

Indian Politics



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NOTE.

This book is intended to present in a handy form the Indian view of many problems of pressing importance in this country. To most persons, the study of these questions at first hand in original documents must, on account of their great bulk, be an impossible task. A short authoritative exposition of them such as is for the first time presented in a collected form in this book, has been felt to be a great desideratum.

The writers of the various articles, as may be readily seen from their names, are well known public men of various parts of this country and may claim to speak with authority upon the questions they handle. The publisher cannot adequately acknowledge his indebtedness to these gentlemen, who have, at considerable personal inconvenience, readily responded to his request, looking for their sole reward in any service that the book may render towards creating a more cordial understanding between England and India.

It is understood that Mr. Dutt's article originally appeared under another title in the Asiatic Quarterly Review. It has since been specially rewritten for this book and it appears here with the kind permission of the editor of that Journal.

THE PUBLISHER.



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INTRODUCTION.

The articles contained in this book are well worthy of the attention of all those who are interested in the welfare of India and therefore in the continuance of British rule in this country. They are written by men who possess thorough knowledge of the subjects dealt with by them and in a style which, I venture to think, will command respect from even the most critical of literary critics. The title of the book, though appropriate enough, hardly does justice to its contents. It is not simply "Indian politics" that are to be found in it but matters of the gravest importance to Great Britain and her great dependency. Indian politicians, both Native and European, all feel the apathy of the British public, as regards Indian politics, very keenly. No doubt there is some excuse for this apathy, for their own multitudinous affairs at home are enough to engross the attention of the most energetic amongst them. Nevertheless, it is but right that an Imperial nation like the British should devote some attention to the affairs of India. No body desires that the British public or the Imperial Parliament should meddle itself with the details of Indian Administration. These may be fitly left in the hands of the Government in India. But the principles on which the administration is to be carried on are surely deserving of attention on the part of those who may be said to be the ultimate court of appeal in relation to India and her government. In recent times the initiation of all policy and even the mode in which that policy should be given effect to with regard to the government of this country, have passed into the hands of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India. An appeal to him, therefore, against any decision of the Government of India in India can be of no avail, for the appeal to him is really an appeal against his own decision. But I need not further enlarge on this topic. The articles in this book, though they do not directly touch on this point, sufficiently show how necessary it is for the good government of this country that the British public should take an intelligent interest in its affairs. Discussion of Indian affairs in England, even when perfunctory, has a good effect on the minds of our educated people. It shows them that their country and her people are not altogether out of the minds of their fellow subjects in Great Britain and it helps to cement their loyalty to their rulers. Why is it that the educated classes of this country make so many sacrifices to maintain the British Committee of the Indian National Congress in London and those who know to

circumstances of the bulk of these classes are can alone appreciate the extent of these sacrifices? They know that the Committee are engaged in disseminating information about their country amongst the British people. They realise that the task of rousing the attention of the British people to matters Indian is extremely difficult. They feel that no great measure of success has yet been achieved by the labours of the Committee, incessant though they have been and are. Yet they go on subscribing large sums of money year by year in the hope that at some time or other the Committee may succeed in inducing the British public to think of the responsibility they owe to the people of India. They have a firm faith in the love of justice and fair-play on the part of the British public and they know that when once that public begin to pay heed to the affairs of India, their position as citizens of the British Empire will be improved and with this improvement will come many other blessings of British rule which have hitherto been withheld from them. I venture to hope that this book may be of help to the British Committee in their work.

It is, I think, right that I should, as shortly as possible, deal with a charge which has of late been freely advanced against the educated portion of Her Majesty's British Indian subjects. It is that the educated Indian is seditious at heart, which in plain language, means that he desires the overthrow of British rule in India. No charge can be more absolutely devoid of foundation than this. The educated Indian like his uneducated countrymen of the present generation has known no Government of his country except the British Government, he has learnt from his studies what the condition of his country was before this Government was firmly established on the land, he sees daily the improvements that have been made and are being made in the condition of his country, he experiences daily the great benefits which British rule has conferred on her, he himself is the product of that benign policy which introduced Western education into his country, he has everything to lose and nothing to gain by the overthrow of the present Government. But yet, it is gravely asserted by eminent personages in high places that the educated Indian is seditious. The educated Indian has his faults, but whatever these faults may be it cannot be asserted that he is blind to his own material interests and it is his own material interests that sway him altogether towards being loyal and contented, as loyal subjects should be contented, towards the Government. Indeed the principle on which the Indian National Congress is based is that British rule should be permanent and abiding in India and that, given this axiom, it is the duty of educated Indians to endeavour to the utmost to help their rulers so to govern the country as to

improve her material prosperity and make the people of all classes and communities happy and prosperous and contented as subjects of the British Empire. The sooner this erroneous but very mischievous notion that the educated Indian is seditious is given up the better for the country. The Indian National Congress consists entirely of educated Indians and as Mr. Eardley Norton in his article on that body well expresses it, "India accepts England's rule gladly and gratefully because she believes that the English is the greatest of all the nations of the earth &c., &c., &c. Our rule is accepted because it is honest."

It will probably be news to many that the Indian National Congress, as it was originally started and as it has since been carried on, is in reality the work of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava when that nobleman was Governor-General of India. Mr. A. O. Hume, C.B., had, in 1884, conceived the idea that it would be of great advantage to the country if leading Indian politicians could be brought together once a year to discuss social matters and be upon friendly footing with one another. He did not desire that politics should form part of their discussion, for, there were recognised political bodies in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and other parts of India, and he thought that these bodies might suffer in importance if when Indian politicians from different parts of the country came together, they discussed politics. His idea further was that the Governor of the Province where the politicians met should be asked to preside over them and that thereby greater cordiality should be established between the official classes and the non-official Indian politicians. Full of these ideas he saw the noble Marquis when he went to Simla early in 1885 after having in the December previous assumed the Viceroyalty of India. Lord Dufferin took great interest in the matter and after considering over it for some time he sent for Mr. Hume and told him that, in his opinion, Mr. Hume's project would not be of much use. He said there was no body of persons in this country who performed the functions which Her Majesty's Opposition did in England. The newspapers, even if they really represented the views of the people, were not reliable and as the English were necessarily ignorant of what was thought of them and their policy in native circles, it would be very desirable in the interests as well of the rulers as of the ruled that Indian politicians should meet yearly and point out to the Government in what respects the administration was defective and how it could be improved; and he added that an assembly such as he proposed should not be presided over by the local Governor for in his presence the people might not like to speak out their minds. Mr. Hume was convinced by Lord Dufferin's arguments and when he placed

Lord Dufferin's, before leading politicians in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and other parts of the country, the latter unanimously accepted Lord Dufferin's scheme and proceeded to give effect to it. Lord Dufferin had made it a condition with Mr. Hume that his name in connection with the scheme of the Congress should not be divulged so long as he remained in the country, and this condition was faithfully maintained and none but the men consulted by Mr. Hume knew anything about the matter.

Since its establishment educated India has laboured hard, under difficulties of no mean order, to make the Congress movement a success. That it has been successful beyond the most sanguine expectations of those who took part in the first Congress can be gathered from the figures given in Mr. Norton's article to which I have referred. The subjects discussed have been of varying importance, but whatever their importance, they have all received earnest and careful attention. It would not be a human organisation if it could be said of it that it has committed no mistakes. But the mistakes notwithstanding, the Congress stands before the world as one of the marvellous successes of British Rule in India.

W. C. BONNERJEE.

CALCUTTA, *December 20th* 1898.

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THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

EARDLEY NORTON, ESQ. *Barrister-at-Law.*

The history of the rise and development of British power in India is full of startling and fascinating romance. This all who read admit. But not all equally perceive that one of its greatest lessons is the lesson of that gradual, yet ceaseless, evolution which, with the inexorable logic of events, is shaping the destinies of the people of India in strict consonance with the principles which from the first have governed her intercourse with England. The India of to-day is the outcome of no blind chance, of no mere freak. She has been built up of design. For good or for ill she is what England has made her. If her aspirations of to-day be wise and good and generous, the merit of it lies in great measure with England. If her requests be unreasonable, her ambitions impracticable, with England lies the blame.

Let me attempt a very brief review. The handful of English merchants whose commercial instincts first sent them to India in quest of Eastern treasure rose by quick bounds into the dignity of the East India Company, guaranteed by successive Charters from the Crown. It was not long before the Company, partly from the pressure of its surroundings, partly from the acquisitive characteristics of its servants, expanded from a pure trading corporation into a territorial ruler. In the fight for life it fought and conquered France in India, though the skill of Dupleix had at one time nearly wrested for ever for his master's crown the jewel of which Englishmen are so justly proud in the diadem of their Queen. In the dissension and the weakness of the Indian chiefs Clive and Warren Hastings found their opportunity and their strength. The decaying Moghul Empire was a bait too tempting not to be seized. England lent her military aid now to one combatant, now to the other, and extracted, much to her own advantage, territorial advantages from both. The possessions thus acquired by diplomacy, shadowed by the sword, were slowly though surely consolidated, but over their continued retention hung the constant fear that coalition between the disunited Indian chieftains might imperil, if not oust, the hard won acquisitions of the Company's servants. The system of alliance had been tried and had so far done its work well. But it was unsuited to the necessities of England's political position in India and

EARDLEY NORTON.

them better adapted to the ever-increasing responsibilities with which British power was daily clothing itself in the land. Politically, and for present purposes, this new departure marks the first step in the evolution which I trace.

Clive, Hastings, and Cornwallis had been among the earliest and the greatest to contribute to the growth of the British power. It was left to the brothers Wellesley—Richard, the charming classic, afterwards Governor-General, and Arthur, the conqueror of Napoleon—to discern that if British rule was to be constant it must be paramount. It could brook no rivals near its throne. The ghost of French ascendancy must be laid at once and for all time, the system of alliance must make room for a system of protectorates. Anticipating the joint action of the French and Tippoo Sahib, Wellesley promptly invaded Mysore in 1799. The capture of Seeringapatam speedily closed that campaign, and in 1803 Wellesley turning his attention to the Peishwa put the seal upon his brilliant undertaking by the successful issue of the wars against Scindia and the Raja of Berar. The treaties which followed on these accomplished two purposes. They extinguished the French and they shattered the Mahratta power. "Forty millions of populations and ten millions of revenue" were added to the British dominions, and England had made sure of the first step upon that ladder which she has ultimately climbed to the permanent exclusion, as is hoped, of all her other rivals throughout the world. Wellesley's policy assured the success of England's new political departure. The way had been won from alliance to protection. The status of the native chiefs had been lowered. They were no longer treated on terms of equality. They were to be thenceforth but distinguished subordinates whose armies were only to fulfil the requirements of puppets on parade, guaranteed against each other and rendered impotent against themselves and against England. The princes of India found their occupation gone. They were no longer permitted to war upon each other; an unseen genius was everywhere making its influence felt. Order was slowly rising out of chaos. Lawlessness was sulkily bowing its head before the imperious commands of an overlord who would brook no denial. The chiefs were publicly invited to govern well. The evils of misrule were politely pointed out to them, but they felt that the substance had gone from them and with the shadow they were not contented. There was only one alternative left and they took it. The proud leaders of daring horsemen surrendered themselves to habitual self-indulgence. Sensuality and debauchery became the badges of a decadent chivalry. Not for the first time in the world's history wine and women played a decisive role. Sunk in their pleasures alike to their subjects' entreaties and to the warnings of their enemies, they were thrown over them unasked the aegis of its

"In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward. And may the God of all Power grant to us, and to those in authority under us strength to carry out these our wishes for the good of our people."

Those words are part of the daily life of every educated Indian. Men of all castes and of all professions turn to them as Christian men turn to their Bible, for comfort, for inspiration, for hope. Have the Queen's promises been kept? A little further on, and the question shall be answered from the lips of English statesmen not prone to throw discredit upon the country of their birth. Meantime, the Proclamation marked the dawn of a new era. Hitherto the policy of England's statesmen had been confined to a protectorate of the princes. Henceforward its scope was to be enlarged, and within its fatherly embraces was to be enfolded an altruistic control over the educational and material prosperity of some two hundred millions of Indian subjects.

Three years before the mutiny another great Charter had been bestowed upon the peoples of India. The despatch of 1854 marked the first dawn of the educational, as the Queen's Proclamation marked the first dawn of the political privileges of her Indian subjects. The authors of the educational despatch, it must be assumed, did not throw their gift heedlessly upon the waters. They must have foreseen the inevitable result of their policy, and have deliberately intended to adopt the inevitable trend of their grant. England repudiated neither the despatch nor Lord Canning's establishment in 1857 of the three Universities of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. Within twenty years of the Queen's accession England deliberately accorded India some of those gifts which she herself had acquired only after centuries of toil, of passion and of pain. From a similar ordeal she openly absolved her greatest dependency. She went further. She threw open by Parliamentary aid the Civil Service to open competition. Nomination died and was buried. The highest administrative prizes of India, it was announced, were within the grasp of any one who could pass a public examination in London. That was indeed a grave step in advance upon the close system of cadetship or of that under which young men were trained for India in the quiet of the college in leafy Hertfordshire.

This sketch, hasty and imperfect, and in the main, a summary from memory of a charming article by Sir William Hunter in the *Contemporary Review* of 1888, brings me down to 1858. It is necessary to go back awhile to trace what was the attitude of great English statesmen in years long anterior to the Queen's Proclamation towards the government of the Indian peoples. This retrospective will serve a three-fold purpose. It will show first that

protection, the princes of India were startled out of their harems and their libations by the sudden incursion of an unlooked for, yet not undeserved, Nemesis.

Across the panorama of great events there moves no greater figure than that of Dalhousie. Into the morality of his methods it is not the purpose of this essay to enquire. His ambitions have given us Jhansi, Satara, Oudh. Some there are who believe that they gave us also the mutiny. His hand has writ his name large on the parchments of Indian history, and his actions have made possible the India of to-day. Swift, stern and silent, he glided over the stage of history, avenging, punishing, annexing, always in the name of God and of a civilisation righteously angered at the misdeeds of the besotted chieftains of the North. There was one angry outburst against the punitive intervention of England's might, a few more cruelties added to the list of wrongs which it had been the duty of England—self-imposed or Divine according to different schools—to erase, and there was heard no further public protest against the policy which had been handed augmented yet intact by its authors the brothers Wellesley through a long line of illustrious lieutenants to be the germ of a newer policy, of a greater advance and of a more adventuresome development. The selfishness and debauchery of the princes of India had rendered possible, if not necessary, the second step in the history of Indian political evolution.

The mutiny of fifty-seven had hardly spent itself, and the echoes of the Cawnpore horrors were still ringing in the ears of Englishmen, when Her Majesty issued that Proclamation to which all Indians turn as to the great Charter of their liberties. The gift was trebled by the method of its grant. The land was still throbbing with the crisis through which it had passed. The air was full of cries for vengeance. The Governor-General had been scoffingly pelted with the attribute of a mistaken virtue. Suddenly from amidst the noise and confusion emerged the figure of a royal woman, cool, collected, pitiful, who of her regal bounty spontaneously showered upon India, cowed and trembling, the sacrament of forgiveness and the promise of a new life. It was thus she spoke:—

"We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and those obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil."

