"Come, draw it mild, and go away."

"Yes, it is mild to-day. I don't see why I should go away, I have as much right to look at the snows as you have. I am also going to reflect."

A pause.

* * * *

Presently Q. broke out with, "What a splendid dance that was last night, what a "scrumscious" girl Miss Silkstocking is, to be sure. What carriage, what grace, she walked in beauty."

"Olympus," said P., giving a jump. "I say, old man, this isn't your style at all. Why, we are getting quite Byronic. We shall soon be comparing Miss Silkstocking to cloudless climes and starry skies. We must be struck all of a heap. By the bye, though, IF these are your reflections, I am afraid the world will not be much improved thereby—a consummation devoutly to be wished, as the clergymen are always saying."

"Sugar the reflections and blow the world, but—(slowly)—I say, how the deuce did those mountains get there?"

"Do you mean to tell me that you never took the trouble to enquire."

"Well, of course," said Q., "I know it is a kind of a Vesuvius Etna business, that lava bubbles up from the bowels of the earth —bowels is a good word, isn't it?—that it gets piled up, sweeping away Pompeii and Herculaneum, and that kind of thing, making a beastly mess all over the place, but what I want to know is this, how does the lava get into the bowels to come up?"

"By Jupiter, or rather by Pluto, our reflections have gone deep enough this time. Now you have tapped one of the abstrusest of subjects which Davy and Daubeney tried to explain. Before going into details, may I ask if you have heard of Elie de Beaumont's theory of parallel chains?"

"No, I have not. Why should I? Who is Mademoiselle Elie de Beaumont that *she* should be heard of. I suppose some gay woman."

"Elie de Beaumont," replied P. bridling, "is not a gay woman but a geologist."

"O she is a geologist, is she? and what did

she say? I hate your geologist, who is always throwing a porphyry or a fossil or stratification or denudation down your throat and expects you to swallow it offhand."

"You evidently don't care for the time Bret Harte speaks of—

When beside thee walked the solemn Palæsosaurus,
And around thee crept the festive Ichthyosaurus,
While from time to time above thee flew and circled
cheerful Pterodactyles.

"No, I don't. I am sick of the whole thing. Anyhow, I am waiting for mademoiselle's theory."

"Here you are, then. Elie de Beaumont says that there were Periods of Repose and Periods of Paroxysmal Convulsion, during which large upheavals of molten ——"

"Oh, I say, that is enough. I can't stand that paroxysmal convulsion. It is too much after a late dance. I feel an upheaval myself, and must call for a hock and soda. This will, I suppose, be the Period of Repose."

At this point of the conversation Messrs. R., S., T. came into the office. "What are you fellows looking so glum about?" said R.

To which Q. answered—

'P. is kindly giving me his ideas on mountain masses."

"Excuse me," said P., interrupting Q., "I am doing nothing of the kind. I am giving you other people's ideas. I may have a pet theory of my own. Anyhow I have not yet had the courage to print that theory."

"Well," adds S., "I think the native's idea is a very good one, namely, that Rama or some one else made the mountain to save the inhabitants from the deluge."

"What hazy notions you have, S.," said T. "I hope you are not preparing for the H. S. Exam., as you are sure to be ploughed. The mountain you refer to was called Goberdhan and was already in existence. Sri Krishn Chand lifted it up on the little finger of his left hand to save the inhabitants of Braj. Now let us hear what P. has to say."

Unfortunately the conversation was again here interrupted by the entrance of the chief, Major Sniggles, from his *sanctum sanctorum*, who said quietly:—

"Don't you think, you fellows, that you

could find some work to do and make a little less noise."

Messrs. P., Q., R., S., T. began to separate. P. whispered to Q.:—

"Come over and dine with me at the hotel this evening. I will give you the whole theory with Mallet 'On Earthquakes,' Durocher 'On the Two Magmas,' Laplace 'On the Nebula Hypothesis,' and Hopkins 'On the figure of the Earth,' complete in one volume, so that you can make a mem in note book for future reference." That thankless Q. only replied —

"It won't run to that. If you will make a solemn league and covenant that this subject is not broached, I will dine with you, not else. Life is too short for paroxysmal convulsions, you only do that kind of thing *once*, and that is when you propose to a girl."

