

SPEECHES AND PAPERS
ON
Indian Questions,
1901 and 1902.

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1901 and 1902

BY

ROMESH C. DUTT, C. I. E.

LATE OF THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE

AND OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW

LECTURER IN INDIAN HISTORY, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON

AUTHOR OF A 'HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION IN ANCIENT INDIA'

'GREAT EPICS OF ANCIENT INDIA'

'THE ECONOMIC HISTORY OF BRITISH INDIA' ETC.

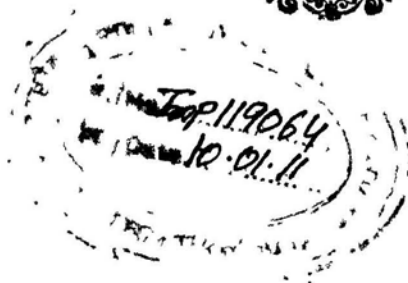
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

THE second series of the *Speeches and Papers of MR R. C. Dutt* is published with his permission. They contain his important speeches made before the Fabian Society of London, and at Liverpool and Glasgow, on the Economic Causes of Indian Famines ; his papers on Indian Agriculture and Indian Manufactures ; and his four Replies to Lord Curzon's recent Resolution on the Indian Land Revenue. Other important speeches, delivered in 1901 and 1902, have also been included.

THE PUBLISHER.

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SPEECHES AND PAPERS

ON

INDIAN QUESTIONS.

I. THE INDIAN LAND QUESTION.

[*Reprinted from the Imperial and Colonial Magazine*
February 1901.]

I.

IN the latter half of the 18th century, a variety of administrative problems presented themselves to the new rulers of India, but none of them was so deeply interesting or presented itself in such varied forms as the Land Question. And the servants of the East India Company, familiar only with the English system of landlords, farmers, and labourers, were fairly puzzled when Zemindars and Polygars, Village-Communities and Peasant-proprietors, appeared before their astonished eyes with all their archaic customs and ancient rights.

The Province of Bengal, the first great acquisition of the East India Company, presented the problem in its simplest form. The country was parcelled out into great estates, owned by hereditary Zemindars, who had under the Mahomedan *regime* virtually ruled their own

estates, encouraged literature and arts in their courts, and often commanded troops for the Imperial service. It was obvious therefore, that any revenue settlement of Bengal, based on the ancient institutions of that land, must be a settlement with Zemindars.

For a time, however, the administration of the Province was in disorder. The battle of Plassy was won in 1757, and the Company assumed the direct administration of Bengal in 1763, but the Company's servants, bent on making large fortunes for themselves, endeavoured to take over the inland trade of the country into their own hands, and drove the traders of the country to despair. Farmers of the land-revenue were also sent to the different districts where they made collections from zemindars or tenants often by coercion, and the agriculturists were grievously oppressed. A great famine, —the greatest that is recorded in the history of India, —then occurred in 1770-71, and is estimated to have swept away one-third of the population of that rich and fertile Province.

Warren Hastings was then appointed Governor of Bengal in 1772, and became Governor-General in 1774; and the Land Question naturally came under his consideration. Hastings himself, trained in the old methods, made the harsh and unwise proposal that the estates of Bengal should be sold by public auction or farmed out on leases and that settlements should be made with the purchasers or lessees for life. A juster and a more humane view of the situation was taken by a large-minded statesman, known to English readers as

the writer of the "Letters of Junius." In one of the ablest minutes ever recorded in India, Philip Francois, then a member of the Governor General's Council, dwelt on the calamities through which Bengal had passed since the British Conquest, and recommended that a permanent settlement should be made with the Zemindars. "If there be any hidden wealth still existing," he wrote, "it will be brought forth and employed in improving the land, because the proprietor will be satisfied he is labouring for himself."

When these varied proposals came before the Court of Directors in London, the Directors were fairly puzzled by the strangeness of the problem and the magnitude of the issues involved ; and following a policy of drift peculiarly British, they allowed the problem time to ripen towards its own solution. On the Christmas Eve of 1776 the Directors wrote to India that "having considered the different circumstances of letting the land on leases for lives, or in perpetuity, we do not for many weighty reasons, think it at present advisable to adopt either of these modes."

For nine years more, Warren Hastings administered the affairs of India, and the Land Question in Bengal ripened towards a solution. The short leases and the prompt demands of Hastings caused much suffering to the people ; ancient houses which had virtually ruled large districts in Bengal were swept away ; money-lenders and auction-purchasers came in their place as new landlords ; and much land went out of cultivation. When, at last, Lord Cornwallis succeeded Warren

Hastings as Governor General, he wrote, "I may safely assert that one-third of the Company's territory in Hindustan is now a jungle, inhabited only by wild beasts." With characteristic energy and benevolence Lord Cornwallis made a ten-year's settlement with the landlords of Bengal ; and within a few years he made that settlement permanent in 1793. The area of cultivation has vastly extended since that date, and the additional profit has remained in the country, and promoted the prosperity of the agricultural classes.

But Lord Cornwallis' work was only a partial solution of the great question. He assured the Zemindars of Bengal against any increase of the State-demand ; he also expressly retained for the State the power to protect the cultivators against undue demands on the part of Zemindars ; but this power was not exercised for a long time. Lord Cornwallis has been blamed for thus leaving the actual cultivators unprotected for a long time ; but the case of Ireland shows that effective legislation for the protection of tenants is not easy. It is enough to add that such legislation was undertaken in Bengal long before it was thought of in Ireland ; that Lord Canning's Bengal Rent Act of 1859 was a thorough and effective measure which received the attention of Mr. Gladstone when he framed his Land Bill for Ireland in 1869 ; and that Lord Canning's Act has been succeeded by the Bengal Rent Acts of 1868 and 1885 which now effectually protect the cultivators of Bengal against all unjust enhancements and ejectments by landlords. It is thus after the labour of a century that

British administrators have solved in a satisfactory manner the great Land Question in Bengal, *firstly*, by extending protection to Zemindars by the Regulation of 1793, and *secondly*, by extending protection to actual cultivators by the Rent Acts of 1859, 1868 and 1885. The consequence is that Bengal cultivators at the present time are more prosperous, more self-relying, and more safe against the worst effects of famine, than the cultivators of any other Province in India.

II.

Madras was the next territorial acquisition of the East India Company. Large slices of the dominions of Mysore were acquired by the British after the wars of 1792 and 1799, and the whole of the Karnatic was taken over in 1801. The Land Question in these territories presented itself in a greater variety of forms than in Bengal; and while they puzzled the servants of the Company, they would have afforded the most interesting materials for study to thoughtful enquirers like Sismondi or Mill, like Lavelaye or Sumner Maine. For, instead of one predominating system as in Bengal, there were various systems flourishing side by side in Madras, and these may be grouped under three great classes.