"And it is our further will that, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified, by their education, ability, and integrity, to discharge."

regarded India as a trust in the hands of England for Indian ends : secondly, that they intentionally held out to the peoples of this country the hope in future years of a generous employment in the service of their own land ; and, thirdly, that the Queen's Proclamation was itself only one step in the history of evolution, made possible by the openly avowed sentiments of the statesmen who governed England when the Queen herself was a girl in her teens.

When in 1833, Parliament searched deeply into Indian affairs, it was thus that the Marquis of Lansdowne spoke :

" He should be taking a very narrow view of this question, and one utterly inadequate to the great importance of the subject, which involved in it the happiness or misery of 100,000,000 of human beings, were he not to call the attention of their lordships to the bearing which this question and to the influence which this arrangement must exercise upon the future destinies of that vast mass of people. He was sure that their lordships would feel, as he indeed felt, that their only justification before God and Providence for the great and unprecedented dominion which they exercised in India was in the happiness which they communicated to the subjects under their rule, and in proving to the world at large and to the inhabitants of Hindustan that the inheritance of Akbar (the wisest and most beneficent of Mahomedian princes) had not fallen into unworthy or degenerate hands. Hence it was important that when the dominion of India was transferred from the East India Company to the King's Government they should have the benefit of the experience of the most enlightened councillors, not only on the financial condition of our empire in the East, but also on the character of its inhabitants. He stated confidently, after referring to the evidence given by persons eminently calculated to estimate what the character of the people of India was, that they must, as a first step to their improved social condition, be admitted to a larger share in the administration of their local affairs. On that point their lordships had the testimony of a series of successful experiments and the evidence of the most unexceptionable witnesses who had gone at a mature period of their life and with much natural and acquired knowledge to visit the East. Among the crowd of witnesses which he could call to the improvable condition of the Hindu character he would select only two ; but those two were well calculated to form a correct judgment, and fortunately contemplated Indian society from very different points of view. Those two witnesses were Sir Thomas Munro and Bishop Heber. He could not conceive any two persons more eminently calculated to form an accurate opinion upon human character, and particularly upon that of the Hindu tribes. They were both highly distinguished for talent and integrity, yet they were placed in situations from which they might have easily come to the formation of different opinions—one of them being conversant with the affairs of the East from his childhood and familiarised by long habit with the working of the system, and the other being a refined Christian philosopher and scholar going out to the East late in life, and applying in India the knowledge which he had acquired here to form an estimate of the character of its inhabitants. He held in his hand the testimony of each of those able men, as extracted from their different published works, and with the permission of the House he would read a few words from both. Sir T. Munro, in speaking of the Hindu character, said : ' Unless we suppose that they are inferior to us in natural talent, which there is no reason to believe, it is much more likely that they will be duly qualified for their employments than Europeans for theirs—because the field of selection is so much greater in the one than in the other. We have a whole nation from which to make our choice of natives, but in order to make choice of Europeans we have only the small body of the Company's covenanted servants. No conceit more wild and absurd than this was ever engendered in the

darkest ages; for what is in every age and every country the great stimulus to the pursuit of knowledge but the prospect of fame or wealth or power? Or what is even the use of great attainments if they are not to be devoted to their noblest purpose, the service of the community, by employing those who possess them according to their respective qualifications in the various duties of the public administration of the country? Our books alone will do little or nothing; dry simple literature will never improve the character of a nation. To produce this effect it must open the road to wealth and honor and public employment. Without the prospect of such reward no attainments in science will ever raise the character of a people.' That was the sound practical opinion of Sir T. Munro, founded on his experience acquired in every part of India, in every department of the public service. Bishop Heber, during his extensive journey of charity and religion through India, to which he fell at length a martyr, used these remarkable expressions: 'Of the natural disposition of the Hindu I still see abundant reason to think highly, and Mr. Bayley and Mr. Melville both agreed with me that they are constitutionally kind-hearted, industrious, sober, and peaceable; at the same time that they show themselves on proper occasions a manly and courageous people.' And again: 'They are decidedly by nature a mild, pleasing, and intelligent race, sober, parsimonious, and, where an object is held out to them, most industrious and persevering.' Their lordships were therefore justified in coming to the same conclusion—a conclusion to which, indeed, they must come if they only considered the acts of this people in past ages—if they only looked at the monuments of gratitude and piety which they had erected to their benefactors and friends—for to India, if to any country, the observation of the poet applied:

'Sunt hic etiam sua præmia laudi.

Sunt lacrymæ rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.'

But, however much civilisation had been obscured in those regions, whatever inroads foreign conquest and domestic superstition had made upon their moral habits, it was undeniable that they had still materials left for improving and ameliorating their condition: and their lordships would be remiss in the performance of the high duties which devolved upon them if they did not secure to the numerous natives of Hindustan the ample development of all their mental endowments and moral qualifications. It was a part of the new system which he had to propose to their lordships that to every office in India every native, of whatsoever caste, sect, or religion, should by law be equally admissible, and he hoped that Government would seriously endeavour to give the fullest effect to this arrangement, which would be as beneficial to the people themselves as it would be advantageous to the economical reforms which were now in progress in different parts of India."

The other view of the question was put by Lord Ellenborough thus:

"He felt deeply interested in the prosperity of India, and when he was a Minister of the Crown, filling an office peculiarly connected with that country, he had always considered it his paramount duty to do all in his power to promote that prosperity. He was as anxious as any of his Majesty's Ministers could be to raise the moral character of the native population of India. He trusted that the time would eventually come, though he never expected to see it, when the natives of India could, with advantage to the country and with honour to themselves, fill even the highest situations there. He looked forward to the arrival of such a period, though he considered it far distant from the present day; and he proposed, by the reduction of taxation, which was the only way to benefit the lower classes in India, to elevate them ultimately in the scale of the society, so as to fit them for admission to offices of power and trust. To attempt to precipitate the arrival of such a state of society as that he had been describing was the surest way to defeat the object in view. He never, however, looked forward to a period when all offices in India would be placed in the hands of natives. No man in his senses would propose to place the political and military power in India in the hands of the natives.

"The Marquis of Lansdowne observed that what the Government proposed was that all offices in India should be by law open to the natives of that country.

"Lord Ellenborough said such was precisely the proposition of Government, but our very existence in India depended upon the exclusion of the natives from military and political power in that country. We were there in a situation not of our own seeking, in a situation from which we could not recede without producing bloodshed from one end of India to the other. We had won the empire of India by the sword, and we must preserve it by the same means, doing at the same time everything that was consistent with our existence there for the good of the people."

I need scarcely apologise for quoting at some length Macaulay's reply to Lord Ellenborough. Macaulay's periods are the familiar property of every educated Indian. They know him by heart, and revel in the luxuriant and generous liberality of his views.

"I have detained the House so long, Sir, that I will defer what I had to say in some parts of this measure—important parts, indeed, but far less important as I think than those to which I have adverted, till we are in Committee. There is, however, one part of the Bill on which, after what has recently passed elsewhere, I feel myself irresistibly impelled to say a few words. I allude to that wise, that benevolent, that noble clause, which enacts that no Native of our Indian Empire shall, by reason of his colour, his descent, or his religion, be incapable of holding office. At the risk of being called by that nickname which is regarded as the most opprobrious of all nicknames by men of selfish hearts and contracted minds—at the risk of being called a philosopher—I must say that, to the last day of my life, I shall be proud of having been one of those who assisted in the framing of the Bill which contains that clause. We are told that the time can never come when the natives of India can be admitted to high civil and military office. We are told that this is the condition on which we hold our power. We are told that we are bound to confer on our subjects—every benefit which they are capable of enjoying?—no—but which it is in our power to confer on them?—no—but which we can confer on them without hazard to our own domination. Against that proposition I solemnly protest as inconsistent alike with sound policy and sound morality.

"I am far, very far, from wishing to proceed hastily in this most delicate matter. I feel that, for the good of India itself, the admission of Natives to high office must be effected by slow degrees. But that, when the fulness of time is come, when the interest of India requires the change, we ought to refuse to make that change lest we should endanger our own power;—this is a doctrine which I cannot think of without indignation. Governments, like men, may buy existence too dear. *Propter vitam vivendi perdere causas*, is a despicable policy either in individuals or in states. In the present case, such a policy would be not only despicable, but absurd. The mere extent of empire is not necessarily an advantage. To many Governments it has been cumbersome; to some it has been fatal. It will be allowed by every statesmen of our time, that the prosperity of a community is made up of the prosperity of those who compose the community, and that it is the most childish ambition to covet dominion which adds to no man's comfort or security. To the great trading nation, to the great manufacturing nation, no progress which any portion of the human race can make in knowledge, in taste for the conveniences of life, or in the wealth by which those conveniences are produced, can be a matter of indifference. It is scarcely possible to calculate the benefits which we might derive from the diffusion of European civilisation among the vast population of the East. It would be, on the most selfish view of the case, far better for us that the people of India were well governed and independent of us, than ill-governed and be subject to us—that they were ruled by their own kings, but wearing our broad cloth, and

working with our cutlery, than that they were performing their salaams to English collectors and English magistrates, but were too ignorant to value, or to poor to buy English manufactures. To trade with civilised men is infinitely more profitable than to govern savages. That would indeed be a dotting wisdom, which, in order that India might remain a dependency, would keep it an useless and costly dependency—which would keep a hundred millions of men from being our customers in order that they might continue to be our slaves.

It was, as Bernier tells us, the practice of the miserable tyrants, whom he found in India, when they dreaded the capacity and spirit of some distinguished subject, and yet could not venture to murder him, to administer to him a daily dose of the pousta, a preparation of opium, the effect of which was in a few months to destroy all the bodily and mental powers of the wretch who was drugged with it, and to turn him into an helpless idiot. That detestable artifice, more horrible than assassination itself, was worthy of those who employed it. It is no model for the English nation. We shall never consent to administer the pousta to a whole community—to stupify and paralyse a great people, whom God has committed to our charge for the wretched purpose of rendering them more amenable to our control. What is that power worth which is founded on vice, on ignorance, and on misery—which we can hold only by violating the most sacred duties which as governors we owe to the governed—which as a people blessed with far more than an ordinary measure of Political liberty and of intellectual light—we owe to a race debased by three thousand years of despotism and priestcraft? We are free, we are civilised, to little purpose, if we grudge to any portion of the human race an equal measure of freedom and civilisation.

“Are we to keep the people of India ignorant in order that we may keep them submissive? Or do we think that we can give them knowledge without awakening ambition? Or do we mean to awaken ambition and to provide it with no legitimate vent? Who will answer any of these questions in the affirmative? Yet one of them must be answered in the affirmative, by every person who maintains that we ought permanently to exclude the natives from high office. I have no fears. The path of duty is plain before us: and it is also the path of wisdom, of national prosperity, of national honour.

“The destinies of our Indian empire are covered with thick darkness. It is difficult to form any conjecture as to the fate reserved for a state which resembles no other in history, and which forms by itself a separate class of political phenomena. The laws which regulate its growth and its decay are still unknown to us. It may be that the public mind of India may expand under our system till it has outgrown that system; that by good government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government, that, having become instructed in European knowledge, they may, in some future age, demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come I know not. But never will I attempt to avert or to retard it. Whenever it comes, it will be the proudest day in English history. To have found a great people sunk in the lowest depths of slavery and superstition, to have so ruled them as to have made them desirous and capable of all the privileges of citizens would indeed be a title to glory all our own. The sceptre may pass away from us. Unforeseen accidents may derange our most profound schemes of policy. Victory may be inconstant to our arms. But there are triumphs which are followed by no reverses. There is an empire exempt from all natural causes of decay. Those triumphs are the pacific triumphs of reason over barbarism; that empire is the imperishable empire of our arts and our morals, our literature, and our law.”

My. Wynn contributed as follows:

“In nothing, however, more unreservedly did he agree with the Hon. Member than in the sentiments which he so forcibly impressed on the House at the close of his speech. He had been convinced, ever since he was first connected with the affairs of India, that the only principle on which that empire could justly or wisely or advantageously be administered

was that of admitting the natives to a participation in the Government, and allowing them to hold every office the duties of which they were competent to discharge. That principle had been supported by the authority of Sir Thomas Munro, and of the ablest functionaries in India, and been resisted with no small pertinacity and prejudice! It had been urged that the natives were undeserving of trust, that no dependence could be placed on their integrity, whatever might be their talents and capacity, which no one disputed. Instances were adduced of their corruption and venality—but were they not the result of our conduct towards them! Duties of importance devolved upon them without any adequate remuneration either in rank or salary. There was no reward or promotion for fidelity; and why then complain of peculation and bribery. We made vices and then punished them; we reduced men to slavery and then reproached them with the faults of slaves."

- I attach the official view of Mr. Charles Grant:

"He would advert very briefly to some of the suggestions which had been offered in the course of this debate. Before doing so, he must first embrace the opportunity of expressing not what he felt, for language could not express it, but of making an attempt to convey to the House his sympathy with it in its admiration of the speech of his Hon. and learned friend the member for Leeds—a speech which, he would venture to assert, had never been exceeded within those walls for the development of statesmanlike policy and practical good sense. It exhibited all that was noble in oratory, all that was sublime, he had almost said, in poetry—all that was truly great, exalted, and virtuous in human nature. If the House at large felt a deep interest in this magnificent display it might judge of what were his emotions when he perceived in the hands of his Hon. friend the great principles he had propounded to the House, glowing with fresh colours and arrayed in all the beauty of truth.

"If one circumstance more than another could give him satisfaction it was that the main principle of this Bill had received the approbation of the House, and that the House was now legislating for India and the people of India on the great and just principle that in doing so the interests of the people of India should be principally consulted, and that all other interests of wealth, of commerce, and of revenue, should be as nothing compared with the paramount obligation imposed upon the legislature of promoting the welfare and prosperity of that great empire which Providence had placed in our hands.

Convinced as he was of the necessity of admitting Europeans to India, he would not consent to remove a single restriction on their admission unless it was consistent with the interests of the natives. Provide for their protection and then throw wide open the doors of those magnificent regions and admit British subjects there—not as aliens, not as culprits, but as friends. In spite of the differences between the two peoples, in spite of the difference of their religions, there was a sympathy which he was persuaded would unite them, and he looked forward with hope and eagerness to the rich harvest of blessing which he trusted would flow from the present measure."

Upon this debate followed the enactment [3 and 4 William IV. c. 85] "that no native of the said territories, nor any natural-born subject of His Majesty resident therein shall, by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the said Company."