"All right, anything to oblige," said P. "I will expect you."

Messrs. P. and Q. met at dinner, but *the* subject was not broached as per solemn league and covenant aforesaid, and so unfortunately the Himalayas have NOT been accounted for up to the present.

No. XXII.

THE TAHSILDAR;

OR,

The Novus Homo.

WHEN Rome had conquered Carthage, defeated Philip of Macedon, crushed most of the principalities of Asia Minor, and was in a fair way of being Mistress of the World, there began to rise up a class of men called Novus Homo. British India is Rome and the Tahsildar, or Mamlatdar as he is called on the Bombay side, is the New Man.

The Tahsildar rules over a country half as large as Wales. He can make himself extremely useful or extremely obstructive to the officers of the P. W. D. His principal

duty is to collect the revenue. In addition he has civil and criminal jurisdiction up to a certain limit, and is personally responsible for the maintenance of public peace during religious festivals and pilgrimages. To assist him he has a P. A. called a Naib Tahsildar, Nazirs, and Sarishtardars, who form a kind of Sub-Deputy Assistant, besides kanungoes, mohareers, patwarees, chowkeedars, and the usual horde of lictors called chuprassis. The Mamlatdar is consulted daily by the Banias, to fix the Nirikhnamah or Bazar Rates As this list is only intended for the outside public and does not apply to his own household, the Tahsildar generally lets the Banias have their own way. The Mamlatdar is *de jure* President, also *de facto* Vice-President, and all the members combined of the Municipal Committee. The members are allowed to have a seat, but they are not permitted to have a head. It thus comes about that the Tahsildar levies the octroi duties in his own person. He also has to make roads and buildings and to allot the funds. As a pastime he is asked to look after education,

police, the Contagious Disease Act and hospitals. In time of war, the Tahsildar has to supply carts, camels, bullocks, ponies, and mules in thousands for less than no sum and in less than no time. If he does not do so, he is written down an Ass and reported as useless. As if these duties were not sufficient for any ordinary mortal man, every European, when he goes into camp and requires a fowl or a pint of milk has to write an elaborate epistle in the vernacular to the Tahsildar—who generally lives miles off—asking him to be good enough to sanction the purchase, for without his permission no vendor dare sell.

When a Lieutenant-Governor or Commissioner comes mooning around on tour, the same old tricks are played which were played when Marquis Wellesley made his famous march from Calcutta to Simla. The Tahsildar waters the road in a way they were never watered before, he puts men out to plough where they never ploughed before, because the ground was too hard, he whitewashes the cutcherry, prison, and school, and adds another

coat of paint to the sculptures or images of gods in the temples. Instead of painting these deities would it not be better to drape them ? as some of the Popes have draped the sculptures of the Vatican. The Mamlatdar also erects triumphal arches with "Well-kom," "Hum, Sweet Hum," and finally displays fireworks and petitions. So the Lieutenant-Governor goes away and writes a report, in which, as James Mill would say, he (the Lieutenant-Governor) "can see nothing but the admirable effects of the Company's admirable government."

Taking all these things together, I hope, dear Reader, you will see that the Tahsildar is by no means an ephemeral sovereign.

In the good old times "Judge-made" law was considered sufficient training to make a Tahsildar. The decision of a case was often as finelybalanced as the sword of Damocles,by a fly's web, not a spider's web. When in doubt how to decide, the Tahsildar would look up at the ceiling as though he were drawing Divine inspiration. He was really counting the number of flies on the roof. If even, the plaintiff

won, if odd, the defendant. The remarkable fact remained, however, namely, that every one was satisfied with the decision and there were no appeals. We have now altered all this. The Mamlatdar has now to learn the Penal Code, pass examinations, and make a lot of unnecessary fuss. Another sign of the times is, that there is now a Mamlatdar who has married a Christian girl. This young woman is a salvationalist and sings to her own accompaniment,

> Won't you come up, come up,
> All the way to—Jordon.

