics; and to regard it simply from the point of view of justice and expediency. We are aware that our words would be addressed in vain to those who regard property in land as an unclean thing; and in whose eyes possessions not acquired by trade are little short of standing evils to society. To such persons we do not appeal. We address our remarks, however, to all those, no matter what their political creed may be, who have any regard left for the rights of property, and, who would view with abhorrence any

breach of faith on the part of the English Government with any of its subjects, however helpless or unrepresented they may be.

The Bengal Tenancy Bill has been introduced professedly for the benefit of the cultivators of the soil, and admittedly at the expense of the landlords of Bengal. If we can show that its results, whilst obviously injurious to the landlords will be simply ruinous to the cultivator, we shall, we submit, have made out a case for the interference of Parliament in behalf of the class whose rights and property the proposed measure threatens to attack. To do so, we propose to state in a few words the nature of the Bill now before the Legislative Council of India. We shall show (1) the relations which exist and have existed between landlords and tenant in Bengal from 1793 to the present day ; (2) the direction in which it is proposed to alter and subvert those relations ; (3) that such changes are uncalled for and undesirable in the interests of all parties ; and, finally, we shall show how this measure was brought about and evolved out of previous schemes of legislature utterly different from and foreign to the principles underlying the Bengal Tenancy Act with which we are now face to face.

Up to the year 1793, the British Government, following the example of all other Governments which preceded it in the sovereignty of Bengal, enacted a certain tribute, or as it is called, land revenue, from the zemindars or landlords of that province. This tribute varied from time to time, both in its amount and in the manner in which it was collected. It was some times farmed out, at others it was collected directly. This tribute the Government fixed once and for ever

in 1793, and it was then enacted that the *proprietors* of the land should be relieved from certain duties, which had hitherto been performed by them, and at the same time should be deprived of certain powers which they have exercised up to that date over the persons of their ryots or tenants. At that time there was no question whatever as to the status of the landlord or of the tenant. The one was termed the proprietor of the soil, the other was by implication described as the person who paid rent to that proprietor.

The landlord paid *revenue* to the Government, he was bound, under penalty of having his estate sold by public auction, to pay that revenue by sunset of the day on which it fell due.

In all the Regulations which were enacted at that time, there was not the slightest allusion to the landlords being other than the proprietor of his land, and, the tenant being other than the tenant of that landlord and of no other person.

It was left, as we shall see, for the statesmen of 1883, to assert, that, the word "proprietor" had a different meaning to that usually assigned to it, and that the landlords of Bengal were nothing more or less than middle men or rent collector, between the Government and the cultivator of the soils.

These early Regulations provided for the protection of a certain class of tenants, who, by ancient custom had been allowed to occupy lands on the various estates and were guaranteed from eviction. Those were persons who had from

generation to generation held their lands on the estate, and, whom no landlord ever sought to displace.

In legislating for them, there was no hint thrown out that they were the tenants of Government. The law simply chrystallized custom as it found it to exist, and, legalized the privileges which these tenants by custom were permitted to enjoy.

The law, which compelled the payment of land revenue by the sunset of the last day on which it fell due, operated, in the first instance, very injuriously to the landlord. Many ancient families lost their estates, and, the land of the country changed hands over and over again. The history of legislation from 1793 down to 1859 is a record of enactments to enable the landlord to collect his rents, and of modifications and alterations of those enactments. Throughout the whole of that legislation we look in vain for any suggestion that the landlord was other than the absolute proprietor of his land, or, that the tenant was in any way connected with the Government, other than all the subjects of any civilized Government are connected with it.

In 1859 it was thought necessary to consolidate the law relating to landlord and tenant, and to define what manner of men possessed the rights of holding land at fixed rates and free from arbitrary eviction. It was thought a hardship that, in those days, when registration was unknown, and, when the granting of leases and their counterparts was a practice of rare occurrence, tenants should be obliged to prove that they and their fathers before them had continuously occupied the same land, or, had acquired the right so to occupy it at fixed rates of rent. So, an Act, known in

Bengal as Act X of 1859 was passed, and this Act forms the substantive land law of Bengal at the present day.