In an explaining despatch the Court of Directors thus unfolded their view of this Act:—

"The Court conceive this section to mean that there shall be no governing caste in

British India; that whatever other tests of qualification may be adopted, distinction of race or religion shall not be of the number; that no subject of the King, whether of Indian or British or mixed descent, shall be excluded from the posts usually conferred on uncovenanted servants in India, or from the Covenanted Service itself, provided he be otherwise eligible."

After a lapse of twenty years, Parliament once more in 1853 revised the Company's Charter. Again I extract some of the speeches of the leading politicians:

Mr. Golbeurn said:

"Sir Thomas Munro had said, there is one great question to which we should look in all our arrangements, namely, what is to be the final result of our government on the character of the people, and whether that character will be raised or lowered. Are we to be satisfied with merely securing our power and protecting the inhabitants, leaving them to sink gradually in character lower than at present, or are we to endeavour to raise their character? It ought undoubtedly to be our aim to raise the minds of the Natives, and to take care that whenever our connection with India shall cease, it shall not appear that the only fruit of our dominion had been to leave the people more abject than when we found them. It would certainly be more desirable we should be expelled from the country altogether than that our system of government should be such an abasement of a whole people."

And thus John Bright:

"Another subject requiring close attention on the part of Parliament was the employment of the natives of India in the service of the Government. The right hon. member for Edinburgh (Mr. Macaulay), in proposing the India Bill of 1833 had dwelt on one of its clauses, which provided that neither colour nor caste nor religion nor place of birth should be a bar to the employment of persons by the Government; whereas, as matter of fact, from that time to this no person in India had been so employed who might not have been equally employed before that clause was enacted; and from the statement of the right hon. gentleman the President of the Board of Control, that it was proposed to keep up the Covenanted Service system, it was clear that this most objectionable and most offensive state of things was to continue. Mr. Cameron, a gentleman thoroughly versed in the subject, as fourth Member of Council in India, President of the Indian Law Commission, and of the Council of Education for Bengal—what did he say on this point? He said: 'The statute of 1833 made the natives of India eligible to all offices under the Company. But during the twenty years that have since elapsed not one of the natives has been appointed to any offices except such as they were eligible to before the statute.'"

Mr. Rich spoke as follows:

"But if the case as to the native military was a strong one, it was much stronger as to civilians. It had been admitted that ninety-five per cent. of the administration of justice was discharged by native judges. Thus they had the work, the hard work; but the places of honour and emolument were reserved for the Covenanted Service—the friends and relatives of the directors. Was it just that the whole work, heat and labour of the day, should be borne by natives and all the prizes reserved for Europeans? Was it politic to continue such a system? They might turn up the whites of their eyes and exclaim at American persistence in slavery. There the hard work was done by the negro whilst the control and enjoyment of profit and power were for the American. Was ours different in India? What did Mill lay down? European control—native agency. And what was the translation

of that? White power, black slavery. Was this just, or was it wise? Mill said it was necessary in order to obtain respect from the natives. But he (Mr. Rich) had yet to learn that injustice was the parent of respect. Real respect grew out of common service, common emulation, and common rights impartially upheld. We must underpin our empire by such principles, or some fine morning it would crumble beneath our feet. So long as he had a voice in that House it should be raised in favour of admitting our native fellow-subjects in India to all places to which their abilities and conduct should entitle them to rise."

And then Monckton Milnes followed thus:

"Objectionable as he believed many parts of the Bill were, he considered this was the most objectionable portion, and from it very unhappy consequences might arise. When the natives of India heard it proclaimed that they had a right to enter the service of the Company, they would by their own intelligence and ability render themselves qualified for that service, if they only had the means of doing so. Then one of the two consequences would follow. They would either find their way into the service, or else the Company would have arrayed against them a spirit of discontent on the part of the whole people of India, the result of which it would be difficult to foresee. He did not see on what principles of justice, if they once admitted the principle of open competition, they could say to the natives of India they had not a perfect right to enter the service."

He was succeeded by Mr. J. G. Phillimore who quoted Lord William Bentinck.

"The bane of our system is not solely that the Civil Administration is entirely in the hands of foreigners, but the holders of this monopoly, the patrons of these foreign agents, are those who exercise its directing power at home; that this directing power is exclusively paid by patronage and that the value of the patronage depends exactly upon the decree in which all the honours and emoluments of the state are engrossed by their clients to the exclusion of the natives. There exists in consequence, on the part of the Home Authorities, an interest in the Administration precisely similar to what formerly prevailed as to commerce, and directly opposed to the welfare of India."

Again Mr. Rich said:—

"As regarded employment in the public service, the natives were placed in a worse position by the present Bill than they were before. The intention of the Act of 1833 was to open the services to the natives; and surely now, when our Indian Empire was more secure than it was at that time, it was not wise to deviate from such a line of policy. His object was that all offices in India should be effectively opened to natives, and therefore he would not require them to come over to this country for examination, as such a condition would necessarily entail on natives of India great expense, expose them to the risk of losing caste, and thereby operate as a bar against their obtaining the advantages held out to all other of her Majesty's subjects. The course of education through which the youth of India at present went at the established colleges in that country afforded the most satisfactory proof of their efficiency for discharging the duties of office.

"This was not just or wise, and would infallibly lead to a most dangerous agitation, by which in a few years that which would now be accepted as a boon would be wrested from the Legislature as a right. They had opened the commerce of India in spite of the croakers of the day. Let them now open the posts of government to the natives, and they would have a more happy and contented people."

Lord Stanley spoke out as follows:

"He could not refrain from expressing his conviction that, in refusing to carry on

examinations in India as well as in England—a thing that was easily practicable—the Government were, in fact, negating that which they declared to be one of the principal objects of their Bill, and confining the Civil Service, as heretofore, to Englishmen. That result was unjust, and he believed it would be most pernicious.”

“Let them suppose, for instance, that instead of holding those examinations here in London, that they were to be held in Calcutta. Well, how many Englishmen would go out there—or how many would send out their sons, perhaps to spend two or three years in the country on the chance of obtaining an appointment! Nevertheless, that was exactly the course proposed to be adopted towards the natives of India.”

John Bright said :

“That the motion now before the Committee involved the question which had been raised before during these discussions, but which had never been fairly met by the President of the Board of Control, namely, whether the clause in the Act of 1833, which had been so often alluded to, had not up to this time been altogether a nullity. If any doubt had been entertained with respect to the object of that clause, it would be removed by reference to the answers given by the then President of the Board of Control to the hon. Member for Montrose and to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the present member for Edinburgh (Mr. Macaulay), in both of which it was distinctly declared that the object was to break down the barriers which were supposed to exist to the admission of the natives as well as Europeans to high offices in India. And yet there was the best authority for saying that nothing whatever had been done in consequence of that clause. He (Mr. Bright) did not know of a single case where a Native of India had been admitted to any office since that time, more distinguished or more highly paid than he would have been competent to fill had that clause been not passed.”

Lastly, Mr. J. G. Philimore added :—

“He also feared that the Bill would prove delusive, and that although it professed to do justice to the natives the spirit of monopoly would still blight the hopes and break the spirits of the Indian people. While such a state of things continued India would be attached to this country by no bond of affection, but would be retained by the power of the army and the terror of the sword. He implored of the Committee not to allow such an empire to be governed in the miserable spirit of monopoly and exclusion.”

In the House of Lords, Lord Monteagle spoke in favour of the inclusion of Indians in the Covenanted Service of India : and Earl Granville added “I for one, speaking individually have never felt the slightest alarm at natives well-qualified and fitted for public employments being employed in any branch of the public service in India.”

Looking back impartially upon the pledges given by Parliament and comparing promise with performance, it is difficult to deny that Indians have in fact good grounds for complaint. They allege that in 1860 a committee was appointed by the Secretary of State of the following members of his own Council, Sir G. P. Willoughby, Mr. Mangles, Mr. Arbuthnot, Mr. Macnaghten, and Sir Erskine Perry, all Anglo-Indians, and that the committee reported *inter alia* as under :

We are in the first place unanimously of opinion that it is not only just, but expedient, that the natives of India shall be employed in the administration of India to a

large an extent as possible consistently with the maintenance of British supremacy, and have considered whether any increased facilities can be given in this direction.

It is true that, even at present, no positive disqualification exists. By Act 3 and 4 Wm. IV. cap. 85, sec. 87, it is enacted 'that no native of the said territories nor any natural-born subject of his Majesty resident therein shall, by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office, or employment under the said Company.' It is obvious, therefore, that when the competitive system was adopted, it could not have been intended to exclude natives of India from the Civil Service of India.

Practically, however, they are excluded. The law declares them eligible, but the difficulties opposed to a native leaving India and residing in England for a time, are so great that, as a general rule, it is almost impossible for a native successfully to compete at the Periodical examinations held in England. Were this inequality removed, we should no longer be exposed to the charge of keeping promise to the ear and breaking it to the hope.

Two modes have been suggested by which the object in view might be attained. The first is, by allotting a certain portion of the total number of appointments declared in each year to be competed for in India by natives, and by all other natural-born subjects of her Majesty resident in India. The second is to hold simultaneously two examinations, one in England and one in India, both being, as far as practicable, identical in their nature, and those who compete in both countries being finally classified in one list according to merit, by the Civil Service Commissioners. The Committee have no hesitation in giving the preference to the second scheme, as being the fairest, and the most in accordance with the principles of a general competition for a common object.

In order to aid them in carrying out a scheme of this nature, the Committee have consulted the Civil Service Commission, and, through the favour of Sir Edward Ryan, they have obtained a very able paper, in which the advantages and disadvantages of either plan are fully and lucidly discussed. They would solicit your careful consideration of this document, and will only, in conclusion, add that, in the event of either of the plans being adopted, it will be requisite to provide for the second examination of successful competitors in India, as nearly as possible resembling that now required in England. The Civil Service Commissioners do not anticipate much difficulty in arranging for this. The Committee, however, are decidedly of opinion that the examination papers on which the competition is to proceed in India and England should be identical; but they think, in justice to the natives, that three colloquial Oriental languages should be added to the three modern European languages, so as to give the candidates the opportunity of selection."

This important document, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji has openly stated in his letter last year to Lord Welby, the President of the Royal Commission on the Expenditure in India, was never published till published lately by himself. The natives of India are aware that Sir Stafford Northcote proposed a clause to fulfil partially the Statute of 1833 by providing for the admission of a small proportion of Indians into the Covenanted Civil Service: that the Duke of Argyll passed it and that Lord Salisbury approving of it, said, "One of the most serious dangers you have to guard against is the possibility of jealousy arising from the introduction of natives into the service." They have seen the Act of 1870, which granted to Indians a specific proportion of appointments in the Covenanted Civil Service, vigorously opposed by the Government of India and delayed for ten long years. They know how the Government of

India fought hard to substitute a "close native service" for the right to share in the appointments of the Covenanted Civil Service, and they know how in 1878 Lord Cranbrook put his foot down on proposals which suggested a very serious deviation from the expressed policy of successive Secretaries of State in England. Lord Cranbrook's despatch is worth quoting.

"6. Your proposal of a close native service with a limited class of high appointments attached to it, and your suggestions that the Covenanted Civil Service should no longer be open to natives, involve an application to Parliament which would have no prospect of success, and which I certainly would not undertake. Your lordship has yourself observed that no scheme would have a chance of sanction which included legislation for the purpose of repealing the clause in the Act of 1833 above quoted, and the obstacles which would be presented against any attempt to exclude natives from public competition for the Civil Service would be little less formidable."

"10. It is, therefore, quite competent to your lordship's Government to appoint every year to the Civil Service of India any such number of natives as may be determined upon, and the number of covenanted civilians sent out from this country will have to be proportionately decreased. The appointments should in the first instance be only probationary, so as to give ample time for testing the merit and ability of the candidates."

"11. It appears to me that the advantages of such a simple scheme will be obvious :—

"(i) It will undoubtedly be much more popular with the natives, as it will place them on a footing of social equality with the covenanted civilian ;

"(ii) Inasmuch as it will exclude no civilian at present in India from any office which he has a moral claim to expect, it will avoid any clashing with the vested interests of the Civil Service ;

"(iii) It will avoid the necessity of any enhancement of salaries of uncovenanted officers which is now proposed, not because such enhancement is necessary, but from the necessity of creating a class of well-paid appointments to form sufficient prizes for a close native service.

And it lastly, pursues the same system of official training which has proved so eminently successful in India."

It was then that Lord Lytton made his famous declaration in a Minute which cynically confessed that the local authorities intended to burke the operation of an English statute and the repeated pledges of a Queen and her responsible ministers. "The Act of Parliament is so undefined," wrote Lord Lytton, "and indefinite. Obligations on the part of the Government of India towards its native subjects are so obviously dangerous, that no sooner was the Act passed than the Government began to devise means for practically evading the fulfilment of it. Under the terms of the Act which are studied and laid to heart by that increasing class of educated natives whose development the Government encourages, without being able to satisfy the aspirations of its existing members, every such native if once admitted to Government employment in posts previously reserved to the covenanted Service is entitled to expect and claim appointment in the fair course of promotion to the highest post in that service.

"We all know that these claims and expectations never can or will be

fulfilled. We have had to choose between prohibiting them and cheating them: and we have chosen the least straightforward course. The application to natives of the competitive examination system as conducted in England, and the recent reduction in the age at which candidates can compete, are all so many deliberate and transparent subterfuges for stultifying the Act and reducing it to a dead letter. Since I am writing confidentially I do not hesitate to say that both the Governments of England and of India appear to me, up to the present moment, unable to answer satisfactorily the charge of having taken every means in their power of breaking to the heart the words of promise they had uttered to the ear."

At last in 1880 were launched the "statutory" Civilians, and it is one of the grievances with Indians that the very name was a trespass upon the avowed intentions of those who had conceded a limited entrance to the Covenanted Service. The distinction drawn between the Covenanted and Statutory Civilians grated on the ear. It was feared that the distinctive name portended no goodwill on the part of its godfathers. At any rate it is openly asserted that after the admission of seven Indians or so as Covenanted Civilians, the Government of India schemed how best to strangle the Statutory Service. Within three years of its formation the political passions of men throughout India were raised to a white heat by the explosion of race feeling which accompanied the so-called "Ilbert" Bill. Still three years later and under the Public Service Commission, the Statutory Civilian quietly expired and on the tombstone which marks his unfrequented resting place Lord Salisbury from the House of Lords inscribed for epitaph the avowal that all England's pledges, proclamations and acts were only "Political Hypocrisy."