I wished to verify the fact, but was not permitted to do so

When a Tahsildar intends to do a call on a European visitor to his town, he must let it be known beforehand, in order that the pan and supari—a sort of a sailor's quid—may be prepared beforehand. In due course the Tahsildar arrives with his rag-tag and bob-tail on a caparisoned charger with housings and trappings.

The conversation commences with the usual Oriental metaphors or beautiful flowers

of speech. After a time Mr. Magistrate says: "Your Honour calls this the seminal season, do you not?"

"Well, not exactly. I don't call it the semimal season, yet there is no particular reason why *you* should not do so."

The Tahsildar feels uncomfortable and moves in his chair. Like a Novus Homo he tries to recover himself, but must fall again.

"Why does your Honour live celibate?"

"I don't know that I do. Celibate did you say? Well, yes, I suppose I am celibate and perhaps celebrated too," said the Englishman restraining himself with the greatest difficulty from bursting a blood vessel of sorts.

The Tahsildar is thorougly uncomfortable by this time. For here, under his very nose, something is happening which he cannot quite understand, why then does he persist with—

"Your Honour is not married—is he?"

Surely it is time to bring in the pan and supari. As the magistrate is taking his leave the Englishman adds—

"If I were you, I should not use that word celibate, its rather old-fashioned, you know. Good day."

No. XXIII.

THE SECRETARIAT;

OR,

Verily an Areopogus.

THE Secretariat may be defined "as a table with folding legs containing innumerable drawers and presided over by an Archon or Head of Department." The legs are collapsible because the tables are all possessed with one remarkable characteristic, namely, that of flying away with the Archon to the hills in the hot weather.

Each Archon has a personal assistant, who calls himself Assistant Secretary or Deputy Secretary or Deputy Assistant Secretary *sub pro tem.* This P. A. always signs for

the Archon and not for himself. This is very kind of him. I hope he gets a share of the Archon's pay for doing the Archon's work.

One day I called upon the Deputy Assistant Secretary *sub pro tem.*, who was an old college chum of mine. I rushed into his office with—

"How are you, old chappie."

He just stared at me with blank astonishment and pointed silently at a door. I opened it and went into a sort of a closet. He followed. Then he shook hands warmly and said—

"You really mustn't go on in that way here, my dear fellow. It's *in fra dig.*"

"Come," I replied, "that's all nonsense. The object of all offices is to get work done. That work can be done just as well with a light heart and pleasant look as with a charity-meeting glum countenance."

I noticed he frowned. Perhaps he was not accustomed to being told that his words were anything less than oracular. So he added—

"You are mistaken. There would not be

any subserviency if we allowed too much frivolity."

"All right, my lad. I have lived as long as you have. I have had more troubles than you have, yet they have not soured me. You only beat me in college because my debts pressed heavily on me. If I came into this *naukari* of yours, I would reduce the correspondence by one-half and have jolly good times over the remainder. And the Babus instead of being "frowsy" would be "frisky."

He only replied—

"I see you are the same hair-brained reckless devil you always were. Come and dine with me. I am living in a chummery."

I dined in that chummery, but there was no revelry. As the champagne circulated it only seemed to depress every one.

We seemed to be in an Examination Room where those who were most silent, got the highest marks, my friend being the Examiner and I the "bull dog." My friend laid down the law on Carlyle's Essays, Agnosticism, and the Beauty of the Grampians. I was the only man who dared contradict him.

I said, "I do not believe any one can understand Sartor Resortus, and Carlyle's jerky style is simply vile. I was aware that people thought it was clever to be an agnostic, but I did not know enough of the tenets, nor could I see any beauty in the bare Grampians though Sir Walter Scott has thrown a historical glamour over the lot." I am personally under the impression that my opinions were not relished, we are still friends, however.

The only way of addressing the Secretariat is through long envelopes with the mysterious letters—

O. H. M. S.

Franked, not stamped.