(1) The Zemindars of the Northern Circars, the Polygars of the South, and the Hill Rajas of the backward tracts, were great landlords, exercising at the same time those administrative powers within their estates

which belonged in a greater or a less degree to all territorial and military lords in olden times.

(2) The Mirasi villages of the Karnatic were Village-Communities, holding the village lands in common, partitioning them among the tenants from time to time, and paying their quota of revenue to the State, like self-contained and self-governing little republics.

(3) In tracts where fighting Polygars had not extended their power, and the Mirasi Village-Communities had not grown up, Peasant-proprietors held and tilled their own soil, and paid revenue direct to the Government.

Which of these systems was the original institution of the country? Which of them should be fostered under the British rule? The Polygars being strong military chiefs were the first to be crushed. The Nawab of the Karnatic, with the help of his British allies, rooted out these local chiefs who had ruled their estates and protected their people through centuries of disorder in Southern India. The Court of Directors shed a pious tear for them. They wrote that "the native princes called Polygars should not be extirpated," that "it was repugnant to humanity to force them to such dreadful extremities." But the Governor of Madras and the Nawab of the Karnatic could afford to disregard these pious wishes; and later on, the Court of Directors reconciled themselves to what had been done! "We entreat your Excellency," they wrote to the Governor of Madras, "to make the manufacturers the object of your tenderest care; particularly when you root out the Polygars,

you do not deprive the weavers of the protection they enjoyed under them." The Nawab of the Karnatic went on merrily, with the aid of his British allies, to root out the Polygars who were strong feudatory chiefs; but the turn of the Karnatic itself came next. On the death of the Nawab, the whole of the Karnatic largely freed from Polygars, was added to the British dominions, after certain formalities, in 1801.

The Land Question was thus brought one step nearer its solution, but was not yet solved. In the Northern Circars and in other places, where there were large Zemindars, a permanent settlement had been made with them under the orders of Lord Cornwallis. What was to be done where there were no Zemindars? Colonel Read and Thomas Munro had made some settlements direct with the Ryots or cultivators, and this form of settlement is called Ryotwari Settlement. The Madras Board of Revenue, on the other hand, pressed for a settlement with the Mirasi Village-Communities which they represented as the original and ancient institution of the land. The official records of Indian Administration do not contain a more interesting controversy than this memorable discussion between the partisans of Peasant-proprietors and the partisans of Village-Communities in Southern India.

Sir Thomas Munro triumphed in the end. He gave his evidence with remarkable clearness, force, and knowledge of details, before the Commons' Committee which was enquiring into the affairs of the East India Company in 1813; and he obtained the

orders of the Court of Directors for the introduction of the Ryotwari system in Madras. Except in estates where a permanent settlement has been made with Zemindars, settlement with the cultivators direct is the prevailing system in Madras at the present time. Village-Communities have been swept away, even like the Polygars of old.

But the great Land Problem in Madras still remains unsolved. Sir Thomas Murno contemplated a *permanent settlement* with the cultivators in Madras, as Lord Cornwallis had made a *permanent settlement* with the Zemindars in Bengal. His desire was that the cultivators of Madras should have their holdings as "a permanent hereditary property" of which "the assessment must be fixed." Down to 1862 the Madras Government believed and declared that "the fundamental principle of the Ryotwari system is that the Government demand on land is fixed for ever." * But within the last forty years the Madras Government has receded from their former position.

The Government demand is not "fixed for ever," but is enhanced at each recurring settlement. The Government claim of one-half the net produce of the soil, after deducting the cost of cultivation, is enforced on the basis of estimates which can never be accurate. The Government rule of fixing one-third the gross produce of the soil as the maximum of the revenue-demand is oppressive and harsh. The cultivators of Madras have no clear and adequate protection against

* Letter of the Madras Government to the Government of India No. 241 dated 8th February 1862.

the State-landlord,* as the cultivators of Bengal have against the private landlord. 11,749 cultivators were ejected from their holdings in Madras last year for inability to pay the Government demand; 60,896 acres were sold for arrears of revenue; one-half of this found no purchasers in the market and was bought up by the Government itself at a nominal value! Six millions of acres of cultivable land remain uncultivated under the present system of heavy assesment!

When the Marquis of Ripon went out to India as Viceroy in 1880, he endeavoured to remedy this state of things. With a commendable moderation and good sense he sought to effect a compromise between the principle that the State-demand should be fixed for ever, and the principle that the State-demand should be virtually unrestricted. He left a door open for the future increase of the land revenue by claiming such increase when the prices of the produce rose. And he extended protection to the cultivators by declaring that no increase would be demanded in the future except on the ground of such a rise in prices. It was an equitable rule and a reasonable compromise, and would have settled the Land Question in Madras. But the Secretary of State for India took it upon himself to set aside this reasonable compromise in 1885, in order to keep the Government-demand absolutely unrestricted. And thus it happens that the Land Question remains

* I have used the word "State-landlord" in a loose way. Strictly speaking the cultivators themselves are recognised as the proprietors of their holdings, and the State only claims a *revenue* from them, not *rent*.

unsolved in Madras, and the agricultural population remain indebted, impoverished, and subject to famines, after a century of British rule.

III.

The territory now forming the Bombay Presidency was acquired by the British later than Bengal and Madras. The last of the Mahratta Peshwas was set aside in 1817, and his dominions were annexed in that year; and the Land Question, which is the most vital question in every part of India, immediately came for consideration.

The Deccan had a well defined land-system of its own under the Mahrattas; the Village-Community-system was better organized and more general in the Deccan than in Madras. Mountstuart Elphinstone, who was the first Governor of the Bombay Presidency, was a kindly and sympathetic administrator, and sought to preserve what was good and commendable in old Hindu institutions. "I am not democratic enough," he wrote in 1822, "to insist on the Ryotwari system. I think the aristocracy of the country where it consists of heads of villages or heads of Zemindaris should be kept up."

But Mountstuart Elphinstone endeavoured in vain. When he left India, the Village-Community-system was disfavoured, and the Ryotwari system was favoured; and one of the ablest and shrewdest of the Directors of the East India Company admitted;—"It cannot be con-

cealed or denied, I think, that the object of this (Ryotwari) system is to obtain for Government the utmost that the land will yield in the shape of rent" * The claims of the Government-revenue superseded all other claims in India ; the old village institutions were crushed or swept away in the Deccan ; the Ryotwari system or settlement with each individual cultivators was introduced as in Madras.

Settlements for thirty years have been made in Bombay in 1836, in 1866 and in 1896, each settlement showing an enhancement of the Government demand by over thirty per cent. But a proper solution of the Land Question, conferring clear, adequate and well defined rights to the cultivators of the soil, has not been arrived at, because the State-landlord is unwilling to place definite limits to its powers. The State-landlord is also the Legislative power ; and it legislated in 1876 that the High Court of Bombay and the Civil Courts of that Province should have no jurisdiction over its actions in the revenue department. The consequence may be imagined ; and what the late Sir William Hunter said in 1879 from his place in the Viceroy's Council is true to this day that "the Government assessment does not leave enough food to the cultivator to support himself and his family throughout the year." In the present year of distress and famine in Western India, Lord Curzon has declared that "the weakness and incapacity for resistance of the people took the local Government

* HENRY ST. JOHN TUCKER : *Memorials of Indian Government*, London 1853, p. 113.

by surprise." That surprise is removed by a reference to the past revenue-history of the Province.