I have endeavoured to make three things clear: first, the gradual evolution of British policy in India; secondly, the means adopted by that policy to raise the status of the Indians; thirdly, the open and repeated promises held out by Queen and Parliament that the Indians should in time be admitted to a greater share than they possessed in the government of their native land. England had taken the peoples of India directly under her own supervision. She had opened to them avenues to learning and to knowledge. She had promised them fair treatment in life's race for life's prizes. The curriculum of education through which the Indian student passes is essentially English. He reads Mill and Macaulay, quotes Shakespeare and is inspired by Milton. The character of Hampden is held up to him for his admiration. All that is best and most ennobling in English literature is poured out before him by his teachers. He is made intimate with the passionate declamations of Sheridan and Burke. He drinks in the political oratory of Fox and Pitt, is moved by the story of

Ireland's wrongs, and thrills with the belief that he too is a sharer in the liberty of that country where freedom no longer "sits enthroned upon the heights." He quickly learns the art of criticism and is invited to express it in the form of essays. In a word, he is educated to feel and think and talk as much like an Englishman as the bounds of Nature will permit. With such antecedents and under such conditions it needed no prophet to foretell what would happen. The youth of India has imbibed only too readily all we have taught it. Can we resent the practical requests of its early and vigorous manhood?

In the year 1885, just fourteen years ago, some seventy two Indian gentlemen assembled at Bombay to consult together over the more instant political wants of their fellow-countrymen. These men were themselves the product of English civilization and culture. They were carrying out to their legitimate consequences the repeated declarations of the Paramount Power and the teachings which they had themselves absorbed under English auspices from the same fountain source whence Englishmen were inspired with dreams of freedom and self-government. Next year (1886) 412 representatives gathered together at Calcutta. The number rose in 1887 to 607 at Madras, and in 1889, curiously enough to that exact number, 1889 at Bombay. That was the year when Sir William Wedderburn presided and educated India listened to the oratorical magnetism of Charles Bradlaugh who was visiting India after a very serious illness at home. In 1890, 677 delegates assembled at Calcutta; in 1891, 812 at Nagpore. in 1892, 625 at Allahabad; in 1893, 867 at Lahore, and in 1894, at Madras 1,200, sat under the presidency of Mr. Alfred Webb, a Home Rule Member of Parliament who undoubtedly exercised a strong fascination over his hearers. In 1895, Poona welcomed 1584 delegates, in 1896, Calcutta saw 784 meet. Last year at Amraoti, the capital of the Berars, 692 delegates assembled. This year the meeting place is to be Madras where rumours of plague, will probably reduce the attendance of those interested in the National Congress.

Roughly speaking, during a period of thirteen years something like 10,000 men have at their own expense travelled long distances, in one instance from a station so remote as Dehra Ismael Khan, to meet and discuss what in their opinion constituted serious and pressing questions of reform. I say nothing of the picturesque appearance presented by the throng of many hundreds of men of all colours, castes, and religions, garbed in the diverse dresses and quaint headgear of the various nationalities of India, though I have myself always felt strangely moved at this visible tribute to the spreading power of my island home. The railway and the steamboat are playing important parts in helping to remove racial ignorance and

dislike. At Allahabad I remember being greatly impressed by being asked to smoke my cigar over my early morning tea when I was one of a group of whom the others were a Brahmin from Southern India, two Parsis from Bombay, a Mahomedan from Lucknow, a Brahmosamajist from Calcutta and a Sikh from Lahore. We discussed in excellent English the reconstitution of the Legislative Councils. No one who has sat through a Congress but must have been struck with the orderliness of its proceedings, the instant obedience to the chair, the remarkable gifts of speech rising in many instances to genuine and powerful eloquence, and occasionally a readiness of debate which I have heard a competent critic declare to be not unworthy of the best traditions of the front bench of the House of Commons. The meetings are conspicuous for the earnestness which marks the members. Official opinion may disagree with some or all of the views expressed. None the less is it true that the men who are selected to speak are in the main experts in the subjects which they champion. Their utterances are entitled to weight as being the outcome of varied personal experience, gathered at the expense of much personal inconvenience and retold for the most part at the risk of much hostile and dangerous criticism. As expositions of the 'other side' of the question they are instructive; as expositions of what educated India declares her urgent needs they form the most valuable library of reference for those in whose hands lie entrusted the present welfare and the future destinies of some three hundred millions of England's subjects.

The adherents of the Congress have had to pass through much vilification and abuse. In that sense it may be truly said that their political education has been complete. It is much to their credit that they have upon the whole maintained an attitude of dignity and self-respect, and have contented themselves with the presentation of the annual report of their proceedings to the Viceroy of India. They have stood silent while the press decried their leaders as "disappointed lawyers," a criticism singularly inappropriate when of those leaders the Hon. Mr. Justice Subramania Aiyar has since become one of Her Majesty's Judges in the High Court at Madras, the Hon. Mr. Justice Budroodin Tyabji, the Hon. Mr. Justice Ranade and the Hon. Mr. Justice Telang have risen to similar positions in Bombay, while the Hon. Mr. Justice Romesh Chunder Mitter heads the list of Indian Judges of the High Court of Calcutta of whom all save the Hon. Mr. Justice Amir Ali were open and steadfast friends of the greatest and most important political movement in India since its connection with British rule. It was surely an unwise thing to belittle men like Bonnerjee and Manó Mohun Ghose of Calcutta, each of whom ranked very high in their respective lines as lawyers at the Calcutta Bar, and both of whom lent their names, their influence, their presence, and their purses to

the Indian National Congress. It has struck me as very unwise, for our Indian brethren are shrewd critics and can detect a fallacy as quickly as most men. To take shelter behind a palpable untruth is a hazardous expedient. For it not merely robs opposition of all real value, but engenders a belief that opposition is based purely on racial prejudice, a belief which I for one hold to be the most prejudicial, if not the most dangerous, to the best interests of England in this country. Pundit Ajoodianath of Allahabad, Pherozeshah Mehta of Bombay, Vijiaraghava Chari of Salem can scarcely be classified truthfully among the failures of the law. Each is or was—for the Allahabad orator, a splendid presence, is dead—a living and powerful centre of influence in his own home, and the practical politician can do few things more risky or foolish than shut his eyes to facts. However unpalatable to many Anglo-Indians may be the truth that in many walks of life, and nowhere more notably than in the Law, our Indian fellow subjects are shouldering aside their European colleagues and pushing themselves to the front, the only safe method of dealing with the new order of things is candidly to admit it and if you dislike it to recognise the principle *factum valet quod fieri non debuit*. It serves no useful purpose to talk of men like Hume and Wedderburn and Jardine as men who make it the business of their lives to disseminate sedition and provoke disorder. The people know these men. They know quite well that each of them is in his own way a distinguished man; and they know that each glories in the chance of birth which made each an Englishman. To libel men such as these is to create an unnecessary friction and soreness. To argument the educated Indian will listen. Abuse only hardens him.

Of the many catalogued demands of the National Congress I will deal only with a few. I know of none which are disloyal. With some I can understand disagreement. But what is there to shudder at in the petition for a re-organised Legislative Council, for the separation of the judicial from the executive function, for the creation of an Indian Military College, for a stricter economy of Indian finances, for a Simultaneous Examination for the Civil Service? So far as the first object is concerned, the Statute of 1892 has instituted a reformed Legislative Council to which, subject to the approval of the chief authorities, members are practically elected by constituencies specially called into being by the Statute itself. In Madras for instance, two members are elected by the Southern division of the Presidency, two by the Northern, one by the University, one by the Municipality. A limited right of interpellation has been granted: the local budget is submitted for criticism. If the criticism is purely academical, and the official answers at times irritatingly vague, at any rate Parliamentary sanction has at last been accorded to a proposal which for eight years was the principal topic of the annual

debate in the National Congress. Official opposition to the demand for some real control over the finances is intelligible ; for all true power is allied with money. But Indians who have been taught that representation should always accompany taxation and whose earliest attention has been directed to Hampden's refusal to pay ship money as an example at once just and admirable, can scarcely be blamed if they seek to exercise some practical supervision over expenditure which, rightly or wrongly, they believe to be often unnecessary, extravagant and unjust. With plague and famine almost always at their doors, the leaders of the people are surely committing no crime when they seek to divert to a starving Municipality, to an extension of sanitary schemes, to the increase of hospitals and schools, to the endowment of scientific laboratories, and to kindred utilitarian improvements, monies which they see taken before their eyes and lavished without their consent upon ball rooms and swimming baths and racket-courts and tapestries for the pleasureable gratification of Governors who spend eight months out of the twelve upon the hills.

The Government of this country have repeatedly acknowledged that the separation of the executive from the judicial function is a measure which theoretically meets with their cordial approval. They plead poverty for not translating their approval into action. Educated India replies that there would be more than ample funds available for a reform which is demanded by every dictate of justice if it were itself permitted to exercise any controlling voice over taxation. What is there unreasonable or unseasonable in this prayer? No one has denounced the combination of the policeman and the judge, of the detective and the magistrate in the same person more forcibly, more openly, more continuously, than has Sir Richard Garth, the late Chief Justice of Bengal, a Privy Councillor, once Conservative member for Guildford and still an unrepentant Tory. To say that the same official, by legislation the chief of the police in the district, first helps that police to secure evidence and then proceeds to try the matter in his Magisterial capacity upon the evidence which he has assisted to prepare, is to say what is often the practice here, and is unjustifiable. Let me quote one extract from Sir Richard Garth.

"Imagine an active young magistrate, having heard of some daring robbery, which has alarmed the neighbourhood, taking counsel in the first place with the heads of the police with a view to discovering the offender. After two or three vain attempts he succeeds at last, as he firmly believes, in finding the right man ; and he then, still in concert with the police, suggests enquiries, receives information, hunts up evidence, through their agency, for the purpose of bringing home the charge to the suspected person. Having thus done his duty zealously in the first stage of the case, he next proceeds to enquire, as a Magistrate, whether the evidence, which he himself has collected, is sufficient to justify a committal. And, having come to the conclusion, not unnaturally, that it is, he afterwards, upon the self same evidence, tries the prisoner in his Judicial capacity, without the assistance of a Jury, and

convicts him. However monstrous this may appear to an English public, the picture which I have presented is by no means overdrawn.

It is not that the Indian public have any want of confidence in European officers as such. But to be tried by a man who is at once the Judge and the prosecutor is too glaring an injustice ; and it is only wonderful that a system so indefensible should have been allowed to prevail thus long under an English Government."

There has arisen—more especially in the North of India—a cry for an avenue for the employment of the sons of the Indian aristocracy in the army. Successive Viceroys, successive Secretaries of State have proclaimed a belief in the loyalty of the princes of India. There they have stopped. For these men and for the sons of men well born whose military instincts lead them to service in the army there is no outlet. To rectify this, a demand has sprung up for an institution somewhat on the lines of Sandhurst in which young India, if so minded, could receive a military education and pass to the service of the Queen by way of direct Commissions. The Queen's son, the Duke of Connaught, when serving in India, was said to have evinced considerable interest in this proposal. I may be wrong. But to me it seems that this ambition to wield a sword in England's army should be both pathetic and a matter of national pride to Englishmen. The valour of our Indian troops has frequently been eulogised. It has given practical demonstration of its existence and its potency on many a hard fought field. We are proud, and justly proud, of our Indian army. Why should we not tie more firmly to ourselves the loyalty of our chieftains and their sons by opening up to them under our own careful training and supervision new methods of cementing an alliance based upon the acknowledgment of a common interest? All around me in my own Presidency I see young men of birth and means who are carefully educated under English tutors to believe in the beliefs and excel in the pastimes which most commend themselves to Englishmen. Once released on attainment of their majority from the leading-strings of their teachers, these boys find themselves in sudden possession of very considerable inheritances with nothing on which to expend their energies, with no profession which they can follow. We teach them to live and dress and act like English gentlemen. Our training tends to cut them loose from their old customs, their old prejudices, their very relatives and friends. They are turned helpless upon the world. English society almost invariably ignores their existence, they are cultivated out of the taste for Indian usages, and they fall gradually into habits of sloth and vice and self-indulgence, human derelicts on an ocean of waste and drink and sensuality and debt. I am drawing no fanciful picture. I could place my hands on more than one sad instance of what I portray. If these young men, the gentlemen of India, were to be drafted into the army, their

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education would not cease with their minority, and we should be spared the sorry spectacle of our training youth to develop only into social waifs and strays.

It would be foolish to ignore the fact that the opposition of the Indian Government and the Secretary of State to giving practical effect to the resolution of the House of Commons with regard to Simultaneous Examinations for the Civil Service has in this country aroused a deep feeling of disappointment and discontent. Great names in England have lent their sanction to such a scheme. It has been stated to be founded on justice. There is certainly nothing in it inimical to the supremacy of England. There is no doubt a so-called orthodox party in the National Congress which refuses altogether to entertain the limitation that, granted the establishment of a system of Simultaneous Examinations, the successful candidates should undergo two or three years' training in England. This attitude is due to the belief that an English training is apt to undermine Hindu traditions and observances and to replace the lost virtues by nothing which commends itself to indigenous admiration and respect. It manifested itself sharply at the Allahabad Congress of 1888. But its adherents are not formidable in number; and the trend of Indian public opinion is unquestionably in favour of an English training. Dutt in Bengal, Tagore in Bombay are representatives of Indian fitness for executive and judicial trust. When it has been fairly tried, the Indian element has not been found wanting. The fear has been openly expressed in many quarters that under the system of Simultaneous Examinations, the English lad would be distanced by the greater application of the Indian. I believe the fear to be groundless. I have enough faith in the intellectuality of my countrymen not to be afraid of the results of an equal competition. But were it otherwise, is it a fair answer in logic or ethics to a request inherently just? Nomination long ago gave way to examination in England. Are we afraid to compete on equal terms with India? Or is it that we deny the Indian the possession of qualities, moral and physical, which we believe to be a *sine qua non* for the administration of this country? I believe the latter to be the objection which weighs most seriously, if not most openly, with the opponents of Indian ambition. The closing years of the nineteenth century are witnessing a strange chapter of European advance. Before the white man the dark is falling back everywhere. Burmah has passed to the British Crown. In Africa, Europe is enlarging daily her hold upon the possession of the native tribes. Egypt is, to all intents and purposes, a British dependency. France, Germany and Belgium are consolidating their acquisitions in the dark-continent. In Natal, the Englishmen are shutting

their gates against the Indian traders. In Australia the Chinese are rigorously forbidden entrance. In far-off East, Europe is quarrelling over the inheritance of the Mongolian. In the nearer West the dismemberment of Turkey is proceeding apace and the Crescent is succumbing to the Cross. What does all this mean? Is it only that decay must yield to the forces of a resistless civilisation, or does it mean that the physical superiority of the white man is for all times and through all conditions to impose his supremacy over the black? We, at any rate in India, have taken upon ourselves responsibilities never yet assumed by any power in history. We have proclaimed that this country is a trust in our hands for its own better progress and content. On the whole, we have so far fulfilled our self-imposed obligation with splendid and unselfish good-will. From North to South we have scattered and are still scattering the seeds of a liberal education. We have exempted our Indian subjects from the centuries of slow and civil struggles through which we ourselves fought our way to freedom and to strength. Before the whole world we have repeatedly bound ourselves by solemn pledges to our Indian subjects. Do we intend to keep our faith inviolate, or are we too entering upon a course of national falsehood and deceit? Upon the answer which we ourselves can give to that question lies, in my belief, our continued and welcome hold on India.