Many theories have been advanced to account for these letters. It is now generally admitted that S. stands for Secretariat. For O. H. M. some foolish people have proposed 'Only Her Manner' or 'Oh Help Me.' The best explanation seems to be that O. H. M., or, as some say, A. U. M., is a Thibetian sentence, which is almost blasphemous to mention. The European Contractor who has

been to Thibet agrees with my translation, which runs thus :—

Oh Thou Sublime Essence which Pervadest ethereal space evolving Κοσμος *out of* χρος. *Thou who art Colorless, Tasteless, Inodourless, and Permanently elastic, having the attributes of Chlorine, Sulphur, and Nitro-glycerine. Thou who—*

I really can't remember the rest, its too great a strain in the hot weather. No doubt, further information can be obtained by consulting the Vedas, Purans, Wilson, and Prinsep. One important result follows from these investigations, which is, that the idea of the Secretariat came from Thibet viâ Ganduk and not from Central Asia viâ Oxus and Jaxartes with our Aryan brethren.

Each Archon believes that his own branch is a panacea for all woes. The Archon of Irrigation thinks that for all your ills cold water is the only certain cure. The Archon of Roads believes that life is made of kankar. The Archon of Barracks would evolve something magnificent out of his brain, but he is always in a state of noble ruin. The Archon of Accounts fancies that rupees make

the world go round—and he is not very far wrong for once, for you can go round the world if you have enough of rupees. Lastly, the Archon of Railways is sure that the neigh of the Iron Horse is the overture of the New Religion, which will regenerate mankind.

The time of each Archon is taken up with voluminous reports and promotion rolls. When the Archon wants information, and he is always in this state, he calls for reports, which in due time arrive. One Engineer has used the metre system because most scientific, another has used English measures because most usual. The Archon himself prefers Russian versts, which he proves by optics, Watts' horse-power, spherical trig. and Carden's solution of a cubic, must eventually be adopted. Now, as the Archon is one of the few men who know Russian in this country, these reports would form a white elephant to any one else, but the Archon knows a trick worth two of that. He first boils up these reports, spices them with a little of his own imagination, and then serves them while hot to the Government of India. If

never strikes the Archon to give suggestions how the reports should be prepared, so that the exact information should be given, the result is that he has to wire off wildly at the 11th hour. His reports too are generally as much in arrears as the Comptroller's accounts.

The promotions are made in this wise. The names of the candidates for the vacancies are put into a hat, which is well shaken and covered by a pocket handkerchief. All the Babus are called as witnesses. The P. A. is then ordered to take out a certain number. Now as the number of vacancies is very small and the number of candidates very large, the probability of any one man's success is indefinitely diminished, as we say in Mathematics, until it reaches the value zero, where it naturally stops. I am a case of a man whose name has only once been drawn out of the hat. *When* that was done I was a hale and hearty young fellow, now I am a bald-headed old "footler."

The ancient Archons had to examine into every man's mode of life, to punish the idle and profligate and reward the virtuous and

good. In the same way the modern Archons put on a patriarchal air, a sort of a be-a-good-boy-and-you'll-get-on style, which is very touching to those with weak nerves—

> Whose old establish'd board of joint control
> Included kingdoms in the cure of souls.

The Archon of Architecture is an exception to the others. His duty consists of designing palaces for Native Princes at Government's expense. He is constantly harassed in mind as to whether the *Naubatkhana* should have a band-stand or not, *the Diwani-am* a knocker, an area bell, boat scrapers, and a hat rack, and the *hamâm* a springing board. Through his wife he must find out whether the ladies of the *Diwani-khâss* prefer polychromatic hues to frescoes, mosaics, and arabesques. The office Babu is consulted as to whether the columns of the stables should be a debased Doric or only a dado. Indian princes are advancing so rapidly in civilisation that it is impossible to adhere to old "styles." The Archon, therefore, wishes to start a new order to be called Gothic-Aryan or British-Indian,

but he must proceed with caution. Will the Government of India sanction such an innovation? This Archon would like to be handed down to Posterity as a second Bramante or Phidias, yet his wishes will never be accomplished, if he is too timid.