The solution that is needed in Bombay is the same that is needed in Madras. We cannot reverse the Ryotwari system after it has been established as the prevailing system in the two Provinces for generations ; but we can work the system with moderation and due care. The rule laid down in 1864 by Sir Charles Wood, then Secretary of State for India, that the Government revenue should generally be limited to one-half the customary rents, should find a place in the fiscal laws of India. The rule laid down by the Marquis of Ripon in 1882, to prevent enhancements except on the equitable ground of a rise in prices, should now obtain the sanction of the present Secretary of State. And a reference should be allowed to impartial Courts of Justice against mistakes made by Settlement and Revenue Officers in Madras and in Bombay.

IV.

Northern India came under British Rule at various dates. Portions of Oudh were ceded to the British in 1801, and Delhi and Agra and other districts were conquered in 1803. The Punjab was annexed after the Sikh wars of 1847 and 1849, and the whole of Oudh was annexed in 1856.

Lord Cornwallis's successful permanent settlement of the land revenues in Bengal was extended to Benares, and proposed to be extended to other parts of Northern

India ; and proclamations were made and pledges were given to the people. But after the death of Lord Cornwallis, the desire to redeem these pledges gradually lost its force. An able and exhaustive report submitted by Holt Mackenzie generally brought to the light the fact that Village-Communities were still in a fairly working order in Northern India ; it was decided to make settlements with these Village-Communities as well as with landlords of large estates ; and it was also decided unfortunately to make these settlements temporary and not permanent. Regulation VII. of 1822 was accordingly passed into law.

On the early mistakes of the Company's Government in the revenue-administration of Northern India it is not necessary for us to dwell ; the Company's servants actually endeavoured to realize over 80 per cent., of the rental as the Government demand. A great deal of suffering and distress was caused to the people, and it has been stated that the hand of the Company's tax-gatherer was felt heavier by the agricultural population than even the occasional devastations of Afghan and Mahratta free-booters of the previous times.

A careful enquirer and a considerate administrator now appeared on the scene. Lieutenant-General Briggs, who had served under Mountstuart Elphinstone in the last Mahratta war, and had settled large districts, produced his great work on the land-systems of India in 1830. And he proved,

(1) that the integrity of private property in land had been recognized in every village in India ;

(2) that the Government had no right to the land but only to a share in its produce, i.e., a land tax ;

(3) that that share was limited by Hindu and Mahomedan law and could not be arbitrarily fixed ;

(4) that the British Empire could be made durable only if based on the broad basis of native institutions,

A better and a more sympathetic administrator never went out to India than Lord William Bentinck who was then the Governor General, and he welcomed General Briggs' work as a help to his administration. The famous Regulation of 1833 was passed after consultation with General Briggs ; the revenue-demand was reduced to two-thirds the rental ; and new settlements were made between 1833 and 1849. The last great work of the Company's servants was to reduce the land-revenue still further to one-half the rental, by the Saharanpur rules of 1855, and this is the recognized rule in Northern India to the present day.

The rule of the East India Company came to an end after the Indian Mutiny of 1857, and a great famine swept over Northern India in the early years of the administration of the Crown. Lord Canning, the first and greatest Viceroy of India under the Crown, sought to pass a remedial measure which would permanently improve the condition of the agricultural classes, which would give rise to a substantial middle class, and which would lead to some accumulation of capital among the impoverished population. Looking at the prosperous condition of Bengal under the Permanent Settlement, and after a careful enquiry into other parts of India,

Lord Canning recommended the extension of a Permanent Settlement to all the Provinces of India.

Sir Charles Wood was then Secretary of State for India ; and in his memorable Despatch of the 9th July 1862 he approved of Lord Canning's proposal as "a measure dictated by sound policy, and calculated to accelerate the development of resources of India, and to ensure, in the highest degree, the welfare and contentment of all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in that country." Lord Lawrence thoroughly supported the proposal in his Minute of the 5th March 1864 ; and Sir Stafford Northcote, who was Secretary of State for India in 1867, gave it his sanction in his letter of the 23rd March 1867 "in consideration of the great importance of connecting the interests of the proprietors of the land with the stability of the British Government."

It is a melancholy truth that the very peacefulness and loyalty of the people of India have weakened, instead of strengthening, this benevolent desire on the part of their rulers. The generation of Canning and Lawrence, of Sir Charles Wood and Sir Stafford Northcote passed away, and after a period of uninterrupted peace in India the succeeding generation of statesmen no longer thought it necessary to sacrifice a prospective rise in the land revenue to promote the welfare and contentment of the people, or to connect the interests of the proprietors of the soil with the stability of the British Rule. The people of India lost the chance of an extension of the Permanent Settlement by their silent submission, and the proposal of Lord Canning and Lord Lawrence was

finally rejected by a new Secretary of State for India on the 28th March 1883

The state of things in Northern India therefore is this. The old Village-Communities have gradually and slowly approximated to a system of landlords and tenants. The revenue demand of the State is about half the rental, and is re-settled every thirty years. A great many local cesses, assessed on the rental, have been added to the land-revenue.

V.

It is unnecessary to prolong this article by any lengthy examination of the state of things in the Central Provinces of India. Saugor and the Narbadda Territories came under British administration in 1818, and the Nagpur State was annexed in 1853; and all these tracts were consolidated into one great Province, and called the Central Provinces of India in 1861. Sir Richard Temple's administration of this great Province from 1862 to 1866 is still remembered by the people of the Province with gratitude; the thirty years' settlement commenced in 1863 was conducted on liberal principles; the Malguzars of Revenue-payers were recognized as proprietors; and the rule of demanding one-half the rental as revenue was recognized in principle, though it was unfortunately evaded in practice.

In a country like India, where the people have no voice or share in the control of the work of administration, the principles of administration are liable to change

from year to year according to the fancies of individual administrators. The history of modern India presents us with no more painful illustration of this truth than the second land-revenue settlement of the Central Provinces effected within the last decade. The Chief Commissioner who ruled the Central Provinces in 1887 considered that the rule of demanding half the rental from the landlords, as the Government revenue, was too liberal to the landlords ! And that reasonable and moderate rule, arrived at after a century of bitter and painful experiments, arrived at on the experience of administrators like Lord Dalhousie, Lord Canning and Sir Richard Temple, was abrogated for the Central Provinces in 1888, without discussion in Council, without consultation with the people ! Settlements have now been made in the Central Provinces in which something like 60 per cent of the rental plus $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent as local cesses have been demanded from the landlords as revenue ; and the period of settlement has also been cut down from 30 to 20 years ! These fatal blunders have deepened the effects of the famines of 1897 and 1900 in the Central Provinces, and have perhaps added to the loss of lives by tens of thousands.