We are permitted the privilege of our faiths. Mine may be of little value. But it is tenaciously held. Twenty years' residence in India has thrown me into constant and almost daily communication with the peoples of this Southern Presidency. Of them I speak with personal knowledge, of the other parts of India with a knowledge derived at second hand from men whom I accept as the chosen and trusted leaders of the people. My father's name and my own professional and political tendencies have brought me into close and confidential relations with all sects and classes of men from the rich and honoured statesman to the humble ryot whose *puttah* to some tiny tract of sun burnt earth is all that lies between himself and starvation. If I have learnt one lesson more than another during these many years of exile and of work, it is that India accepts England's rule gladly and gratefully because she believes that the English is the justest of all the nations of the earth. I do not believe that there is any sentiment about the matter. Our rule is acceptable because it is honest. We are not loved. I see no reason why we should be. But we are admired because we are energetic, and we are trusted because we have in the main and under much temptation kept our pledges intact. It is still true that our word is our bond. And therein lies the secret of India's willing bondage. The morality of our rule is its sanction. Educated India watches us with close and critical eyes. But

it is a mistake to suppose that our actions are appraised only by those who have partaken of our education. Each man who has come into contact with our schools and our Universities is the centre of a village circle, a circle of relations and dependents and servants by whom he is regarded as the wise man of the hour. To these he imparts the fruits of the lessons he has learnt and from him radiate into the humblest house the story of England's good work in India. It is surely unwise to tamper with this faith in our good intentions. I know more than one Englishman in India who regretted not merely as ungenerous but as unwise the spectacle of one of Her Majesty's Judges in London looking at the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 through a lawyer's spectacles in his endeavour to whittle away the solemn and beautiful utterances to which all India turns as to the great Charter of her rights. Anything which tends to impair the trust in our good faith tends to shake the stability of our empire here. So long as we are regarded as the most upright of Western nations, so long will our yoke be not unpalatable to the East. It is true that India was conquered by force. It is only true, I believe, in a restricted sense, that we hold India by the sword. The prestige of our arms is an accepted fact. But the permanence of our rule is based upon trust, not fear. To me it is a comforting faith that could India be polled to-morrow upon the choice between England and any rival European nation, the vote would be unanimous in favour of the retention of British rule. For it is not a faith according to a famous definition, "the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things unseen." It is a faith, if a faith at all, founded upon long and careful experience, the substance of things critically surveyed, the evidence of things analysed, balanced, weighed. If by disloyalty one is to understand an abundance of frank and outspoken criticism of the Executive, then India is disloyal to the core. But those who recognise in such criticism the direct result of our own teachings, must rejoice that our lessons have borne such healthy fruit and will surely prefer these unconcealed manifestations of the growth of thought to the sullen and dangerous reticence of an inaudible discontent. To one school of critics, the Indian National Congress is the embodiment of seasoned and cultured sedition. By another it is apologised for as a safety-valve. By a third it is hailed as a barometer of the people's hopes and fears, of their wishes and their wants. Which of these schools is the wisest in its day, and which is more likely to make the best use of the living encyclopædia of human information and belief? However imperfect the system of its representation, the Congress unquestionably focuses the aspirations and ambitions of those in whose interests it professes to act. It is true that as a community the Mahomedans stand aloof. This attitude may be

explained partly by the fact that educationally they are far behind their Hindu fellow-citizens and partly by the fact that in certain quarters advantage has unfortunately been taken of racial jealousy to foment them into a spirit of antagonism and mistrust. But many intelligent and well-educated Mahomedans openly sympathise with and support the Congress movement. Twice eminent Mahomedans have presided over its debates. In 1887, Mr. Budroodin Tyabji, now a High Court Judge in Bombay, was President at Madras, and again in 1896 the Honourable Mr. Sayani, a Member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council was President at Calcutta. There is little truth in the statement that the Parsees are hostile to the Congress. I have no wish to disparage the pretensions of the Parsee knight who launches such comic Bhowagharese against his Indian fellow citizens from his place in the House of Commons. I venture, however, very respectfully to suggest that those who are acquainted with the truth see no reason to subordinate to that somewhat noisy Zoroastrian the tried and capable accomplishments of such men as Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji Mr. Dinsha Eduljee Wacha, or the Honourable Mr. Pherozeshah Mehta.

From many sources has come the criticism that the Congress desires to see imported wholesale into India the representative institutions which obtain in England. The leaders of the Congress reply, "Read our debates, let our speeches speak for themselves." The closest scrutiny of the proceedings of the Congress will disclose nothing of such a request. Parliamentary representation as it exists in England is a recognised impossibility for India. All that Congress has asked for is a far larger and more real representation in the local Legislative Councils in which it would seek a much more effective control than it possesses at present over the national expenditure. To the right of interpellation it would add the right of moving resolutions from which it is debarred under existing rules. Congress declares it has no wish to be placed in a numerical superiority in those Councils. Every scheme it has debated has always accorded an official majority to the Government. Its wish is not to outvote, but to instruct authority, and how has it been received? Lord Lansdowne paid it the compliment of describing it as the equivalent of the "forward liberal party." The Marquis of Dufferin, at a St. Andrews Banquet, denounced it and its founder, Allan Hume, in language the calumny of which still lives to arouse astonishment and indignation and despair. The leaders of the Congress were prepared to be cold-shouldered and neglected. They were not prepared for active and hostile misrepresentation at the hands of the Queen's Viceroy. It is not the duty of the chief of the state to bequeath a legacy of ill-will to the peoples he governs. When he speaks, he speaks with the authority of high office. His public

utterances are weighed in balances sensitive to the slightest inflection. No country in the world is more easily swayed by official utterances than is India. Indian and Anglo-Indian alike hangs upon the views, expressed or deduced, of Government which are at once and eagerly followed by society at large. It is from no mere desire to revive the remembrance of old controversies that I refer to this melancholy incident in Lord Dufferin's rule. His libel is not yet forgotten. It still remains an object lesson of what a Viceroy should avoid. One Governor was sufficiently a man of the world to show courtesy to the Congress in debate. Lord Connemara invited the assemblage of 1887 to a garden party at Government House. The invitation was addressed to the "Distinguished Visitors at Madras." The Congress did not stop to quarrel with the terms of the invitation. It went *en masse*. Lord Connemara, handsome, affable, diplomatic, was shrewd in his knowledge of mankind, and no session of Congress broke up with kindlier feelings between rulers and ruled than did the session whose good will Lord Connemara purchased at the expenditure of a little social courtesy. The significance of the Congress movement may be estimated by one undeniable fact. All over India there are scattered able bodies of men who correspond to the local Bars of our provincial towns in England. In the Presidency cities these Indian *coteries* are numerically and intellectually formidable. Everywhere they are steadily increasing in numbers and in attainments. Almost all are the products of our University teaching. To a man, they are the devoted adherents of the Congress. At rare intervals, some Vakil who fancies professional preferment the more certain if he be known politically as a total abstainer propitiates the sources of favour by pretended indifference to the political activities around him. But secretly he meets his Congress colleagues in conclave and sends a private subscription to its funds which he asks shall not be acknowledged in public. There is scarcely an Indian official who is not heart and soul with the Congress. Writing of my own knowledge at first hand, many of these officials exhibit their sympathy by donations to what they regard as a common cause. When promotions of purely Indian Judges are made to the High Court Benches, the Government, however reluctantly, is compelled to take its selection from the ranks of Congressmen. It is the same in Bengal, in Madras, in Bombay, in the North-West. The truth is that no Indian of any ability but recognises that the Congress is fighting the battles of his children and his children's children. He appreciates its motives, he sympathises with its aims, he approves of its methods. The conditions of his life may prevent any overt manifestation of his view: but the leaders of the Congress are aware of his existence, and the vitality of the movement is assured by the mass of the silent but educated support which stands in

serried ranks behind its annual display. Were I a statesman and in office I should be proud of this wonderful exhibition of the development of English education. I would point with exultation to its peaceful, orderly assembly, to the discipline of its meetings, to its ready and cheerful obedience to its President, to its grateful acknowledgment of the manifold blessings of British Rule, to the sober language of its demands, to the very demands themselves, as necessary and intended results of our education, of our promises, and of our policy, and I would boast, as I believe I could boast truthfully, that no country in the world but my own could in so short a time have transformed the India of yesterday into the India of to-day. I would seek to lead, not to drive, the men who are engaged in thinking out according to their lights the grave problems connected with the necessary prosperity and continued contentment of some three hundred millions of their fellow countrymen. These men are not paid demagogues or political incendiaries with no stake in the land. Their material well-being is bound up with British Rule. They comprise, educationally, the pick and flower of all the trades and professions in India. Many of them are wealthy land-owners, nearly all of them are men of substantial means. Is it wise to decry such men as paid agitators, to denounce their leaders as discontented lawyers? In past years I was of the Cabinet of the Congress. My official severance with that body is now complete. But I gladly pay my old colleagues the tribute of my admiration and respect for the ability, the ardour and withal the moderation with which questions were thrashed out in the Subject Committees. It was here that all the real work of the Congress was done. For hours the specially selected debaters would meet and discuss the various topics to be submitted to the general body with a learning and enthusiasm which told of much legislative and administrative capacity. I will instance only one scene. The Councils Act of 1892 was the outcome of eight years unflagging toil. What it gave was not what was asked for. But it at least placed the seal of Parliamentary recognition and approval upon the special demand of what some one designated as the "voices crying in the wilderness." For many months before the Congress of Bombay in 1889 the various Presidencies were busy in hammering out their rival schemes. Bengal, Madras and Bombay each drafted its own report. In Madras, a large and very able Committee met week after week at my private house and embodied its recommendation in a printed paper of which its authors need never be ashamed. When the Subjects Committee assembled in Bombay under the Presidentship of Allan Hume, the debates over the rival proposals of the Presidencies lasted into the small hours of the morning. In the end, and on that particular occasion, Madras triumphed, and her scheme led in the hands of Charles Bradlaugh to that subsequent

ventilation in the House of Commons which ultimately took shape in the Act of 1892. I quote this only as an illustration. Hostile critics of the Congress are unaware of the concentration, deliberation and close scrutiny to which all questions are submitted in private before they are committed to the various speakers on the public platform of the full session of the National Congress. It is true that my personal knowledge ceases with 1894. But I have no reason to suppose that there has been any change in the procedure since.

If I were asked to single out of their many characteristics that which I considered was the most predominant trait of the men who meet annually to consider the political and other wants of their countrymen, I should be disposed to say it is their sense of pride in being subjects of Great Britain. There are who sneer at the cheers for the Queen with which each Congress closes. I know that these are felt and are the genuine outcome of an intense and lasting pride in England's greatness and goodness. I have lived too long behind the scenes and mixed too freely with the delegates not to be certain that they bear very willingly and very gratefully the yoke of England's rule. It is that knowledge which has so pained me as I have heard the latter-day cry of sedition which has culminated in legislation which many men regard as unnecessary, ungenerous and unwise. The prosecution of Tilak was in every sense of the word a mistake. The safety of England did not need the conviction of a man who is regarded by all his fellow countrymen as a martyr and by such Englishmen as know him personally as a staunch and loyal adherent of every thing that is good and sound and admirable in Great Britain's administration of India. With education constantly progressing and hungrily grasped, with fresh avenues daily opening to their ambitions, the struggle for life outside the Covenanted Services has sharpened the rivalry between our Indian subjects and ourselves. Their success, if not always achieved by methods the most scrupulous, has been sufficiently pronounced and substantial to arouse sentiments of jealousy and alarm. It would be foolish to shut one's eyes to the truth that one result of the succeeding Congresses has been to stimulate a new sense of patriotism and self-trust. This is one necessary result of our teaching. It is equally the necessary result of combination and organisation. We have taught the people to think. Can we now arrest the results of thought?

Among the weighty opinions which command attention, it appears to me, none is entitled to more consideration than the utterance of one who like Lord Cromer has passed an active portion of his official life amid those phenomena which are hourly inscribing their warnings on the wall. And this is what he has said :—

No one who watches the signs of the times in India, with even moderate care can doubt that we have entered upon a period of change. The spread of education, the increasing influence of a free press, the substituting of legal for discretionary administration, the progress of Railways and Telegraphs, the easier communication with Europe, and the more ready influx of European ideas, are beginning to produce a marked effect upon the people. New ideas are springing up. New aspirations are being called forth. The power of public opinion is growing daily. Such a condition of affairs is one in which the task of Government, and especially of a despotic Government, is beset with difficulties of no light kind. To move too fast is dangerous, but to lag behind is more dangerous still. The problem is how to deal with this new-born spirit of progress, raw and superficial as in many respects it is, so as to direct it into a right course, and to derive from it all the benefits which its development is capable of ultimately conferring upon the country, and at the same time to prevent it from becoming, through blind indifference or stupid repression, a source of serious political danger. It is only what ought to be expected by every thoughtful man that after fifty years of a free press and thirty years of expanding education, with European ideas flowing into the country on every side, and old indigenous customs, habits, and prejudices breaking down, changes should be taking place in the thoughts, the desires, and the aims of the intelligent and educated men of the country, which no wise and cautious Government can afford to disregard, and to which they must gradually adapt their system of administration, if they do not wish to see it shattered by forces which they have themselves called into being, but which they have failed to guide and control.

In 1889 Sir William Hunter who may claim high rank as an authority on Indian affairs was bold enough to say :—

I have been referred to as a moderate man. I am a moderate man. But it is not altogether pleasant for any Englishman in the midst of the political life of this country to stand on the bank and merely look on at the stream of public activity flowing past him. If I am a moderate man and abstain from politics, it is because I have proposed to myself a task which I cannot discharge if I engage in politics. The history of India has yet to be written, and when it is truly written, Englishmen will learn that the present movement is the inevitable result of causes which we ourselves have set in motion. Those who misrepresent us speak of our movement as isolated, dangerous, unimportant. But I believe this political movement in India is an indestructible part of that great awakening in India which is showing itself not only in the intellectual progress of the Indian people, but in India's commercial development and in many signs of a new national life. We have got a great force to deal with, a force which must be powerful either for the disintegration of our Indian Empire or for the consolidation of our Indian Empire; and therefore as an old official I say it is our duty to use it as a consolidating and not as a disintegrating force. The service which Mr. Yule rendered last year was one of peculiar value. It is my lot to live at some distance from London, and I have ample opportunity of hearing what people in the country say about us. The change that has taken place is very curious. Last year we were considered dangerous to the future security of the British Empire in India. It is not too much to say that during the twelve months, and in a large measure owing to Mr. Yule's exertions, to his power of calm argument, and to the dignity of his personal character, that feeling has been gradually modified, and that we are now looked upon not as dangerous, but as a class of persons who have to be watched and considered. And we are very glad to be thus watched, for we have nothing to hide. I affirm that there is no political movement in this country which is managed with the same moderation of speech and the same dignity of procedure as this, the Indian National Congress.