When, however, the Imperial hukm has gone forward with Estimate and Budget allotment it cannot be reconsidered. Behold the writing on the wall :—

It is the Law of Red Tapeism and Altereth Not.

No. XXIV.

THE CIVIL ENGINEER AT (NOT IN) A MESS;

OR,

They were Strangers and he took them in.

SOME years ago a silly woman told an Engineer that he had too much swagger to belong to the P. W. D., he ought to be in the Army. That woman intended to compliment that man, and was only expressing the popular fallacy that military swagger helps to form *esprit de corps*. We are getting more radical now. Still there are Engineers who are ashamed of doing the same work which shed such a lustre on the names of Smeaton and Brunel. There are also military men who consider swagger only a contemptible trait

worthy of derision. As a true historian I must now record facts. Topkhana was a military station. Mr. Wingwall, an Engineer, called at the Mess and received an invitation for guest night. Before going Mr. Wingwall determined to uproot, annihilate, demolish, and play general havoc—not General Havelock—with the opinions held by military men about civilians. To prevent his redoubts being stormed in the rear he fortified himself on all points.

The evening arrives, Mr. Wingwall makes his appearance, and is introduced to the Colonel.

"Allow me to congratulate you, Colonel, on your new decoration—the K.C.B."

"Thanks, I am much obliged, but I only received a C.B."

"Dear me, I saw in the papers that your Regiment was at the front the whole of the time. I fancied, too, that in the List of Honours I saw your name—De Tompkins, I believe."

"That's true. But another De Tompkins, whose Regiment never left India, got the

K.C.B. while I received the C.B. It seems impossible to understand the mysterious distribution of rewards."

Mr. Wingwall has succeeded in convincing the Colonel that he is a man of sense—who reads the newspapers.

At Mess, Wingwall sits next to the Major. This officer is apparently deaf from artillery fire, for he persists in calling our Engineer Mr. Singwell, Dingdong, Kingcall—any name except the right one. Mr. Wingwall tries to interest the Major on the territorial designation of regiments, mounted infantry, proposed amalgamation of foot artillery to cavalry volunteers. He asks whether the Major agrees with Wolseley's late article on "Military Genius" and what he thinks of Personal Influence over the soldier. All, however, to no purpose. The Major is full of his woes, the examinations he is called upon to pass, the excessive official routine, and how the service is generally going to the dogs. The Captain now tries to circumvent our Engineer in échelon and wishes to lay down the law on Hungarian wines and Turkish

tobáccos. Mr. Wingwall just turns to the right about and faces the adversary. Pooh-poos the Hungarian wines as quite an exploded idea, and gives out that *the* wines of the future are those from Denmark and Norway, that he has received a consignment, and found it all to be pure juice of the grape. That, moreover, these wines make blood rapidly—a *sine qua non* in this country, where the blood has a tendency to become sluggish. With regard to tobacco he would state that the new factory at Nûrpur will eclipse the world for good *weeds*—mark his words.

The Lieutenant is apparently just about to be married, for he can speak of nothing but—

> Woman divine
> Woman and wine.
> There's nothing so fine
> As woman and wine.

As our Engineer has the names of all the chief actresses at his fingers' ends and talks familiarly of Little Tooshoes, Giltslipper, or Holdfast, the Lieutenant writes him down as a man about town and consequently possessing vast stores of knowledge.

"Have you any good shooting on your line, Mr. Wingwall?" says Colonel De Tompkins across the table.

"Pretty fair, Colonel, I have known better in my time."

"Now, what would you call *fair?*"

"Well, day before yesterday I got 8½ brace snipes, 6 brace grouse, 4¼ partridges, 3 hare, and 1 black buck."

"I should call that an extremely good bag. What do you mean by 4¼ partridges?"