This law, to speak briefly, provided that a tenant, who had continuously occupied the same land for a period of 12 years, was protected against eviction, save on the ground of non-payment of rent. That all tenants who had held land continuously at the same rent from the time of the Permanent Settlement of 1793, were entitled to hold at that rent thenceforward and were not liable to have their rents enhanced, and that a continuous holding for twenty years previous to the date of the passing of Act X of 1859 was deemed to have been a holding from the time of the Permanent Settlement unless the contrary were proved. The landlord's power of distraining was limited also to the power of distraining the crops on the ground for the current rent.

In this enactment, amending the law of landlord and tenant, nothing is said to cause the slightest impression to arise that the landlord was other than a proprietor, or, the tenant other than his tenant.

This is the law under which we are now living. It is the law under which, for the last twenty-five years, men have bought and sold landed property. In the faith of the permanence of the principles which brought forth these enactments, men have invested their money in land. They have made provision for their children by purchasing landed property. They are now told, however, that their rights exist only so long as Government chooses to tolerate those rights. That the rights which they have bought and paid for, have no real existence, and that the

Governments which have ruled India from 1793 down to the present day, have merely refrained from the *exercise* of the power of scattering those rights to the four winds, whilst they, undoubtedly, possessed that power all along. We are told that the use of the word "proprietor," which runs throughout all the earlier enactments, was a meaningless use, and, that a Radical Government will now step in and restore agrarian relations to what it asserts the Statesmen of 1793 intended that those relations should be. We interpret the action of the present Government in a different manner; and, so far from admitting that the new legislation is likely to restore things to the conditions intended by the statesmen of 1793, we assert that it will directly violate those intentions, and break the pledges given by the Government of that time. This, too, in order to reduce agrarian relations to conditions, which find favour in the eyes of modern Radical thinkers, whose gifted leader has stigmatized landlords as those "who toil not neither do they spin." We have laid emphasis upon the use of the word *proprietor* in all the text of the earlier laws. We do so because we consider that it rests with the advocates of the present Bill to show, that the framers of those laws were either ignorant of the meaning of words in the English language, or, that they were deliberately misleading those with whom they entered into the compact known to history as the *Permanent Settlement* of Bengal.

It would be wearisome to the reader and beyond the scope of a pamphlet of this nature to enter exhaustively into the changes of the law of landlord and tenant, which this Bill proposes to introduce. We shall, therefore, confine

ourselves to stating the principles of the present law which are about to be subverted, and, the chief innovations which are about to be introduced. Those who have been so unfortunate as to have purchased or inherited land, have done so with the idea that they were entering into a possession, subject to certain rights on the part of their tenants, and no more. These rights may be summed up briefly as rights of immunity from eviction, provided the tenant paid his rent, and had occupied the land in respect of which he claimed that immunity for twelve years; and (2) rights embodied in certain provisions of law regulating the enhancement of rent, in cases in which the tenant had held his land continuously from the time of the Permanent Settlement or from twenty years previous to 1859. Holders of land, also, entered into possession knowing that they were obliged to pay their land revenue by sunset of the day on which it became due, that they were bound to collect for Government certain cesses known as Road Cess and Public Works Cess, and, that the procedure afforded to them for recovering their rent was tedious and slow.

The present Bill aims at creating a new form of tenant right.* It declares that the holding of *any* land in any part of an estate for 12 years gives an immunity from eviction in respect of every acre of land held, no matter for how short a time, in any other part of the estate. This may be illustrated by saying that, if a tenant held land under the Duke of Westminster in London for 11 years, and, during

* The report of the Select Committee invites the opinions of local Governments as to whether a more convenient *fiscal* area than estate would not be devised. The principle, however, remains untouched, that occupancy in one part of an estate or fixed area means occupancy in all that estate or area.