Such, briefly, has been the history of Land Administration in the five great Provinces of India. Generally speaking, the land revenue is paid by landlords in Northern India, Bengal, and the Central Provinces ; while it is paid direct by the cultivators of the soil in Madras and Bombay. To this difference in systems no objection is taken ; but the people of India desire that

reasonable, equitable, and intelligible limits to the State-demand should be framed. There is one clear and intelligible limit which is recognized in theory by the State itself, and which applies to all Provinces of India ; and that limit is : *The Land Tax shall not exceed one-half the rental or one-half the economic rent.* This rule was recognized for Northern India by Lord Dalhousie's Saharanpur Rules of 1855 ; and it was recognized for Southern India by Sir Charles Wood's Despatch of 1864. Let this rule be honestly adhered to in practice.

II. INDIA AND THE NATIONAL LIBERAL FEDERATION.

*Speech at the Conference of the Committee of the National
Liberal Federation at Rugby on February, 27, 1901.*

Reprinted from "India."

THE meeting of the Delegates at Rugby was the largest of such meetings since the establishment of the Federation, and the large hall was inconveniently crowded. The South African discussions were necessarily prolonged, and it was after five o'clock when Mr. Romesh Dutt, who attended as a delegate from Lewisham, was able to move his resolution. It ran thus :

"That this meeting deplores the succession of severe famines which have caused the deaths of millions of people in India in recent years, and considers it necessary to prevent the recurrence of such severe calamities by moderating the Land Tax, extending irrigation works, and relieving as far as possible the annual burdensome drain on the financial resources of India which impoverishes the people of that country."

In moving this resolution, Mr. Dutt said that although the subjects which had been discussed by the meeting that afternoon were of the gravest importance, there was none among them which was of a higher importance in the interests of the British Empire than

that which formed the subject of his resolution. They had to deplore the deaths of twenty or thirty thousand Englishmen in the South African War ; but the loss of lives from the present famine in India could scarcely be much under a million ; while the loss of lives from the succession of famines which had occurred in India within the present generation, or rather within the forty-two years since India had passed under the direct administration of the Crown, could scarcely be less than the entire population of England. English Liberals would ask themselves the cause of these disastrous and frequent famines in a time of profound and uninterrupted peace within the natural frontiers of India. India at present was not a great manufacturing country, nor a great commercial country, but a great agricultural country ; and four-fifths of the vast population of India depended upon agriculture. If the Government demand from the produce of the soil was moderate, and placed within definite and intelligible limits, the people could be prosperous. But the Government demand was being increased at each recurring settlement every twenty or thirty years ; the people could save nothing ; and every year of drought was a year of famine. After the great famine of 1860, Lord Canning, then Viceroy of India, had recommended that limits should be placed on the Government demand ; and Lord Lawrence, who succeeded as Viceroy of India a few years after, had supported this recommendation ; but, nevertheless it was rejected by the India Office in London. The Marquis of Ripon who was Viceroy of India from

1880 to 1884 had recommended certain other limitations to the Government demand; but even his very moderate recommendation had been rejected by the India Office in London. Thus it happened that the agricultural people of India were in a state of chronic poverty and indebtedness and would continue to be subject to repeated and fatal famines, till the Land Tax was moderated and strictly limited. His second recommendation was the extension of irrigation works. On this point there was no difference of opinion, because irrigation works—tanks as well as canals—were the only possible means of saving crops in years of drought. His last recommendation was to decrease as far as possible the annual drain from India. While taxation had increased both in England and in India, there was an essential difference between the two countries. In England, the proceeds of taxation were spent in the country, and thus flowed back to the people in one shape or another to fructify their industries and help their trade. In India, an amount exceeding one half of the net revenues was annually taken away from the country, and thus rendered the people hopelessly poor. It was a drain unexampled in any country on earth at the present day; and if England herself had to send out one half of her annual revenues to be spent annually in Germany or France or Russia, there would be famines in England before long. Therefore he proposed that this annual drain should be reduced, as far as possible, from year to year, by the employment of the people of India in the administration of their own country, and by the

cost of the Imperial Army in India being shared to some extent by England herself

Miss ALISON GARLAND rose to second the Resolution and was received with cheers. She said that she had probably been asked to second it because she had been to India in 1899-1900, and had visited several famine centres, and knew what the Indian famine meant. She depicted in vivid colours the scenes she had witnessed, and concluded her description by stating that in the midst of these horrors the Government had refused to make a Parliamentary grant to India—not because the British nation were averse to such a grant, not because such a grant was not needed, but because the Indian Government and the India Office did not ask for it. The Indian Government did not ask for it because they knew that a Parliamentary grant would be followed by an inconvenient Parliamentary enquiry.

When the chairman was about to put the Resolution to the vote, one delegate rose to oppose it. He said he had been in India and had seen two famines, and he was opposed to the Resolution. The remedies suggested by the mover would not avert famines in India, for when the annual rains failed, and the crops of the two hundred million people of India failed, nothing could avert a famine. He proposed therefore that this meeting should not pass the Resolution in a hurry.

COLONEL HANNA who was in the gallery then rose to speak; and though it was getting late, his venerable appearance, his great earnestness, and his known mastery of Indian facts, ensured him a patient and respectful

hearing. He said there was no such thing as the total failure of the crops in India. When crops failed in one Province there were always ample harvests in others. There always was a sufficient supply of food for the people of India. It was not the want of food supply, but it was the want of money to buy food, which caused famines in localities where the crops failed. He therefore thought that famines could be averted by improving the condition of the people. But the Government of India spent money unwisely in frontier wars, and the total outlay of such frontier wars came to eighty millions of English money. Colonel Hanna therefore supported the Resolution.

The Resolution being put to the vote was carried almost unanimously, only one or two hands being raised against it. This concluded the business of the meeting.

III. SOCIAL PROGRESS IN INDIA.

[Speech delivered at the Annual Meeting of the National Indian Association, on March, 25, 1901.]