"One bird was so completely shot away that I reckon it as only half a bird. I assure you this is what we Engineers call only a fair bag. Take my subordinate, Longstalks, for instance, the birds almost come into his hand, so he can put the proverbial salt on their tails. 'It's simple murthur, sir,' he says."

"Dear me!" replied the Colonel. "That's very astonishing. Several of us went to a village called Párinda, just off your line, said to be famous for birds, and absolutely did not get anything. When we alighted at the station I said to the Station Master: 'Babu,

are there any ducks here?' He replied: 'Ducks sar, no sar, there are no ducks, but there may be dra—akes.'"

Here every one was supposed to sniggle, sneeze, chuckle, or smile, but no one did so. For the Colonel had regularly retailed this mellow story every guest night for the last 2½ years., and Wingwall had previously got "khabar" on this point. After Mess, Wingwall played pool and won. He also played whist. As he knew the ordinary leads from Pole, and had luck, he again won. Now as Mr. Wingwall had been well primed with Mess liquors and gave no sign of mental derangement the officers seemed to come to the conclusion that he was "Aw ya—as, a clewaw fellah, you knáu."

As our Engineer was about to take his departure Colonel De Tompkins took him aside and said furtively: "I am about to build a lock hospital. The funds at my disposal are Rs. 500, now what would you advise me to do?"

"Rs. 500, Colonel! why, that is a mere bagatelle and will scarcely pay for the beds

and chilamchis, much less for the surgical instruments."

"Such dreadful creatures don't require beds" answered the Colonel haughtily, "earthenware chatties will be quite good enough for them. We can borrow the instruments from the Civil Surgeon."

"In that case," replied Mr. Wingwall, "if you insist upon having a design for Rs. 500, I should have neither funds nor floor. Make the walls of concrete in reticulated work and pay the contractor for quality of material and not by dimensions. You will thus have plenty of ventilation and the air shaft will be unnecessary. I should prefer the regular dodecahedron to the irregular octohedron as giving more space for the same money and I should roof with thatch."

"Yes—certainly—very good. Now I would consider it a favour—a personal favour I may say—if you would kindly send me the design. Any rough sketch will do, as I have a mistri who does these kind of things. I dare say we shall manage to get on."

* * * *

Nearly every Colonel who has any money

at his disposal thinks he can become an ornamental amateur in Engineering. The next time we see De Tompkins we shall make a point of asking him if he has received the design for the regular dodecahedron.

* * * *

Note.—If the Colonel wishes to take up engineering as a hobby, we would recommend him to study the design for a skew bridge with segmental arch or two intersecting Gothic vaults.

No. XXV.

FAMINE RELIEF WORKS;

OR,

Mark Tapley! Mark Tapley! My salary for a Tapley!

ONE evening in September Mr. Furlow was sitting with his olive branches and the wife of his bosom, not at his fireside, for we generally do without these luxuries in India, but on his chabuttra. A telegram was put into his hand—

"India orders Furlow to report to Consulting Engineer at Mahalshahr."

To say that Mr. Furlow was surprised is to express in very feeble language the condi-

tion of Mr. Furlow. He was electrified, flabbergasted, and thunderstruck, and at once began to imagine why he alone had been selected. When Mr. Furlow had completely finished tearing his hair out by the roots and breaking the furniture, he began to reflect. Mrs. Furlow and the children must be sent off, everything sold, and he must take his departure within the proverbial week. In due course these painful operations were undergone. Mr. Furlow, on reporting himself at Mahalshahr, received urgent and quite too immediate orders to proceed to Kâlganj for Famine Relief Works. It will be surmised that famine works are by no means the pleasantest job a man can have, nor are they particularly healthy or invigorating.

As the famine-stricken people came in, they were registered by the Assistant Collector and sent on to Furlow to find work in road-making, &c. Naturally Furlow only required robust or useful men or women and rejected the others, yet the Assistant Collector would send them back saying they must all be employed somehow. So a continuous

game of battledore and shuttlecock took place between the Engineer and Collector. The Hospital Assistants were under the Collector's orders and certified as useful, men and women who were positively more than three-fourths in the grave. When a "faminewala" was $\frac{15}{16}$th in the grave with festering ulcers he was allowed to go to hospital. There a dose of port wine was given him and this made him quit his tenement of clay *instanter*. I do not abuse the system, I am only relating unpleasant facts.