the 11th year, took up a holding from that nobleman in Cheshire, he would be entitled to claim a tenant right in the latter holding, just, as though he had occupied it for 12 years.* Not only that, but every tenant-at-will under the new Act is to be entitled, should the landlord wish to enhance his rent, and evict him should he not agree to this enhancement, to receive 10 times the amount of rent enhanced from this landlord as compensation for disturbance;† (2) the first named tenant-right, or, as it is called, occupancy-right is to be made transferable by sale or otherwise without any reference whatever to the landlord; (3) the landlord is no longer to be allowed to use land, which he may have reclaimed or which may have come upon his hands by the death or desertion of his tenants as he hitherto was enabled to do, in any manner which he might think fit. He is bound, if he lets it, to let it subject to the rights we have mentioned. The stock of land held by landlords as reclaimed land, or land thrown upon their hands by any of the means described, and at present held by them free of existing tenant-right is to be measured and registered. The burden of proof that it is so held is to be thrown on

* Since this was in print the report of the Select Committee on the Bill has been printed, and the following alteration made :—

We have also decided to strike out the clause giving the non-occupancy raiyat compensation for disturbance, but have provided in lieu thereof (section 60) that when an ejectment suit is brought against a non-occupancy raiyat on the ground of his refusal to pay an enhanced rent, the Court shall fix a fair and equitable rent, and the raiyat shall have the option of holding on at that rent for a term of five years, after which he will be liable to be ejected on the same conditions as after the expiry of an initial lease, provided rights of occupancy have not accrued to him in the meantime.

† The squatter is by this better off than he was before for where he might have been got rid of by payment of 10 times the enhancement, he can now stay on for five years on paying what the Court decides fair.

the landlord, and the stock of such land can never be increased ; (4) the right of landlord and tenant to contract with each other, a right inherent in all civilized relations of life is to be absolutely taken away, and, not only that, but, all existing contracts are to be null and void ; and, lastly, the enhancement of rent is to be limited by an arbitrary standard fixed with regard to the price of the staple crop, which is rice, and is the least valuable of all the crops grown.

This is briefly the programme sketched out by the proposed Bill. Every one of the five heads which we have sketched will work injuriously to the tenant. They have only to be stated to show that they are a gross violation of the rights which landlords have bought and paid for, in many cases at auction sales, held at the instance of Government, and by Government officials.

We are aware that the present Cabinet thinks but little of landlords ; and still less of their rights. We shall show, however, that from their own standpoint, the welfare of the cultivator, this Bill is mischievous and destructive.

In the first place, the Bill makes rights of occupancy so valuable that there will be every effort made on the part of landlords to break them. In spite of assertions to the contrary, we affirm that, up to the present, landlords, as a rule, have allowed rights of occupancy, to grow up.

We have the assertion of Sir E. Baring that 90 per cent. of the tenants of Bengal have acquired those rights. Landlords are now, as a rule, on good terms with their tenants they accommodate them in many ways as, for instance, giving them the right to cut grass and reeds for building their houses without making any charge. This accommodation

will no longer be given. Landlord and tenant will be ranged into hostile camps, and every device will be resorted to by the landlord to make the right of occupancy, which the law will have forced upon the tenant, as worthless as he possibly can make it. This will not be conducive to the well-being of the tenant.

If the object of the Legislature had been to ruin the cultivator, it could not have gone better to work, than by giving him the right to sell his occupancy rights. Improvidence, thriftlessness, and, a facility for incurring debt are the characteristics of the Bengal cultivator. Upon the occasion of every marriage, at every death, and at every religious festival his one idea is to spend money on useless ceremonies. Married when they are children, Bengal cultivators have large families when Englishmen have not yet thought of taking a wife.