MR. DUTT said: The Resolution which I have the honour to second has been explained by Sir Roper Lethbridge, and I have very little to add to what he has said, except that as an Indian myself, I feel great pleasure in seconding it. The Resolution is for making increased efforts in support of the Association's funds with the object of promoting female education in India. It is well known—speaking at least for the part of India from which I come, and with which I am most familiar—that for the last thirty or forty years or more, a great deal has been done by the people of India themselves in the cause of social progress and of female education. A great deal has been done, not ostentatiously, but by quiet work at home, to help the cause of social progress; and anything like a lasting and abiding improvement in the country must be done in the future, as has been done in the past, by the people themselves. (Hear, hear). I think many of the gentlemen present here, who have passed a great many years of their lives in India, like my friend Sir Charles Stevens who has moved the first Resolution, are familiar with the names of prominent Indian gentlemen who devoted their lives to the cause of education and of social reform. I need

only mention the names of Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar and Keshab Chandra Sen of Bengal, and of Justice Ranade of Bombay whose recent death has filled the people of India with sorrow. They were prominent men in India who, in spite of various duties which they had to perform, devoted a great part of their time to the cause of social progress and social reform, and were careful to adopt methods which were consistent with our Eastern life, because they knew that all reforms in order to be abiding, must be consistent with our Eastern customs and life. (Hear, hear.) This is a point, ladies and gentlemen, which we should always remember—we who try to work in the cause of social reform. The people of India gratefully accept help from all true friends in the cause of reform; they avail themselves of the schools and teachers you provide; they benefit by your sympathy and your support; but nevertheless all abiding reforms must be worked out by themselves, consistently with the life they live. It is not desirable and it is not possible, to Europeanise Indian life. (Applause.) The people of India are well able to judge for themselves what is best for themselves, and Indian life and Hindu life has always proved itself capable of assimilating what is good for itself. It is because we have been able to assimilate all needful reforms from generation to generation and from age to age, that our ancient Hindu life still exists in India when so many phases of ancient life have passed away in other countries like Rome and Greece, like Persia, Egypt and Babylon. Therefore, Sir, our best helpers and our truest friends

are those who, while they offer us their help and their sympathy, can at the same time sympathise with Eastern life and Eastern institutions. And it is because this Association is trying to co-operate with our own endeavours, to help us where we are in need of help, to provide teachers and schools for the education of our wives, sisters, and daughters, that we gratefully accept its sympathy, its services, and its help. And I have great pleasure, Sir, in seconding this Resolution, because the truest progress that we can make, and the truest line upon which we can make that progress, is the extension of female education in India. It is necessary that our women should be familiar with modern institutions, with modern knowledge, and with modern history ; a sound education like this is needed to smoothe the path of our future progress.

IV. THE LAND TAX, RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION.

*Speech delivered at a Conference of Indians in the
Westminster Town Hall on May, 24, 1901.*

MR. ROMESH DUTT moved the following Resolution :

"In view of the frequent and recurring famines which have desolated India in recent years, and the extreme poverty of the agricultural population, it is desirable that the Land Tax of India should be moderated and placed within fixed limits, and that extensive irrigation works—canals, tanks, and wells,—should be undertaken for the protection of crops in years of drought."

Mr. Dutt said : The Resolution which I have the honour to move is, properly speaking, a supplement to the Resolution which you, Mr. Chairman, have moved, and which has just been passed. You, Sir, have raised your voice to-day, as you have raised it in this country for the last forty years, against that perpetual Economic Dram which has impoverished the people of India, against that annual flow of a large portion of the Indian revenue out of India ; I desire to show how a large portion of this revenue is raised in India from the poorest of the poor, from the agriculturists and tillers of the soil. It will thus appear, Sir, that we are not speaking of two different questions, but only of two aspects of the same question ; we are not asking for

two different reforms—we are demanding the same reform, shewing its need from outside and from inside. For my own opinion is that the annual Economic Drain will never be reduced until the Land Tax is moderated ; and the Land Tax will never be moderated until the Economic Drain is reduced.

Sir, we stand to-day face to face with the appalling fact that famines and deaths by starvation have almost become chronic in India, after a hundred and fifty years of British Rule.

I am old enough, Sir, to remember the last years of the rule of the East India Company ; and I distinctly remember the day when, 43 years ago, it was proclaimed in every town and village of India, that the East India Company was abolished, and the empire had passed under the direct administration of the Crown. During these 43 years we have enjoyed the blessings of peace, undisturbed by a single war within the natural frontiers of India. There has not been the slightest ripple of disturbance among the loyal population of that country. But peace has not brought with it prosperity to the people. On the contrary, the people of India are becoming more impoverished and resourceless from year to year, and famines and deaths are becoming more frequent and fatal. There have been 11 famines within these 43 years, and the deaths from these famines, by the most moderate computation exceed 20 millions. It is an astonishing and appalling fact, not seen in the present day in any other civilised country on earth.

The causes of these famines were not unknown to first Viceroys of India under the Crown. Lord Canning, who saved India during the dark days of the Indian Mutiny, tried also to save the country from the greater calamities of famines. He saw that our nation was a nation of agriculturists; he saw that in Provinces where the Land Tax was permanently settled, the agriculturists were prosperous; and he recommended that the Land Tax should be permanently settled all over India. He was succeeded after the interval of a few years by Lord Lawrence, another of the great saviors of India during the Mutiny, and Lord Lawrence also strongly recommended that the Land Tax should be permanently fixed all over India in order to give the agricultural people of India some means of saving in good years against droughts and failures of harvest in bad years.

These proposals came for consideration before two Secretaries of State. One of them Sir Charles Wood was a Liberal, and another, Sir Stafford Northcote was a Conservative, but they agreed in the cardinal maxim that India should be ruled for the good of the people of India. Permit me to read one or two passages from the memorable despatches of Sir Charles Wood and of Sir Stafford Northcote in which both of them approved the proposal of permanently fixing the land-revenue of India. [Passages read.]

These were the views of statesmen who ruled India during the first decade after the Mutiny, men who felt their own responsibility and who sympathised

with the people of India. But that generation passed away, and a less sympathetic school of statesmen were bent on eternally increasing the revenue derived from the soil; and the benevolent proposal of limiting the land-tax for the good of the people of India was finally rejected by the India Office in 1883—over twenty years after the death of Lord Canning.

Nevertheless all hope was not yet lost. A worthy successor of Lord Canning, the present Marquis of Ripon, was the Viceroy of India in 1883, and he suggested some very moderate limits to the enhancement of the Land Tax, limits which were accepted by the Government of Madras and I believe, the Government of Bombay. But Lord Ripon left India in 1884, and his proposals were rejected by the India Office in 1885. The result is that except in Provinces where it was already permanently settled, the Land Tax is being continuously raised at recurring settlements, it hangs like the sword of Damocles over the heads of Indian cultivators, it takes away the motive for permanent improvements, it paralyses agriculture, and it is accountable for the worst horrors of the succession of famines which have desolated India during these recent years.

I therefore move, Sir, that the Land Tax of India be moderated and fixed in the lines laid down by Lords Canning and Lawrence, or in those laid down by the Marquis of Ripon.

I now come, Sir, to the second part of my Resolution which concerns Irrigation works, and that will

not detain me long. The necessity of Irrigation works in years of droughts to save crops is universally admitted ; but it is stated that it is not possible to construct canals on high table lands and hilly tracts. My answer to this is that where canals cannot be constructed wells and tanks can be constructed ; and such tanks made by old Hindu and Mahomedan rulers still exist and irrigate hundreds of square miles.