Carts, different kinds of grain, and canvas bags lay piled up in mountain heaps. Every train brought more and every one helped himself. The gentleman who kept the tally must have found some difficulty in making an even "balance" for the Examiner of Accounts.

When Furlow went over the works the coolies would cease digging, would expose their sores, and throw themselves in front of his horse's hoofs to be trodden to death. In one place you might see cattle feeding on offal, in another ghastly corpses being

cremated. If you visited the hospital you saw in verity a living skeleton.

> If shape it might be called that shape had none,
> Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,
> Or substance might be called that shadow seem'd,
> For each seem'd either—black it stood as night
> Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell.

Then you noticed the poor little children, crippled like Richard—

> Cheated of feature by dissembling nature,
> Deformed, unfinished, sent before their time
> Into this breathing world.

And you felt perfectly sick and giddy.

When you returned to camp it was to fancy that the water was putrid, sugar musty, tea scurvy, meat tainted, and milk rancid. To sleep, was to dream of "Gorgons, hydras, and chimeras dire."

Letters received from Mrs. Furlow, fumigated with "Jockey Club" and camphor, informed her husband that the children had measles and whooping cough, which were brought on by the famine, and ordered him that all communications were to be disinfected with carbolic acid or quinine.

The Lieutenant-Governor, who invented famines, did not remain long on the spot himself—urgent business required his presence elsewhere. He regulated the procedure by sitting in an arm-chair and writing statistics which contained an immense amount of valuable information. To wit.—(1) the amount of heat energy by Joule's law, contained in a single grain of parched gram, (2) the number of carts—fixed carefully beforehand—which passed a certain turnpike road, (3) the rapid *decrease* (?) of mortality on account of the strenuous measures adopted.

Sadler, an M. P., who wished to distinguish himself, tried to palm off on the world that the prolificness of individuals, *ceteris paribus*, was inversely as their numbers. Macaulay extinguished Sadler. Now we would beg to state that we also have a law which we wish to offer for the consideration of the Famine Commissioners. It is, "The prolificness of individuals, *ceteris paribus*, is directly proportional to their food and inversely proportional to the square root of their densities." We hope the Famine Commis-

sioners will not play the part of a second Macaulay on us. We would like to add that space and the excessive labours of a professional career prevent us from deducing our reasons mathematically from first principles. We trust, however, that the law will be taken for granted as the result of experiments on real human flesh.

There is another point to which we would direct the attention of the Famine Commission, namely, that the Famine Token is really not an elegant design. We would suggest a Roman "As" with Death's head on obverse. An ear of "Jao" or barley on reverse with the motto *bari bhari mahangi hui*, which we predict, according to *abjad*, will give the exact date.

Printer, if you dare put a second "S" to that Roman coin I will saddle you for the remainder of your life with the ghost of a faminewala and then you will be sorry you did not carry out my orders implicitly.

Some people argue that everything is for our good, including famines. At any rate the usual jobbery took place, the Lieutenant-

Governor became famous, those who worked hardest got nothing, while the Big Man's *protégées* and Personal Assistants received promotion out of their turn.

At last Mr. Furlow returned to his olive branches and the wife of his bosom. As soon as they met, his words were :—

> Oh I have passe'd a miserable time,
> So full of fearful dreams of ugly sights,
> That as I am a Christian, faithful man,
> I would not spend another such a time,
> Though 'twere to buy a world of happy days.

No. XXVI.

A LA GUPIBUS;

OR,

The Story of an Indian Scandal.