And in 1890 Sir William again commented as follows:—

In this very rapid survey of the effects of Western Education in India, I feel as if I had only touched the fringe of a great subject. Into the political results I am precluded, by want of space, from entering. For to deal fairly and satisfactorily with so vexed a question as the present political movements of the Indian races, would demand a detailed treatment forbidden to me here. I may therefore briefly say that those political movements are the legitimate and inevitable result of Western Education in India. The men who conduct them are the men to whom in all other respects, intellectual and moral, we are accustomed to point as the highest products of British rule in India. They are the men who form the natural interpreters of our rule to the masses of the people. To speak of such men, when their activity takes a political direction, as disaffected, would be equally unjust and untrue. For they are the men who, of all our Indian fellow-subjects, realise most clearly that their interests, present and future, are identified with the permanence of British rule.

But brief as this survey has unavoidably been, it suffices to show that the present political movements among the Indian races are only one aspect of a general advance, moral, intellectual, and industrial, that is now going on. The most significant fact connected with the late Indian National Congress at Bombay was not its marvellous assemblage of 1889 representatives from every province of India. It was rather that this great gathering for political purposes was held side by side with a still greater meeting in the same city for ameliorating the condition of Women in India—the Social Reform Conference attended by 6,000 persons, chiefly Hindus. A political movement which is purely political may be wise or unwise, but a political movement which forms part of the general advance of a people to a higher state of society and to a nobler ideal of domestic and individual life, is irresistible. It may be guided, it may be moderated, but it must assuredly be reckoned with.

Sir Charles Dilke can by no means be accounted a blind follower of Congress leaders or a partisan of Congress ambitions. Yet even he can write of the great movement in a spirit of criticism to which no wise man can take exception.

The recent attitude of the leading Anglo-Indians towards the Indian National Congress has been confused, and we gain no certain guidance from it when considered as a whole. The general position has been hostile, but some of the thoughtful men, as, for example, Sir William Wedderburn, the President of the National Congress of December 1889, have given, under the form of benevolent neutrality, a full and general approval. The high authority of Sir William Hunter has been set upon the side of approbation, and his pen has conferred upon the last three Congresses a considerable publicity—the meetings of 1885 and 1886 having passed almost unnoticed. Sir William Hunter's support outweighs much opposition. His unrivalled knowledge of India makes him a most trustworthy guide, in everything, may I say, but spelling. The attention which was excited in the United Kingdom by the Congress of December 1888 was, curiously enough, aroused by Mohammedan opposition to it. Some leading Indian Mussulmans, able to write an excellent letter of the orthodox English type, stated their views in opposition to the Congress through the most influential English journals. The result of this opposition was to attract much notice in England, which led to an examination of first principles that had not the result that the Mahomedan gentlemen intended, and a study of Sir William Hunter's letters and articles has completed the educating process. He has conclusively shown, with the calm of the historian rather than with the partial spirit of a contemporary writer, that the present native movement is the necessary outcome of the principles on which our rule of India has been based, and that it is to our interest, as much as it would be to our honour, to satisfy it in some measure.

Argument upon the matter is to be desired but not invective, and there is so much reason to think that the Congress movement really represents the cultivated intelligence of the country, that those who ridicule it do harm to the imperial interests of Great Britain, bitterly wounding and alienating men who are justified in what they do, who do it in reasonable and cautious form, and who ought to be conciliated by being met half-way. The official class themselves admit that many of the natives who attack the Congress do so to ingratiate themselves with their British rulers and to push their claims for decorations: and while I am on this point, I may add that it is an almost universal opinion among officials themselves that some of the recent appointments in the various classes of our orders have been unfortunate. Our first duty in India is that of defending the country against anarchy and invasion, with which I have dealt in the last chapter; but our other greatest duty is to learn how to live with what is commonly called the Congress movement, namely, with the development of that new India which we have ourselves created. Our past work in India has been a splendid task, splendidly performed, but there is a still nobler one before us, and one larger even than that labour on the Irish problem to which our public men on both sides seem too much inclined to give their whole attention.

I have quoted from authority whose respectability is beyond dispute. But the value of men's utterances is not measured, so far as I am concerned, by the dignity of their stations, or by the titles with which authority is pleased to ornament their names. I say nothing in disparagement of such gifts. But no wiser head or truer heart ever enlisted itself in the unselfish service of promoting Indian progress than that of the man who lived and died undecorated—*plebeius moriar senex*—yet gave without stint of the rich abundance of his experience and of the generous dictates of his beliefs for the advancement of all things tending to union and friendliness and love. I have often thought how proud my father would have been had he lived to see the practical fulfilment of what with him was something more than a day dream, the prescience of a man who was not merely a great lawyer but by instinct and experience in the true sense of the word a statesman. It will harm no man that I ask for the dead a reputation which assails no rival's claim. Forty one years ago he wrote the words with which, my offering on his distant grave, I close my long list of contributions to the validity of India's requests and of recognitions of the justice of her wants.

We are teaching the people to think: are we prepared to carry out our act to its legitimate necessary consequences? If not, far better were it, with the boldness of Lord Ellenborough¹, to avow at once, that the spread of education is incompatible with the maintenance of British rule in India. Shall we ignore the change? Or honestly accept it, and its responsibilities? Is there any one among us so infatuated as to dream that, after we have taught the Natives to think, they will refrain from exercising their newly-acquired power? The very charm of novelty alone would suffice to insure its exercise. We teach them principles of morality; are we infatuated enough to imagine that they are not questioning the reasoning on which we support a declaration of war against foreign States, or the appropriation of the territories of our neighbours; or that construction of old treaties which somehow ever interprets them to our own advantage? We inculcate in them the

principles of Jurisprudence; do we suppose that they cannot spy out the nakedness of our present administration of justice, and the mockery of our police? We imbue them with a knowledge of political science; shall we not expect to find them struggling to assert their political rights, urging, as they have already done, their claim to the abolition of all class privileges, demanding that all men shall stand equal before the law, requiring to be admitted to an ever-increasing share in the administration of the country, pressing their admission to political freedom, and a representative system which shall give them the hold of their own purse strings? In the old days, which are past, the people obeyed us in their ignorance because they regarded us as beings of a superior order, and crouched before us as clothed with an irresistible power. They crouched and cowered before us. *Omne ignotum pro magnifico.* But it is the tendency of familiarity to lessen wonder, even where it does not engender contempt; and we have educated people so as to enable them to judge us by a more correct standard. It is more true now, than ever, that our empire is founded upon opinion. But there is this distinction, formerly, it was a false opinion; now it is a true one: formerly opinion was the result of erroneous impressions; now it is founded upon more correct data: formerly, it was based on ignorance; now it is founded in knowledge. Those whom they took for gods, as the ancient Mexicans or Peruvians mistook Cortez Pizarro, they now find to be men like themselves; their superiors, it is true, but still errant, fallible men. They will weigh our every act; and it behoves us well to be circumspect as to the quality of our every action. We must accept the truth, that the country is to be governed by us for the sake of the people, and not of ourselves. We must drop the habit of regarding ourselves as mere exiles, whose first object should be to escape from a disagreeable climate, with the greatest possible amount of the people's money, in the shortest possible time. We must look upon the land as that of our adoption; and each of us, according to his means and opportunities, must help on the welfare of the Natives, in that station of life to which it has pleased God to call him. We cannot ignore the fact of the change which our own educational measures have brought about. It remains then to accommodate ourselves to the consequences of our own policy. We must recognize the right of the Natives to political advancement, as they fit themselves for employment.

I have tried—I trust not wholly unsuccessfully—to sketch the evolution which here as elsewhere is slowly creating new forces which the Imperialism of England must acknowledge and with which it must learn to cope in a spirit of large and generous discipline. I have tried to show that the India of the nineteenth century is what we have intentionally made her. In all around me I detect design. I have also tried to make clear that the programme of the Congress includes a series of reforms which are not revolutionary, still less disloyal: that these are urged by men who are the acknowledged and trusted leaders of the people, speaking earnestly and with admirable eloquence on matters with respect to which most of them are skilled experts. Under much provocation the language of these leaders has always been moderate and the leaders themselves have exhibited much self-restraint and self-respect. The movement they direct and control is full of deep and significant interest. No English statesman can afford to pass it over with contempt. The member for Cardiff was right when in the debate on the Councils Bill he designated it as the most important event in Indian history since the memorable year of 1857. We may disagree with some of the remedies proposed as impracticable,

we may dissent with some of the schemes as utopian. But no one who has honestly and intelligently followed the rise and progress of the intellectual activities which have taken shape in the National Congress but must admit the earnestness which underlies and the ability which characterises the operations of that body. It is no purpose of this paper to follow its future or to criticise its defects, but one who has tried to prove himself a friend to its energies may perhaps be permitted in all kindness to warn its adherents against any attempted departure from the catholicity of aim and method with which for fourteen years it has worked through much difficulty and opposition and unrest for the common benefit of all men in India irrespective of colour or caste or creed. A less unselfish ambition will alienate the sympathies of the people of England and wreck a work in which the historian of the future will delight to trace the most sure as the most wonderful evidence of England's claim to the permanent respect, the ungrudging gratitude and the tender admiration of her Indian subjects.



THE ECONOMIC CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE OF INDIA.



(RAO BAHADUR R. N. MUDHOLKAR. B. A., L. L. B.)

"If a country be found possessing a most fertile soil, and capable of bearing every variety of production, and that notwithstanding, the people are in a state of extreme destitution and suffering, the chances are, there is some fundamental error in the Government of that country."—JOHN BRIGHT.

There are few subjects on which a greater diversity of opinion prevails than the economic condition of the people of this country, and hardly any, the discussion of which has aroused more anger and violent denunciation. When in one of the resolutions passed by it in 1891 the Indian National Congress laid emphasis on the great and growing poverty of the masses in India, and pointed out that a vast portion of the population were living a life of semi-starvation and such utter destitution that they succumbed on the first approach of a famine, ridicule and sneer were freely resorted to by those who disagreed with this view. Most people will remember the violent storm which arose when Mr. Hume in a rather plain-spoken letter drew attention to the grave danger to which this condition of the masses exposed the whole country and the Government. His motives and his honesty, and those of the men, who held similar views, were questioned, and it was laid down as a self-evident truth that those, who asserted that there was anything wrong in the state of the country, must be actuated by feelings of hostility to the Government and to the British nation. Such a spirit is greatly to be deprecated. The question of the actual condition of the people and the result which the administrative, industrial and social forces at work are producing upon that condition, is of too important a nature for a consideration of it to be clouded by passion, prejudice or bias. Both the Government and the people are vitally interested in it. Indeed, to the latter it is a question of life and death. It is proposed in the following few pages to examine—though very briefly—the situation and to arrive at a correct estimate of facts.

It is asserted on the one hand, that the vast bulk of the population is so poor that they cannot obtain sufficient sustenance even in ordinary years, that their condition is deteriorating, that they have become so destitute and so devoid of all staying power that they succumb on the first approach of an unfavourable season and die in hundreds of thousands and millions, that the periodically recurring famines and the disastrous results which follow from them are due mainly to this loss of staying power in the people, which

on its part is due to the prostration and dislocation of the industrial system which existed formerly in this country, that the decadence of those industries itself was brought about more by administrative acts than by natural causes, and that the system of administration and the policy of Government cause a large annual drain of the wealth of this country which is exhausting its resources and increasing its poverty.

On the other hand, it is stated that the talk about the poverty of the people of India and the exhaustion of the country is unmeaning and baseless, and that far from growing poorer the country and its people are increasing in opulence. It is confidently pointed out that population has increased, that large cities and towns have risen in place of villages, that trade has increased by leaps and bounds, new industries have sprung up, thousands of miles of railway have been laid out. The statistics of commerce, it is urged, demonstrate the immense increase in foreign trade brought about by the shipping industry (which has practically come into existence during the last hundred years) and the vast amount of bullion absorbed in this country clearly indicates that the people cannot be poor or so poor as they are said to be.

It is necessary to examine all these statements and give their proper significance and weight to the facts contained in them, before any correct or accurate estimate of the existing state of things and the nature and tendency of the forces at work can be formed. It is greatly to be pitied that those who dwell on the deficiencies and shortcomings of the existing system should have their motives questioned and their arguments met with opprobrious epithets. But the fear of misrepresentation or detraction should not prevent one from doing his duty in so important a matter.

It is an undeniable fact that British rule has conferred numerous blessings on this country. Coming in at a time when the disruptive forces at work in the last part of the 18th century had produced a state of confusion and anarchy, it has given to the people in the first place those primary requisites of civilised life—peace and order. The internal peace maintained and the protection accorded to life and property are such as India has not experienced for centuries past. Not resting merely with this great work it has established Government by Law, introduced a well-organized and superior system of administration in all its branches, created the department of public instruction, founded universities, schools and colleges, established hospitals and dispensaries, constructed railways, roads, bridges and important irrigation works and exerted actively for the increase of commerce and the development of the resources of the country. The work of England in India has in all these matters been such that her children may well be proud

of what has been accomplished. The people of India on their part are not unmindful of the vast benefits conferred upon them and are sincerely grateful for them. The greater association of the people of the country in the various departments of the administration than existed formerly, their admission to some of the privileges of British citizenship are equally appreciated and acknowledged. At the same time it is impossible to shut one's eyes to the fact that side by side with these advantages there exist many defects, shortcomings, failures, lapses, which not only diminish the value of the good work done, but produce positive harm to numerous classes of the population. To obtain the full measure of the benefits conferred, and thereby to strengthen the tie which connects India with England, those defects and evils must be removed. He is no true friend of England and India who shrinks from or resents criticism directed to this end.

Endowed with a fertile soil, a good geographical situation and every variety of climate suitable for the purposes of production, possessing mineral resources of a high order, with a thrifty, sober, peaceful and industrious population, this country enjoys exceptional advantages for the creation and accumulation of wealth, and there is no reason why under favourable influences it should not acquire that pre-eminence in opulence which not only poets but historians and contemporary writers assigned to it in former times. It is said that India is already on the high road to such a pre-eminence and opulence. Large cities like Calcutta, Bombay, Madras have come into existence only during the last 150 years and have attained a high position in population, wealth, enterprise and commercial activity. Mere hamlets or insignificant towns before they came into British possession, Calcutta had, at the census of 1891, a population of 741,144 souls, Bombay of 821,764, Madras 452,518, Karachi 105,199. The yearly trade of Calcutta comes to the total amount of 72 crores of rupees, that of Bombay to nearly 66 crores of rupees, of Madras and Karachi to about 11 crores of rupees each. During 50 years the total value of the export and import trade has gone from 20 crores to 200 crores. During this period, 147 cotton spinning and weaving mills with an approximate capital of 14 crores and employing 150,000 people have come into existence. There are 29 jute mills with an approximate capital of 4 crores and giving work to 79,000 people; 71 rice cleaning mills, 68 saw-mills, 8 paper factories which between them employ 49,000 workmen; besides 63 tanneries, 51 iron foundries, 54 flour-mills, 56 oil factories and 41 tobacco factories, employing many thousands of labourers. All over the country are cotton presses and ginning factories. The coal mining industry has already made considerable advance and the total output of collieries comes to nearly $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions of tons a year.