What we want is a multiplication of such useful and necessary works, and not the further extention of railways from the public revenues or under guarantee of profits from such revenues. Two hundred twenty five millions sterling have been spent on railways ; and the Famine Commission of 1898 recorded their opinion that all railways required for protective purposes are done. I deplore therefore the construction of further railways in India out of the public revenues or under guarantee from public revenues. It is a misuse of public money in India under pressure from capitalists and speculators in this country. Only 25 millions sterling have been spent on Irrigation ; if more attention had been paid on irrigations, famines would have been impossible today.

Sir, I have only one word more to say before I conclude. The closing years of the 19th century have revealed to Englishmen, that a greater danger than the Mutiny of 1857 has overtaken India in the impoverishment of the people and the frequency and intensity of famines. There is not an Englishman living, no matter to what political party he may belong, who does not

feel grieved and humiliated at this state of things in India after 150 years of British Rule. To talk to them now of the material progress of India, is an insult to their understanding. To talk to us of the recuperative power of India in the face of these repeated and disastrous famines is a mockery of our misfortunes. No Sir, we must face the broad facts which are apparent to every one, and the facts are simple enough in all conscience when we examine them honestly, for the same economic laws which create wealth or poverty in other parts of the world, create wealth or poverty in India. Prosperous industries, prosperous agriculture, a sound financial administration are the source of wealth of all nations ;—in India you have permitted our indigeno^{us} industries to perish, you have overtaxed agriculture, and your financial arrangements are so bad that you annually drain from India a sum equal to one half of her nett revenues. These are broad undeniable facts, and these are the causes of the repeated famines in a country where the land is fertile, the people are frugal and industrious, and peaceful.

It is necessary, in order to save India, that we should grasp these facts and that the people of England and the people of India should work together to remedy past blunders, and prevent future evils. My countrymen are prepared to do this. I speak without fear of contradiction when I state that there is but one feeling which pervades all ranks of the people of India, and that feeling is to support the British Government, and to help the British Government not only in the field of battle,

but also in the more arduous work of civil administration. It is an unjust and an unwise policy to exclude the people of India,—as you now do,—from all control over the administration. It is unjust because it degrades the people and makes your administration fatally unsuccessful; and it is unwise because it turns the population of India into hostile critics instead of loyal parakers in the administration of their own concerns. It is only confidence and trust in the people which can maintain your Empire and make it prosperous. Sweep away the present policy of distrust and exclusion, concede to the people of India some control over their own laws and administration, make them cosharers in the management of their finances,—and they will be jointly responsible with you Englishman, in the eyes of the world, for the prevention of famines, and for the prosperity of the Empire.

V. RESTRICTIONS ON LAND ALIENATION.

Speech made in course of a debate on Mr. Thorburn's paper read before the East India Association at the Westminster Town Hall on June, 24, 1901; the Right Ho'nble Leonard Courtney presiding.

Mr. ROMESH DUTT said : Mr. Thorburn had spoken of the Village-Communities as owning property jointly. That was the practice up to the beginning of the nineteenth century. He looked back with regret to that old institution which was well suited to the genius of the Indian people, and was the earliest form of Self-Government in the world. But he thought Mr. Thorburn had made a mistake in saying that the right of alienation was the gift of the British Government. There never was a time when the Indian peasant had not this old customary right. What the British Government did was to legalize this ancient customary right, as could be gathered from the Blue-books of the eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth century. It was plain from those records that British administrators in India legalized this customary right, which was as old as the civilization of India itself. The main question raised by Mr. Thorburn had often come before the Government of India. In Bengal the prohibition of alienation had been discussed at least twice in the last twenty years. In 1883 it was discussed in

connexion with the Bengal Tenancy Bill. Recommendations were then made that in the interests of the cultivators the right of alienation should be taken away from them. But enquiries, in which he himself took a part, showed that transfers were being frequently registered, and yet that the peasants were not being made the slaves of the money lenders. The reports drawn up on the matter were sent to Mr. MacDonnell, now Sir Anthony MacDonnell, who agreed in the view that the cultivator was not to be saved by being made a life-tenant for his holding. A measure of general confiscation was thus avoided at that time. But the proposal came up again from the Punjab. He would say nothing of the needs of the Western Punjab which he knew only as a tourist. But he would say that the cry of alarm rang through India, and in 1896, in Bengal, they were asked again whether it was not necessary to deprive cultivators of the right of alienation in order to save them from their own unwisdom. They were taken aback. They wondered whether they were living in the time of Haroun Al Raschid, and whether the cultivators of the soil must suffer because the Khalif's favourite wife had dreamt a bad dreamt. (Laughter.) The Bengal Government were again advised to drop the proposal. He could speak from personal knowledge of the Orissa division, where, if anywhere, the peasants needed protection against money-lenders. But he was able to show to the Government of Bengal that the peasant there had exercised the right of alienation for sixty or seventy years, and that their land was not pass-

ing to the money-lenders. Once again the proposal was rejected. But only last week he had seen from the Indian newspapers that a Bill was before the Bombay Legislative Council in which it was proposed to create a new class of cultivators who should not have the right of transferring their holdings. He would not judge a Bill which he had not seen. But on broad economic grounds he maintained that failure must attend any effort which sought to save the cultivators by confiscating their rights, and lowering the value of their property. Economic laws which operated elsewhere also operated in India. It was sometimes said that cultivators in India were like children. They might be ignorant and superstitious, but, taken generally, they were conscious of their own interests, and keen in defending them. What they wanted was a moderate assessment and clear rights which they were able to defend. He would say again that he made no remark about the Punjab Act, but the extension of this Act to the rest of India would be a calamity. (Applause.)

VI. THE ECONOMIC CAUSES OF INDIAN FAMINES.

*Lecture delivered at a meeting of the Fabian Society
in London on June, 28, 1901.*

Mr. DUTT said : the occurrence of frequent and wide-spread famines in India in recent years was perhaps the strangest, as it was the saddest, phenomenon in modern times. India was under a civilised administration ; the Indian Civil Service was an able and experienced body of administrators ; the Indian people were frugal and industrious ; the land was rich and fertile ; the country had enjoyed uninterrupted internal peace for nearly half a century. They had all the causes which led to wealth and prosperity in other lands, and yet they were so resourceless and impoverished that every year of drought led to a famine, and deaths from each famine were reckoned not by thousands, but by hundreds of thousands, and sometimes by millions. The economic causes of this strange phenomenon were simple and obvious. The present system of administration, without popular representation, had failed to safeguard the interests of the people. All the sources of national wealth had been narrowed. Agriculture, manufactures, and a sound finance were the sources of wealth in all countries. Let them examine how these sources had been affected by the present system of administration.

AGRICULTURE AND THE LAND TAX.