The great protection they have had hitherto against ruin has been, that their tenant right was not transferable, and that the money-lender closed his purse, when he found that he had exhausted the security which the tenant could give. Now this will be at an end. As sure as fate, one by one will these occupancy rights pass into the hands of the money-lender, and the tender mercies of the money-lender are cruel. His little finger is thicker than the loins of the zemindar or landlord. Within 20 years, not one of the present generation of tenants will be left in the land. Their place will be taken by a race of serfs, ground down by the ruthless tyranny of grasping and avaricious middle men, Mr. Ilbert, in introducing the Bill, admits that it will create a class for whom, he says, future statesmen will have to legis-

late. A truly statesman-like policy, to create an evil for future legislators to remedy. The transferability of tenant right will, we claimed to have shown, be productive of nothing but evil to the very class for whose benefit this revolution is being introduced.

The limiting of the stock of land held by landlords, free from tenant right, will also prove injurious to the cultivator. It will prevent landlords from reclaiming waste lands. There are, we are told, in one part of these provinces thousands and tens of thousands of tenants eagerly seeking land ; there are, on the other hand, thousands and tens of thousands of acres of land in the eastern districts of Bengal, which only require clearing to be made fertile and fit for cultivation. Yet, the proposed law contemplates the tying down of the cultivator upon land insufficient for his support by new and fictitious right of occupancy. Whilst, on the other hand, it puts a positive bar to the employment of the capital of the landlords, in reclaiming jungle lands for the use of the cultivator of the soil. Yet this law is, we are told, to create plenty and prosperity out of poverty and misery.

As regards the prohibition of the right of landlord and tenant to enter into contracts for their mutual benefit all we have to say is, that the Government which introduced it is the Government which declared that the people were fit for local self-Government, and were fit to administer public funds—the Government, which has so recently posed as the beneficent leveller of race distinctions. The *law* may abolish the right of contract, but custom is stronger than law. Ready-money transactions will take the place of promises to pay.

For the future, illegal cesses will be given in place of legal rent. The exactions of such cesses will be the more rigorous because they are illegal, and, the cultivator will be driven to have recourse to the money-lender for the ready-money, the payment of which will precede any engagement entered into between him and his landlord with whom he will not be allowed to enter into a contract. The last state of the cultivator will, therefore, be worse than the first.

The arbitrary restrictions on the enhancement of rent will also cut both ways. If it is true, that in many parts of the country tenants are rack-rented, it is none the less true, that, in many parts of the country, tenants are under-rented. In the latter case landlords will at once run up their rents to the uttermost limit allowed by law. In all cases, litigation and ill-feeling will take the place of the friendly relations which at present exist.

Such then will be the results to the tenant or cultivator should the Bengal Rent Bill become law.

As to the necessity for such a sweeping measure, we have but to go to the written reports of the Government of Bengal for the past three years and to the utterances of the late Lieutenant-Governor. It would be tedious to reproduce them, but the written words are on record. Unexampled prosperity has marked the history of the province for the past four years. The cultivators have thriven and prospered. Instances of oppression have grown few and far between, with improved administration; and the people are growing in intelligence and knowledge of their rights. The landlords alone have experienced difficulties in realizing their rents. These difficulties it is proposed to increase still further.

It may be asked how this legislation has come about. We shall give a brief history of it for the benefit of those who are ignorant of how such a revolution has come to be contemplated.

From the year 1870, when Government enacted that the landlords of Bengal should collect from their tenants and pay in to the Government Treasury the Road Cess and Public Works Cess, there has been as constant desire on the part of the landlords that some assistance should be given them in realizing their rents. The process allowed by law was tedious and unsatisfactory, and, it was almost proverbial that a landlord's troubles began when he got a decree against his tenant. This was recognized by Sir G. Campbell, Sir R. Temple and Sir Ashley Eden ; and during the last named Lieutenant-Governor's tenure of office, a Bill was actually introduced for facilitating the collection of rents. It was introduced by a gentleman who has had a considerable connection with the present Bill. It is true that, in introducing the Bill, he gave to the Bengal Council his aspirations and hopes regarding future legislation, but he introduced the Bill ; and gave as his reason for introducing it, the sense that the Government of Bengal had of the unnecessary difficulties which hampered the landlord in the collection of his rents. That Bill was abruptly withdrawn, and a Commission was appointed to report upon the relations of landlord and tenant in Bengal and to prepare a draft Bill. In order that they may understand the composition of this Commission, it will be necessary to inform our readers as to the branches into which the Civil Service is divided. There are two—the executive and the judicial. Those who belong