The gold-mining industry in Mysore and the petroleum and iron mines hold out good promise. The tea, coffee and indigo industries which are of recent origin have already attained considerable proportions. In 1894-95, 10,577 vessels with a tonnage of 8,255,822 entered and cleared at ports in British India. In 1868-69 after the opening of the Suez canal, the total tonnage of vessels entered and cleared was only $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions. These are, it is urged, signs not of poverty but of wealth. Then there is the extension of the railway system which began forty years ago. Over 20,000 miles of railway are already open to traffic and about 4,000 are either under construction or sanctioned.

These are facts and their importance cannot be gainsaid. How far they are indicative of wealth or even competence, so far as the children of the soil are concerned, has to be seen. Leaving Bombay and Calcutta with their palatial public and private buildings and their busy and crowded thoroughfares, if one goes into the country and sees into the squalid huts of the peasants or the labourers, or if one ventures into the poorer quarters of those big cities themselves, one cannot fail to be struck by the contrast afforded by the grinding and wide-spread poverty of the masses to these signs of apparent prosperity.

"Forty millions go through life on insufficient food" so said Sir William Hunter. Sir Charles Elliott said in a settlement report "I do not hesitate to say that half of our agricultural population (*i.e.*, over 70 millions) never know from year's end to year's end what it is to have their hunger fully satisfied." Mr. W. R. Robertson, at one time head of the Agricultural Department in Madras, said, "The condition of the agricultural labourer in India is a disgrace to any country calling itself civilised." The Director of Land Records and Agriculture, Bengal, said in 1888 "My personal opinion is that the condition of the agricultural classes in Behar including parts of Bhagalpur Division has deteriorated within the period of British rule and that it is deteriorating, while that of the population of the greater part of Bengal proper has improved." In 1888 an inquiry was made amongst some of its officers by the Government of India about the condition of the people. The opinions elicited depict a lamentable state of things. The Bengal Government stated that in Behar the labourers including petty landholders who form 40 per cent. of the population can earn a very scanty subsistence. The local officers say they can only take one full meal a day instead of two. Even the Government of India, which was inclined to take a more hopeful view of the situation than the reports of its subordinate officers justified, had to confess; "There is evidence to show that in all parts of India there is a numerous population which lives from

hand to mouth, is always in debt, does not save and has little or nothing to fall back upon in bad seasons."

The latest pronouncement on the subject is that of the Famine Commission of 1898:

"The poorer professional classes suffered severely from rise of prices, but do not come on famine relief. Beyond these classes there always has existed, and there still does exist, a lower section of the community living a hand-to-mouth existence, with a low standard of comfort and abnormally sensitive to the effects of inferior harvests and calamities of season. This section is very large, and includes the great class of day-labourers and the least skilled of the artisans. So far as we have been able to form a general opinion upon a difficult question from the evidence we have heard and the statistics placed before us, the wages of these people have not risen in the last twenty years in due proportion to the rise in prices of their necessities of life. The experience of the recent famine fails to suggest that this section of the community has shown any larger command of resources or any increased power of resistance. Far from contracting, it seems to be gradually widening, particularly in the more congested districts. Its sensitiveness or liability to succumb, instead of diminishing, is possibly becoming more accentuated, as larger and more powerful forces supervene and make their effects felt where formerly the result was determined by purely local conditions. We may take this opportunity of remarking that the evidence given before us by many witnesses proved that in times of scarcity and famine in India the rise in price of food is not accompanied by a rise in the wages of labour; on the contrary, owing to competition for the little employment available when agricultural employment falls off, the rate of wages offered and accepted is frequently below the ordinary or customary rate. Such wages in times of famine prices are not subsistence wages for a labourer with dependents to support."

The periodical recurrence of famine is a source of constant dread to the Government. The report of the Famine Commission of 1879 shows that from the beginning of the century to the period of their enquiry there were 17 famines. The loss of life from the first five which happened in the first quarter of the century is not stated; but during the last twelve, which happened during the 45 years intervening between 1833 and 1878-79, the loss of life is put down at 12,700,000. The loss of life by war in all the civilized states of the world between 1793 and 1877 is estimated by Mr. Mulhall, the statistician, at 4,500,000. In spite of the perfect internal peace which the British rule has established in India, in spite of its benevolent intentions, the great efforts and sacrifices made by it to afford relief during times of distress, three times as many people died of starvation in India during the famines of half a century, as were killed in war over the whole civilized world in one century.

At no previous time was the Government of India better prepared to cope with famine than in 1896-97. Profiting by its past experience, it had kept ready schemes of relief works, and no time was lost in devising methods or determining the organization. And yet what a heart-rending spectacle, the country afforded! Correspondents of English and Anglo-Indian papers sent to visit the scenes of distress described cases of people sinking from

exhaustion and dying by the roadside or in fields or under trees. This time at any rate it was not a case of want of grain. It was want of means to buy that grain. There was sufficient grain to feed all but there was no money to buy it.

This poverty in normal years and absence of staying power becomes intelligible when it is seen how small the average income per head of the population is. In his speech introducing the budget in 1882, Lord Cromer (then Major Baring) said that the average yearly income per head in India was Rs. 27. This estimate was based on calculations made by Sir David Barbour, and though Lord Cromer would not pledge himself to the absolute accuracy of the figure, he said it was sufficiently near the truth to show "the extreme poverty" of the masses. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji's calculations show that the income per head is only Rs. 20. In a speech delivered by him in 1871, Mr. Grant Duff stated the income to be 2 £. This estimate was accepted as correct by Lord Mayo. The £ in those days was equal to nearly Rs. 10. Laying aside for a while the estimates of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and Sir M. Grant Duff and accepting the higher figure of Lord Cromer and Sir David Barbour, the income per head is hardly sufficient to meet the most necessary requirements of life. The diet of a prisoner in jail costs in average years Rs. 23 $\frac{3}{4}$ per head per annum. A native sepoy's diet costs Rs. 42 per head per annum. A camp follower's diet costs Rs. 30 per head per annum. Sir James Peile has calculated that the food expenses of an agriculturist in the Deccan come to Rs. 40 per head per annum. Taking the food expenses at the camp follower's scale (which is a very low scale) and to make allowance for children under twelve years of age, calculating only at three-fourths of that scale, there remain only Rs. 4.5 out of which have to be paid Rs. 2.5 for taxation of all kinds, 1.5 for clothing, .5 for sundries and there remain available only annas 3 for renewal of implements and stock, accumulation of capital, provision against emergencies and for occasions of joy and sorrow.

The following statement shows the average income per head in India and other countries :—

England	... £ 41	Scotland	... £ 32	Ireland	... £ 16
United Kingdom	35.2	France	... 25.7	Germany	... 18.7
Russia	... 9.9	Austria	... 16.3	Italy	... 12
Spain	... 13.8	Portugal	... 13.6	Belgium	... 22.1
Holland	... 26	Denmark	... 23.2	Sweden	} 16.2
Switzerland	... 16	Greece	... 11.8	and Norway	
Turkey	... 4	Europe	... 18	United States	27.2
Canada	... 26.9	Australia	... 43.4		
India (according to Lord Cromer and Sir David Barbour)					... 2

The great industry in India is agriculture. The condition of the agricultural classes, however, has been a source of anxiety to Government for years past. Their growing indebtedness and the increasing transfer of land from the agricultural to the money-lending and other non-agricultural classes is considered a serious economic and administrative evil. The alarming proportions which the problem is assuming became manifest in 1874 when the ryots in several parts of the Deccan, pressed by enhanced assessments on the one hand and the demands of the money-lenders on the other, rose against the latter, maltreated their persons, deprived them of their property and destroyed the bonds and books of account evidencing their indebtedness. An influential Commission was appointed to investigate into the origin of these riots. The majority of the Commission were of opinion that among others the fiscal policy of the Government was one of the causes which produced the disturbances. The minutes of Mr. (now Sir Auckland) Colvin and Mr. Carpenter are very emphatic on the point.* In introducing the Bill for the relief of the Deccan agriculturists,† Sir Theodore Hope had to admit that "to our revenue system must in candour be ascribed some share in the indebtedness of the ryot." In the discussion which followed, Sir Robert Egerton, the Lieutenant-Governor of Punjab, pointed out that too little attention was paid to the fact of the stringency of our revenue laws having contributed to, if it did not entirely originate, the indebtedness and difficulties of the Deccan ryot. His Excellency the Viceroy Lord Lytton admitted that along with legislative measures like the bill under consideration executive action for relaxing the rigidity of the revenue system was necessary. Over twelve years later the Commission appointed to investigate into the working of the Act had to draw attention to the existence of the same rigid, fiscal system.

The gravity of the agrarian problem and the real nature of the economic situation will be made clearer by a consideration of the character of our trade with other countries, on the increase of which during this century very great stress is laid by those who deny the poverty of the people of India.

**Note.*—The following extract from Mr. Carpenter's minute deserves to be reproduced :—

"The effect which an enhancement of assessment has upon the ryot in binding him as a debtor and contracting his credit as a borrower, is unavoidable however moderate in amount and equally distributed the enhancement may be. The effect is augmented if the enhancement though not larger than the land can easily bear is still larger than could be foreseen and prepared for. It is still further augmented if the enhancement is excessive, that is, larger than the land can easily bear. Finally if the enhancement is unequally distributed, the injurious effect on individuals is intensified, and these individuals suffer the additional hardship of seeing others more fortunate than themselves."

† The Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act of 1879.

In the year 1894-95 the Export and Import trade stood thus:—

Exports including re-exports Rx 117,139,850

Imports of merchandise, Government

stores and treasure 83,110,200

Excess of Exports over Imports... .. 34,029,650

During the 55 years which intervened between 1840 and 1895 this trade stood thus:—

Years.	Imports. Rx	Exports. Rx	Excess of Exports over Imports. Rx
1840-44	10.43 Millions per year.	15.10 Millions per year.	4.67. Millions per year.
1845-49	12.51 ..	18.32 ..	6.11 ..
1850-54	15.85 ..	21.10 ..	5.25 ..
1855-59	26.85 ..	26.77 ..	.08 ..
1860-64	41.04 ..	44.19 ..	3.15 ..
1865-69	49.32 ..	59.46 ..	10.14 ..
1870-74	41.60 ..	59.43 ..	17.83 ..
1875-76	44,192,377	60,291,730	16,099,353
1876-77	48,876,750	65,043,789	16,167,039
1877-78	58,819,645	67,433,324	8,613,679
1878-79	44,857,342	64,919,741	20,062,399
1879-80	52,821,398	69,247,511	16,426,113
1880-81	62,104,984	76,021,042	13,916,058
1881-82	60,436,155	83,068,198	22,632,043
1882-83	65,548,868	84,527,182	18,978,314
1883-84	68,157,311	89,186,397	21,029,086
1884-85	69,591,269	85,225,922	15,634,653
1885-86	71,133,666	84,989,502	13,855,836
1886-87	72,830,670	90,190,633	17,359,963
1887-88	78,830,468	92,148,279	13,317,811
1888-89	83,285,427	98,833,879	15,548,452
1889-90	86,656,990	105,366,720	18,709,730
1890-91	93,909,856	102,350,526	8,440,670
1891-92	84,155,045	111,460,278	27,305,233
1892-93	83,275,087	113,554,399	30,279,312
1893-94	95,482,688	110,603,561	15,120,873
1894-95	83,110,200	117,139,850	34,029,650

The first thing to note is the growing character of this trade. The trade again is not confined to one country or one nation, but our commercial transactions extend all over the globe. These features, so far as they go, are satisfactory. But a most disquieting feature is that every year there is an excess of Exports over Imports and that this excess is alarmingly increasing. In 1840 this excess was 5 crores of rupees. Now it is over 34 crores a year. The imports of a country are paid by its Exports. Under

normal conditions, a country carrying on a foreign trade wishes and expects the full *commercial* value of its Exports *plus* a suitable profit over it, *i.e.*, the value of the Imports should be in excess of the value of the Exports to the extent of the profits made. The trade of India shows that far from obtaining any excess of Imports over Exports, the excess of Exports over Imports recurs year after year, and during the sixty years between 1835 and 1894-95 this excess amounted to the enormous sum of 586½ crores for which there was no commercial return and which represents therefore the drain of her wealth from a money point of view.

The number of vessels employed in this trade was in 1894-95, 10,577 representing a tonnage of 8,255,822 which was distributed as follows:—

British	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,784,849
British Indian	...	...	...	...	...	...	288,192
Foreign	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,025,993
Indian	...	...	...	...	...	...	156,788

Nearly 80½ per cent. of the shipping trade is British or British Indian and about 1½ per cent. Indian. The following remarks of Mr. O'Connor sum up the situation very pithily:—

"The native craft employed in the foreign trade are slowly but surely disappearing."

"The shipbuilding industry in India is of the smallest dimensions."

In 1880-81 the tonnage of native Indian craft was 3 per cent. of the whole. Now it is half of that.

If we examine the goods exported and imported, it will be seen that the exports consist in the main of articles of food and raw materials for manufacture and the imports of manufactured articles. In 1894-95 the export trade consisted of:—

					Rupees.	
					Crores.	lakhs.
1.	Grain and pulse	...	...	17	..	5
2.	Seeds	...	...	14	..	20
3.	Jute, raw	...	...	10	..	57½
4.	Opium	...	...	9	..	6
5.	Cotton, raw	...	...	8	..	70
6.	Tea	...	...	7	..	55½
7.	Cotton yarn and cloth	...	...	7	..	15
8.	Hides and skins	...	...	6	..	56
9.	Indigo	...	...	4	..	74½
10.	Jute manufactures	...	...	4	..	21
11.	Coffee	...	...	2	..	12½
12.	Lac	...	...	1	..	40

					Rupees.
					Crores. lakhs.
13.	Wool, raw	...	...	1	37½
14.	Dyes	...	...	...	86½
15.	Provisions	...	...	...	84½
16.	Oils	...	...	...	77½
17.	Wood and timber	...	...	...	66
18.	Sugar	...	...	...	55
19.	Spices	...	...	...	51½
20.	Silk, raw	...	...	...	50¼

The imported articles were :—

1.	Animals living mostly horses	...	...	26
2.	Articles of food and drink	...	8	38
3.	Metals and manufactures of metals including hardware, cutlery, machinery, mill-work, railway, plant and rolling stock.	...	10	34
4.	Chemicals, drugs, narcotics dyeing and tanning materials	...	1	86
5.	Oils	...	2	22
6.	Raw materials and unmanufactured articles	...	4	42
7.	Articles manufactured and partly manufactured	...	42	65

Among those coming under class 2 is 5 lakhs of tons of salt worth 84 lakhs of rupees.