He would begin the enquiry with Agriculture and the Land Tax of India. Four-fifths of the population of India depended at the present day on agriculture for subsistence. *Prima facie* if the land was lightly assessed, the people would be prosperous. If the land was over-assessed, the people would be reduced to a chronic state of poverty. The Land Tax therefore was a far more important question in India than in other countries, where the people were less dependent on agriculture. The system of imposing the Land Tax varied in the different provinces of India. He would not trouble them with all those details. He asked them only to remember the broad distinction that, generally speaking, the Land Tax or land revenue was paid to the State by landlords in Northern India, while in Southern India it was paid directly by the cultivators of the soil. There were large exceptions to this general rule, but it would be enough for their purpose that night to remember this general rule. The early British administrators made the fatal mistake in Southern India, as they did in other parts of India, of fixing an impossible land tax, and collecting it with a rigorous severity unknown in India before. In Madras the demand was actually fixed at 45 per cent. of the produce of the soil. In other words if a cultivator produced crops worth £10 a year—and this was a liberal estimate for an Indian cultivator—the Government demanded £4 10s. as its revenue, leaving only £5 10s. to the cultivator to support himself and his family for 12 months, and to

pay for his ploughs and bullocks, his farm labour and seed grain. This naturally caused a great deal of misery and oppression and the accounts to be found in the earlier records were deplorable. [Some extracts from the records of 1818 were read.] This was the state of things in Southern India in the early days of British rule. He need hardly say that much improvement had been effected within the last 80 years. But more improvement was needed. The Land Tax had been reduced from 45 per cent. to a maximum of 33 per cent. but even this was a ruinous rate, for a cultivator could not afford to pay £3 7s. to the State out of £10 of his gross produce. The settlements were made now for long periods, generally once in thirty years, but at each recurring settlement there was a revision of the Land Tax which prevented land improvements and paralysed agriculture. Many English administrators had recommended within the last century that the State demand should be fixed in some way in order to give the people a motive for improvements and a chance of saving. The last of these recommendations was from Lord Ripon, who proposed in 1883 that the State demand should not be increased except when there was a rise in prices of crops. All these recommendations had been disregarded. At each recurring settlement the land revenue was raised; the cultivator of Southern India did not understand on what grounds it was raised; he was not permitted to appeal to courts of justice against such enhancements made by revenue officers; and thus the strongest motive for agricultural improvements and savings was wanting.

Turning now to Northern India, there the land-revenue was generally paid by landlords—not by the actual cultivators. In some parts of India, as in Bengal, the land-revenue had been permanently fixed, once for all, and profits from improvements remained with the people. And it was remarkable that in permanently settled Bengal there had been no famine, involving loss of life, for over a hundred years, showing the beneficial effects of the Permanent Settlement. Other parts of Northern India had not been so fortunate. In the valley of the Jumna and the Ganges Permanent Settlement was promised. The Marquess of Wellesley passed two regulations, in 1803 and in 1805, in which he unreservedly gave a pledge to the people to make a Permanent Settlement. His successor, Lord Minto, pressed the Directors of the East India Company to redeem this pledge. Nevertheless, the directors of the East India Company violated the pledge, and a Permanent Settlement of the land revenue was not concluded in Northern India. The company was abolished in 1858. Three years after, Lord Canning, the first Viceroy of India under the Crown, again pressed for permanently settling the land revenues of India. Lord Lawrence, another distinguished Viceroy and able statesman, supported this proposal. Two Secretaries of State, Sir Charles Wood, a Liberal, and Sir Stafford Northcote, a Conservative, recommended this measure. Nevertheless the proposal was finally rejected in England in 1883. In the absence of a Permanent Settlement of the land revenue, the State demand

had varied from time to time in most parts of Northern India. The early British administrators fixed it as high as they could—they demanded from landlords eighty percent of their rental as the Government revenue. If a landlord's rental was £1,200, the East India Company demand £1000 out of it as the Land Tax. This was found an oppressive and impossible rate. In 1833 the Land Tax was reduced to two-thirds; and in 1855 to one-half of the rental. In other words the landlord with a rental of £1,200 now paid to the Government £600 as the Land Tax. But this was not all. A new settlement was made every twenty or thirty years. In these recurring settlements the landlord's rental was ascertained after fresh enquiries. The land revenue demanded was not half the actual rental, but half the prospective rental. And to this a great many local taxes were added for local purposes.

Such was the state of things now in India. It was clear that agriculture could not flourish under such a system. There was no adequate motive for land improvements or for savings, unless there was some fixity in the Government demand. What was wanted was, (1) some clear fixed rules limiting within moderate limits the liabilities of the cultivator in Southern India, and of the landlord in Northern India; and (2) some independent Courts of Justice to which the taxpayer could appeal if these rules were violated or misinterpreted by the revenue officers. The agricultural population of India demanded such security and justice under the British rule.

INDIAN MANUFACTURES.

The question of agriculture was the most important question in India. The history of Indian manufactures was equally sad. The policy of the East India Company, from the commencement of their rule, was to discourage Indian manufactures for the benefit of British manufacturers. The Company became the administrators of Bengal in 1765. Four years later they issued an order that the manufacture of silk fabrics should be discouraged in Bengal, that the people should produce raw silk in India to be woven in England, that Indian silk-winders should be made to work in the company's factories and prohibited from working outside, "under severe penalties, by the authority of the Government." The effect of this mandate, according to the Select Committee of the House of Commons was "to change the whole face of that industrious country, in order to render it a field for the produce of crude materials subservient to the manufacturers of Great Britain." This Report of the Select Committee was submitted in 1783. Let them pass over a period of thirty years to 1813, when the East India Company's charter was renewed. An enquiry was made, as usual, before the renewal of the Charter. Eminent witnesses like Warren Hastings of Bengal, Thomas Munro of Madras, and Sir John Malcolm of Bombay, were examined. They were asked by the *House of Commons*, not how Indian manufactures could be encouraged, but how they could be discouraged to make room for British manufactures. For it was found that even up to that date Indian silk

and cotton goods could be sold in England at a price from 50 to 60 per cent. lower than those produced in England. What was the policy which England pursued? She imposed a prohibitive duty which killed the Indian manufactures. The following statement was made by Joseph Ranking before the House of Commons during their enquiry of 1813 :

"Can you state what is the 'ad valorem' duty on piece goods sold at the East India House ?

"The duty on the class called Calicoes is £3. 6s. 8d. per cent. upon importation ; and if they are used for home consumption, there is a further duty of £68. 6s. 8d. per cent."

"There is another class called Muslins, on which the duty on importation is 10 per cent. ; and if they are used for home consumption, of £27 6s. 8d. per cent.

"There is a third class, coloured goods, which are prohibited from being used in this country, upon which there is a duty upon importation of £3. 6s. 8d per cent ; they are only for exportation."

"This Session of Parliament there has been a new duty of 20 per cent. on the consolidated duties, which will make the duties of Calicoes . . . for home consumption £78. 6s. 8d. per cent. ; upon Muslins for home consumption £31. 6s. 8d."