to the former branch are charged with the magisterial and fiscal management of districts. Their lives are spent amongst the people. They are obliged to be in tents in the interior for at least three months of every year. They are brought into intimate connection with every class of the people, and have been rightly described as the eyes and hands of Government. The duties of judicial officers, on the other hand, are of a sedentary nature. They are occupied with civil and sessions work, and, except when they have to inspect an out-lying court, are never called upon to move into the interior. Now the Rent Law Commission consisted of a President, who is a gentleman of great and varied experience, and of two judicial officers, neither of whom had had charge of a district for any length of time, and whose experience was chiefly derived from the judicial side of the service. There were also two members of the executive service, one of whom ceased, at an early period, to sit on the Commission, and another, whose experience was almost entirely derived from the Secretariat in Calcutta, and who had charge of a district, we believe, but once, and that for about a year. There were also three native gentlemen on the Commission. Of the ability of the gentlemen who composed this Commission there can be no question, but, with the exception of the President, their experience had not been acquired from the intimate knowledge of the people and of their condition which independent charge of a district can alone give.

Had this Commission gone from district to district and examined the question upon which they were to report in the light of local enquiry, the results would, we think, have been very different, but the Commission sat in Calcutta,

took no evidence whatsoever, and evolved a report and draft Bill which the President admitted was the result of differences of opinion, varying from downright opposition to imperceptible shades of difference.

This was signed with various dissenting notes, was avowedly the result of a compromise, and was put forward with the idea on the part of the President that the whole question would be discussed at a future time and after the opinions of the various district officers and Commissioners of divisions had been obtained. The Report and Bill were printed and circulated, and, with but few exceptions, the officials consulted were loud and uncompromising in their dissent from its principles and provisions.

The reader would naturally suppose that this would have been sufficient for the Government of India, and have caused it to direct a fresh enquiry and a fresh draft. The reports of the various officials were, however, submitted by the Secretary to the Government of Bengal (himself a member of the Rent Commission) to the Government of India, with a letter, which to say the least of it was not calculated to add to the force of the opinions expressed against the Bill. We quote from the Report printed and published by Government.

“In considering these criticisms the Lieutenant-Governor has felt bound to be specially careful to weigh, not merely to count, opinions. It is evident from some of the reports that want of leisure or inclination has prevented the writers from studying the report of the Commission thoroughly, and mastering the intricate subject in all its different bearings; whilst the small amount of settlement

work in Bengal, and the transfer (in 1869) of rent suits to the Civil Courts have, it is to be feared, deprived the younger generation of revenue officers of that intimate acquaintance with the rural economy of Bengal possessed by their predecessors. It thus not unfrequently happens that the most off-handed disparagement of the work of the Rent Commission proceeds from officers on whose judgment in revenue matters the Government is not in the habit of placing much reliance."

The Report and Draft, therefore, went up to the Government of India, with a note, discrediting those who ventured to differ from its principles, and to deny the necessity for legislation. The Government of Bengal, however little reliance it might have placed upon the opinions of the hostile critics to the Bill, did not wholly ignore them. A Commission was issued to a gentleman, a member of the Board of Revenue, to go round to the various centres and tap the sources of local information. This gentleman's proclivities in favour of a peasant proprietary were well known. Yet he, in the Report and draft Bill which he submitted, did not venture to go the lengths to which the Rent Commissioners had reached. His report and Bill were then circulated; this time to *selected* officials, men upon whose judgment, presumably, the Government was in the habit of placing some reliance.

Those of them who had opposed the original Bill of the Rent Commission reiterated their opposition, and almost all of them approved of the modifications which were introduced. It became the duty of the Secretary to the Government of Bengal again to forward these reports to the

Government of India. In his letter he abstained altogether from summarizing these opinions. He merely alluded them with the remark that they were worthy of attention, and proceeded to demolish the arguments set up by the land-holding classes against the Bill.