Among those falling under class 7 are :— Crores. lakhs.

(a)	Cotton twist and yarn	...	2	85
(b)	Cotton piece goods little less than...	30	..	
(c)	Silk goods manufactured...	1¼	..	
(d)	Woollen goods manufactured	1½	..	

Among the articles exported, tea, coffee and indigo come for nearly 14½ crores of rupees. The trade is a valuable one but it is almost entirely owned by Europeans and the profits all belong to them and go out of the country.

The only manufactured articles exported which deserve to be noticed are cotton, yarn and cloth and jute manufactures. These are industries which have great potentialities before them and inspire hope. But even in them part of the capital is not native, the management wholly other than native, and skilled labour for the most part imported.

The textile fabrics and the articles of food and drink imported are all capable of being produced in this country. In regard to fabrics, statistics show that of the prices of manufactured articles, only $\frac{1}{4}$ or at the most $\frac{1}{3}$ represents the cost of the raw material and three-fourths or two-thirds represents the wages of the persons engaged in manufacture, profits of manufacturers, cost of transport &c. If instead of sending raw materials to other countries and receiving the finished product from there, this country had manufactured its own raw materials, the amount representing the difference between the cost of the raw material and the price of the manufactured article would have remained all in the country and made substantial additions to the wages fund and the profits of capitalists. This yearly loss in wages and profits is estimated at from 50 to 60 crores.

Therefore, large though the volume of our foreign trade may be, and marvellous the strides which it has made during the last 75 or 100 years, there is not much reason for unmixed satisfaction. On the contrary, the growth is unhealthy and the situation abnormal and economically unsound. The articles which we import comprise almost the whole sphere of industrial activity. For articles of every day use we are dependent on foreigners. Not long ago we supplied all our wants, and from the products of our industries supplied those of other nations.

"From the earliest days, India has been a trading country. The industrial genius of her inhabitants, even more than her natural wealth and her extensive seaboard, distinguished her from other Asiatic lands. * * * The brilliant mediæval republics of Italy drew no small share of their wealth from their Indian trade. It was the hope of participating in this trade that stimulated Columbus to the discovery of America, and Da Gama to the circumnavigation of the Cape of Good Hope. Spices, drugs, dyes, and rare goods; fabrics of silk and cotton; jewels, and gold and silver—these were the temptations which allured the first adventurers from Europe."—(Hunter's India p. 555).

Again :—

"In architecture, in fabrics of cotton and silk, in goldsmith's work and jewellery, the people of India were then unsurpassed."—(*Ibid* p. 593.)

"The carving of its wood work, the patterns, colours and texture of its carpets, shawls and scarfs, admired for centuries, have, since the Great Fair of the world, been set forth as patterns for the most skilled artificers of Europe to imitate. From the looms of Dacca went forth those wonderful tissues that adorned the noblest beauties of the Court of Augustus Cæsar, bearing in the eternal city the same designation sixteen centuries ago as that by which cotton is still known in India; and the abundance of Roman coin and relics up to our time occasionally exhumed, yet preserve traces of the early commercial connection between the two most wonderful nations in the world—those of the Cæsars and the Moguls." *Notes on India* by Dr. Buist, Editor of the *Bombay Times*.)

How this industrial superiority was lost will appear from the following passage from Mill's History of India:

"It was stated in evidence that the cotton and silk goods of India up to this period (1813) could be sold for a profit in the English market at a price from 50 to 60 per cent. lower than

those fabricated in England. It consequently became necessary to protect the latter by duties of 70 and 80 per cent. on their value, or by positive prohibition. Had this not been the case, the mills of Manchester and Paisley would have been stopped at the onset and could scarcely have been set in motion even by the power of steam. They were created by the sacrifice of the Indian manufacturers. Had India been independent, she would have retaliated. This act of self-defence was not permitted her. British goods were forced on her without paying any duty, and the foreign manufacturer employed the arm of political injustice to keep down and ultimately strangle a competitor with whom he could not have contended on equal terms."

"The value of Dacca muslins" says Sir William Lee-Warner, "exported in 1787 was 30 lakhs; but in 1813 it had fallen to less than 4 lakhs."

Fettered and restricted by protective tariffs, the further decay and collapse of Indian industries was accomplished by the advance of the West in the applied sciences. Under the influence of the powers of steam and the perfection of machinery the cost of production was so diminished that the English manufacturers could undersell Indian weavers in their own country and literally drive their goods out of the market.

The one industry we have now got is agriculture. How this dependence on one single industry has proved injurious will appear from the two following quotations from the Report of the Famine Commission of 1879:—

"At the root of much of the poverty of the people of India and of the risks to which they are exposed in seasons of scarcity lies the unfortunate circumstance that agriculture forms almost the sole occupation of the mass of the population, and that no remedy for present evils can be complete, which does not include the introduction of a diversity of occupations through which the surplus population may be drawn from agricultural pursuits and led to earn the means of subsistence in manufactures or some such employments."—*The Report of the Famine Commission, Vol. II page 175.*

"A main cause of the disastrous consequences of Indian famines, and one of the greatest difficulties in the way of promoting relief in an effectual shape, is to be found in the fact that the great mass of the population directly depends on agriculture, and that there is no other industry from which any considerable part of the community derives its support. The failure of the usual rain thus deprives the labouring class, as a whole, not only of the ordinary supplies of food obtainable at prices within their reach, but also of the sole employment by which they can earn the means of procuring it. The complete remedy for this condition of things will be found only in the development of industries other than agriculture, and independent of the fluctuations of the seasons. With a population so dense as that of India, these considerations are of the greatest weight, and they are rendered still more serious by the fact that the numbers who have no other employment than agriculture are in large parts of the country greatly in excess of what is really required for the thorough cultivation of the land; so far as this is the case, the result must be that the part of the population which is in excess of the requirements of agriculture eats up the profits that would otherwise spring from the industry of the community."—*The Report of the Famine Commission.*

The Famine Commissioners believed that 90 per cent. of the rural population, or rather more than 80 per cent. of the total population, is already connected with the land. The writer of the exceedingly able and well informed articles on the economic situation, which appeared in the

Quarterly Journal of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha in January and October 1890, has calculated that 86 per cent. of the entire population is so dependent, including agricultural labourers, while 7.2 per cent. only are otherwise engaged, the remaining 6.8 per cent. being employed in Government or domestic services &c. Agriculture is thus the mainstay of the people.

Now let us see how stands the case with this industry. The most striking feature with regard to it is the extraordinary extension of cultivation. In 1852-53 the cultivated area (under crop) in Madras was 9.78 millions acres. In 1894-95 it was nearly $24\frac{1}{2}$ millions. In 1852-53, in Bombay it was 12.69 millions. In 1894-95 it was over 28 millions. In North-Western Provinces, the increase is from $21\frac{1}{4}$ to 25 millions. In Central Provinces it is from 11.1 millions to 16. In Berar, the increase since 1858 is over 60 per cent. Now, vast though this extension of cultivation is, it is not sufficient to meet the requirements of this country. The total area under crop was in 1894-95 a little over $196\frac{1}{2}$ millions acres. The population in 1891 was over 221 millions. Making allowance for the increase in the population which must have taken place between 1891 and 1894, the cropped area would be barely three-fourth of an acre per head. Sir William Hunter calculates that at least one acre is required to keep a human being in comfort.

Then, again, the extended cultivation has been but in too many cases obtained by encroaching on grazing lands and fuel and timber reserves and by resorting to inferior and unproductive soils and is thus not all profitable economically.

The yield from land in India is not what it used to be or what it is in the advanced countries of the West. Wheat land in the North-Western Provinces which now gives only 840 lbs. an acre, yielded 1,140 lbs. in the time of Akbar (Hunter, p. 517). In India the average yield of wheat per acre is 700 lbs; in England it is 1700; of cotton 60 to 70 lbs. as against 200 in America; of rice 800 lbs. as against 2500 in Bavaria. Of agricultural stock there are not two cattle (cows, bullocks and buffaloes) per 5 acres of cultivated land. "That the agriculture of the country is in need of improvement is beyond question. The arable land is a limited factor in the case, and the population is every year getting nearer to terms of equality with it." (Material and Moral Progress Report for 1891-92, p. 277.) The main impediments to improvement are want of manure, want of cattle and want of water. (Hunter). In other words, what is wanted is capital. And capital does not flow in sufficient quantity to agriculture because of the sense of uncertainty produced by the operations of the Settlement Departments. The necessity of granting fixity of tenure and permanence to the land revenue

demand was perceived years ago and a permanent settlement was definitely promised in the despatches of 1862 and 1865. But these solemn promises have not been carried out; and even the limitations imposed by Lord Ripon with the concurrence of the Secretary of State on the ever growing enhancements of assessments are now being disregarded and set at naught.

One argument remains to be noticed, namely, the absorption of gold and silver in this country. Between 1834 and 1894-95 the net imports of gold amounted to 152 crores of rupees. Deducting out of these for

- (1) Gold coin (mohurs) estimated at 3 millions,
- (2) Gold reserves of exchange banks in India,
- (3) What has passed out of the country as part of personal belongings, ornaments or plate unknown to trade returns,
- (4) Wastage by loss and by wear and tear from year to year,
- (5) Export overland into Central India which is unascertained.

There cannot be more than 120 to 125 crores of rupees worth of gold which remained with the people of this country. This gives 2 crores a year for a population of 280 millions *i.e.*, about $1\frac{1}{4}$ anna per head per year.

Similarly the net imports of silver during these 61 years were worth 361 crores. During the 60 years which elapsed before the stoppage of free coinage, 343 crores rupees worth of silver passed through the mints. Writing in 1885 Sir William Hunter estimated the silver rupees in circulation at £ 158 millions. (Hunter, p. 569). To take the circulation at £ 180 millions now would not be very wide of the mark. If we further take into account the absorption, by Central Asia, Afghanistan, Beluchistan and N. W. border tribes &c., there would not be more than 1·2 crore a year for hoarding ornaments &c., which gives less than one anna a head per year (see Mr. G. V. Joshi's paper in the Quarterly Journal of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha for July 1888).

Even the very high estimates of Sir William Hunter which leave out of account the factors noticed by Mr. G. V. Joshi and place the absorption of the two metals between 7 and 11 millions a year, would give only between 3 annas 5 pies and 5 annas 10 pies per head per year both gold and silver. This disposes of the talk about the hoarding of the precious metals.

The situation may be shortly summed up thus:—

India has an extensive and expanding trade with all the quarters of the globe, but it is carried on for the most part by foreign capital, with foreign labour, in foreign ships, and the children of the soil have very little share in it. The trade itself is by the excess of exports over imports indicative of a heavy and increasing annual drain which is exhausting the resources

of the country. By the dislocation and partial collapse of the old industrial system, from a manufacturing country, she has become an agricultural one. Thrown on this one industry, the pressure of the population on land has increased beyond healthy limits, and agriculture itself has ceased to be a profitable occupation. The result is "an acute, widespread, growing poverty all over the country, increasing severe distress among the lower classes and absence of economic staying power in the masses."

No amelioration of this condition is possible unless both the state and the people set themselves resolutely to correct the mistakes of the past. The excess of exports over imports represents the Home charges of the Government of India, the private remittances of its servants and the profits of foreign merchants &c. The magnitude of the Home charges and the desirability of reducing them are admitted by responsible statesmen in England. The expenditure on administration in India is also heavy beyond the means of the people. The action required in these matters is indicated thus by the Indian National Congress :—

"That the cost of the administration be greatly reduced : in the Military branch, by a substantial reduction of the standing army, by the substitution of long termed local European troops, like those of the Hon. E. I. Company, for the present short term Imperial regiments with their heavy cost, of recruitments in England, in transport and of excessive mortality amongst non-acclimatized youths ; by the cessation of the gigantic waste of money that has gone on, now for several years on so called Frontier defences, and by a strict economy in the Commissariat, Ordnance and Store Departments ; and in the Civil branch, by the wide substitution of a cheaper indigenous agency for the extremely costly imported Staff ; and, that measures be at once taken to give, as was promised by the British Government thirty years ago, fixity and permanence to the Land Revenue demand, and thus permit capital and labour to combine to develop the agriculture of the country, which, under the existing system of temporary settlements, in recent times often lasting for short periods, in some cases only extending to 10 and 12 years, is found to be impossible ; and to establish agricultural Banks.—(Resolution III of the Seventh Indian National Congress).

(i) As regards the machinery to control Indian Expenditure, it is prayed—(1) that the non-official Members of the Viceroy's Council may be made more directly representative of the Indian people, and that they may have the right to move amendments and divide the Council upon the provisions of the Budget ; (2) that a sufficient number of representative Indians of position and experience may be nominated to the Council of the Secretary of State on the recommendation of the elected Members of the Viceroy's and Local Legislative Council ; and (3) that each year a select Committee of the House of Commons may be appointed to inquire into and report upon the financial condition of India :

(ii) As regards the progress of Expenditure, it is prayed that the Military and other unproductive expenditure be reduced, that larger amounts be spent in promoting the welfare and the progress of the people, and that a large saving and a more efficient administration may be obtained by the substitution, as far as practicable, of Indian for European agency in the higher grades of the Public service ; and

(iii) As regards apportionment of charges, it is prayed that the Imperial Treasury may bear a fair proportion of all expenditure in which the common interests of India and the rest of the Empire are involved ; and especially that the expenses of the present war beyond

the frontier may be largely borne by the Imperial Exchequer. Lastly, that it be an instruction to the President to submit a copy of this Resolution under his own signature to the Chairman of the Royal Commission with the least practicable delay.

—(Resolution III of the 13th Indian National Congress).

The recommendations of the Congress give expression to the conviction to which all thinking Indians and many independent Englishmen have arrived after a deep study of Indian questions. It is the old cry for justice and for peace, economy and reform. Justice as well as expediency require the adoption of a policy, which would enforce economy, husband the resources of the state, foster the development of indigenous and local arts and industries which have practically been extinguished, and help forward the introduction of modern arts and industries.

But the action of the state alone will not lift us from our present low condition. To compete with any hope of success with the activity of the progressive countries of the West, a more vivid appreciation of the changed conditions of industrial pursuits, a greater readiness to adapt ourselves to this change, a higher resourcefulness, superior powers of organization, more steady energy, better combination and united action than what we have exhibited hitherto are necessary to be manifested and put forward. Technical education in all its branches, comprising instruction both in the theory and practice of the sciences applied to industries is an absolute *sine qua non*. The highest and the best trained intellects in the country must devote themselves to the solution of the economic problem. Shall we do this? Our salvation to a certain extent at least lies in our hands.