This finally killed the Indian weaving manufacture. Henry St. George Tucker, himself a Director of the East India Company, wrote in 1823 :—"India is thus reduced from the state of a manufacturing to that of an agricultural country."

[Extracts from Tucker's memorandum dated 1823 were here read.]

RAILWAYS AND IRRIGATION.

The prohibitive duties had now been abolished after they had done their fatal work. Other changes had also taken place in India. About the middle of the 19th century railways were introduced in India. Railways were beneficial everywhere in the world by shortening distances, and making journeys cheaper, quicker, and easier. But in India, unfortunately, railways had been constructed by the Government out of the public revenues, or by private companies under guarantee of profit out of the public revenues, and the economic effect of this had not been beneficial. It had been a financial loss to Indians. After deducting all earnings they had paid forty millions sterling out of the revenues of India to cover the loss; and the annual loss still continued. Capitalists and speculators and manufacturers in this country, who had votes, were putting continual pressure on the Government of India for the construction of more lines with guarantee of profits from the Indian revenues. Indians, who had no votes, were unable to resist this pressure, and railways had been overdone. The Famine Commission of 1898 reported that all lines required for famine protective purposes had been done, but still more lines were being constructed which the people did not want, and which the people were made to pay for. On the other hand, irrigation works which were needed by the people for the protection of their

crops, were neglected. 250 millions sterling had been spent on railways, and only 25 millions on irrigation up to date. Yet out of 220 million acres of cultivated land in India, only 20 millions or less than one-tenth the area, were protected by irrigation works.

The people of India had struggled against every adverse circumstance, and within the last half century had endeavoured to revive their manufactures by adopting European methods, and by the help of steam and machinery. Cotton mills had been started in Bombay and in Bengal, and the products of these mills had some sale in India and out of India. No Royal Commission or Committee of the House of Commons sat to help and promote this infant enterprise; if any Government had instituted an enquiry with this avowed purpose, it was likely that British voters would have turned it out of office within a twelve-month. As it was, Lancashire voters forced the Indian Government to pass tariff rules which no national Government, responsible for the good of the people under its administration, would have passed. A small import duty used to be imposed in India on piece goods and other articles, not for the purposes of protection, but merely as a source of revenue much needed. To this the Lancashire manufacturers objected, and the Indian Government was compelled to surrender this source of revenue in 1882. But the revenue so surrendered could not be replaced; the Indian Government was in a bad way, and wished to re-impose it. A sort of compromise was then effected which was a striking illustration of how India was ruled

under the dictation of British manufacturers. An import duty was re-imposed on British piece goods, and this was accompanied by a similar duty imposed on goods manufactured in India to satisfy the British manufacturers. Under the imposition of this strange duty—without parallel in any other country in the civilised world—the Indian mills which were struggling for existence had greatly declined within the last decade, especially in competition, with Japan which imposed no such duty on its own products

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

He now turned to the financial administration of India. The entire financial policy of England in respect of India from the 18th century to the present day was to charge to India everything which could rightly, or even wrongly, be charged to that unrepresented country. England had spent hundreds of millions in acquiring and defending her colonies all over the earth. For acquiring and defending the Empire of India, she had not paid a shilling. On the contrary, during the rule of the East India Company, India paid an annual tribute to England reckoned in millions. When the company was abolished, the cost of the transfer of the Indian Empire to the Crown was charged to India. Since then they had made India pay for wars in China, Afghanistan, Persia, and the Soudan. They maintained a vast army in India, mainly for imperial purposes, at the cost of the people of India. They had virtually excluded the people of India from nearly all high offices in their own country

in order to find a career for English boys in India. A Parliamentary Return was submitted nine years ago, showing all salaries and pensions of a thousand rupees and upwards paid by India. Taking Rs. 10 for a pound sterling, the total came to fourteen millions sterling to Englishmen annually, and only $3\frac{1}{4}$ millions to the Natives of India. Such had been the financial policy of England towards an unrepresented country. The result was that public debt had increased by leaps and bounds in India in a time of profound peace. The public debt, taking ten rupees for a pound, was 118 millions sterling in 1875; in 1895 it was 220 millions. In other words while the public debt was steadily decreased in England, mainly under Mr. Gladstone's influence, it nearly doubled in India within 20 years of profound peace. England paid for the Colonial Office, located in Whitehall. India paid for the India Office located in a part of the same building. In payment of the expenses of that office, and of various other liabilities, India had to make a constantly increasing annual remittance to England. As India had little manufacture and little trade, virtually the whole pressure fell on the produce of the soil—on the food of the people. Thus India was forced to export far more than she imported, and this excess was increasing at a startling rate. He compiled the following figures from a paper which an official of the India Office read before the Society of Arts in March last.—

ANNUAL EXCESS OF EXPORTS OVER IMPORTS.

FROM	Tens of Rupees.
1859 to 1863 . . .	2 millions
1864 to 1868 . . .	8 "
1869 to 1873 . . .	16 "
1874 to 1878 . . .	15 "
1879 to 1883 . . .	19 "
1884 to 1888 . . .	15 "
1889 to 1893 . . .	20 "
1894 to 1898 . . .	25 "

The significance of the above figures would be better understood by comparing them with the total revenues of India. The Royal Commission on Indian expenditure in their recently published Report found the net revenues of India to be 57 million tens of rupees. A sum, therefore, nearly equal to one half of the public revenues of India was annually remitted out of India without a direct equivalent. A sum representing the food of twenty-five millions of the people of India was annually remitted to England without a direct return. Was it possible that under this financial arrangement India could be other than impoverished and famine-stricken? If any of the prosperous countries of the world—America or England, France or Germany—had been subjected to such conditions, would not that country have been reduced to poverty, and visited by famines, within a few decades?

CONCLUSION.

He must now conclude. It was necessary to remember that there was no great economic effect without an economic cause. The famines in India were directly

caused by the failure of rains in particular tracts, but the rains never failed over the whole of India, and there had never been a year when the total food supply of India was insufficient for the total population of India. What caused distress and deaths was that the people had been so hopelessly impoverished that they could not buy when the crops failed in any particular locality. Let them remove the economic causes of the nation's poverty and they would remove the causes of famines. In the first place they should moderate the land tax and give it some equitable limits which would be understood by the people. In the second place they should discontinue the construction of railways out of public revenues, or under guarantee of profits from public revenues, and extend irrigation works. In the third place they should encourage the industries of India, as the Government of a country ought to do, and thus multiply and add to the resources of the people. In the fourth place they should follow a just and equitable financial policy towards India, as in the case of British Colonies, relieve India from unfair charges, reduce her public debt, and reduce that annual drain which was impoverishing the nation. Lastly they should have some trust and confidence in the people, and admit them to some share in the control of the administration, for it was not in human nature that they should be able to safe-guard the interests of another people without allowing them some voice in their own concerns.

In the words of one of England's greatest philosophers and economists, John Stuart Mill, "The government