He also submitted a minute written by one of his late colleagues, one of the ablest lawyers in India, to the following piece of criticism:—"The Lieutenant-Governor has seen unofficially a minute by Mr. Justice Field, the late Secretary to the Rent Commission, with reference to Mr. Reynolds' memorandum and revised Bill. Free use has been made of Mr. Field's suggestions on certain points. But he has not had the advantage of seeing the detailed criticisms on the Commissioners' Bill, or of discussing it point by point with officials and non-officials for months past as has been done by the Lieutenant-Governor, *his Secretary* (the writer) and Mr. Reynolds, and his own prejudices as drafter of the Commission Report and Bill were naturally enlisted on the side of their work."

Thus every expression of opposition to the principles which pervade the present Rent Bill was disposed of, and a Bill was drafted and sent home to the Secretary of State for approval, which was, however, too revolutionary in its provisions for even a liberal Cabinet Minister. Certain provisions were, therefore, cut out, and the result is the Bill which is now before the Council.

This Bill was once more submitted to the criticism of the local officers, and an overwhelming majority of those whose experience in the country is of long standing, and whose lives have shown a never-failing concern for the wel-

fare of the people, has once more condemned the measure as a violation of the rights of property, uncalled for and unnecessary.

This is a plain history of the events which preceded the introduction of the Rent Bill. We leave our readers to make their own comments upon the course of events which transformed a Bill, brought forward for the purpose of facilitating the collection of rents, into a measure depriving the landlords of the only power of collection they were possessed of, and a redistribution of property beside which the Irish Land Act pales into insignificance. We ask the people of England if they will, unmoved, see a measure like this pass into law.

The landlords of Bengal are a peaceable and law abiding race of men. We have nothing to fear that, even should this redistribution of their property take place, they will resent it by any but constitutional means. Like the landlords of Ireland they are ranged on the side of law and order, and it is to their interests that the country should be peaceable. Like the Irish landlords, too, they have ever stood by the British rule in times of trouble and distress. During the mutiny, their loyalty was conspicuous and their aid invaluable. During the famine, it has been left on record that they came forward with their assistance wherever it was required. In the every day life of every district officer it has hitherto been the custom to expect from the landlords of the country aid and co-operation in carrying out works of utility, and it is not often that this expectation is disappointed. Yet these men are to be deprived of rights which they unmolestedly have enjoyed for ninety years. They are to be told that the tacit and explicit recognition

of these rights by a series of Governments has no meaning, and that they are now to restore to the tenants the years which the locust hath eaten.

This announcement is made to them at the instance of no one, save those whose views of landed property are peculiar, and who seek, under the name of restoring ancient rights, to subvert all existing relations and make them conform to what they themselves think right. No ryot has ever asked for the Bill, and no ryot wants it. All that the people of this land require is to be left in peace and freed from the perpetual feeling of unrest, in which they have lived since the advent to power of the present Ministry. We ask that enquiry should precede legislation; and that the landlords, as a class, should not be condemned and fined without a hearing. We ask that men whose loyalty has been tried and proved should not be treated as though they were the common enemies of their fellow-countrymen. We appeal to all classes of our countrymen to protest against a subversion of existing relations until some cause for their subversion has been shown, to protest against a measure; which will admittedly create a class of paupers for whose protection legislation will again have to be set in motion; and by every constitutional means to insist upon the withdrawal of a measure which is dictated by the spirit which despoiled the landlords of Ireland to give to rebels and outrage-mongers, which would despoil the landlords of India to give their property to those who have never desired it; and which will not stop until the landlords of England have been forced to distribute their property amongst the proletariat of Birmingham and Manchester.

The note of war has already been sounded in England, by the Crusade preached by Mr. George against the land. We ask the co-operation of those who still value the rights that from ancient time have been supposed to belong to property to defend the outwork that is now being attacked in India and by their votes to deliver the country from a so-called freedom which when reduced to words means an implicit obedience to the dictates of a Radical majority.