MR. and Mrs. Surkey were members of the Public Works Department of the Government of India. Surkey must have been born under an inauspicious planet, for he ought to have gone on the stage. His imitation of the Dâk Bungalow khansamas when catching a murghi or his impersonations of Seigniora Screemi-Babilini were most amusing. Mrs. Surkey was born a Miss Sappho, which is to say that Mrs. Surkey was born a poet. Trench, Latham, Angus, or some of our old school-masters tell us that a poet is

a heterogeneous compound of dissimilar elements, a sort of a hybrid neuter, and follows the same rules as Rider, billiards, or croquêt.

We are not sure whether Miss Sappho had the knack of button-holing her audience when she recited her poems. It is a solemn fact, however, that if you gave the slightest encouragement to Mrs Surkey, she fastened on to you with her glittering eye like the Ancient Mariner until dinner or the screams of the baby redeemed you.

Biographers tell us that Miss Sapphó was devotedly, passionately, attached to a Mr Phocon or some such gentleman. I hope Mrs. Surkey is a model wife and will not FORCE-ϘN her victim of a husband to publish her works. Miss Sappho restricted her powers chiefly to lyrical poetry, Mrs. Surkey has been brave enough to dabble in everything. There are Pastorelles and Madrigals, Alexandrines which draw their slow length along, lyrics without number, comic tragedies, serio-burlesques, chansons de Gestes, satiric odes, and rhyming sonnets. There are three closely written

MSS. I believe I heard two of these read, and it is a wonder I am still in the full vigour of my senses. Heaven forbid that I should be present while the favour is being conferred on the audience of reading the third volume. Had I not been permitted to smoke during the operation, I am confident I should have done something desperate. Perhaps I am not a poet, only a hard practical man of business, and so cannot soar to such a height of sublimity.

From Mrs. Surkey's own account it appears that, like Pope, she "lisped in numbers for the numbers came." Like Byron, Burns, or other great poets, the poetic fervour only came in fits and starts so that these Madrigals, Alexandrines, &c., were jotted down on the backs of envelopes, table napkins, cookery books, or window sills.

> Smooth solid monuments of mental pain
> The petrifactions of a plodding brain.

The scraps were then collected and Mr. Surkey was ordered to write them out in his best handwriting in an illuminated album. This album was placed on a marble-top table and adorned Mrs. Surkey's drawing-

room. When any one called, after being introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Surkey, his next step was to be made familiar with the contents of the album on the marble-top table.

Many of these Madrigals, Alexandrines, &c., were devoted to the people of the station. The doctor was called Hill, because this rhymed with pill, chill, ill, and kill. The District Superintendent of Police was called Lees, because this went with crees—cries would be better, as everyone does not know Scotch—lies (poetic licence), fleas, cheese, and peas. The Deputy Commissioner was called Black, because what could be better than crack, lack, flag (poetic licence again), back, knack, and quack? Here is a specimen selected at random and quoted from memory as Mrs. Surkey has refused us a true copy and has "reserved all rights"—

Ode to Saint Chillyair.

From poetry, from heavenly poetry,
This Indian station got its chill,
From poetry to poetry,
By all the powers of Surgeon Hill,
The diapason winding up in kill.

I think I have read something like this before, at any rate, if Mrs. Surkey chooses to plagiarise, that is not my business. This is only a humble chronicle of events.

I should like to make further quotations, but perhaps the Indian public prefer the genuine Alexandrines which do not drag their slow length along.

I have now to hasten on to other matters, laying especial stress on the fact that Mr. Surkey had a long silken auburn beard of which he was very proud.

Surkey was often away on his work for days together as he had a long length of open line. Meanwhile Mrs. Surkey devoted herself to the Muses and preferred sedentary occupation to going to the Station Badminton, so she did not associate much with the other members of the community.

One day Surkey returned from work, and being tired sat on the floor putting his head on his wife's knee. In a fit of abstraction no doubt the poetic inspiration was turned on, anyhow Mrs. Surkey seized her husband's beard and cut it off. Duet, Sonnet, 'Samson

and Delilah,' pastorelle (Solus) 'Oh where and oh where is my long beard gone.' Mr. Surkey, finding himself robbed of a portion of his own property—not his wife's this time—felt so depressed that he went straight off to his bedroom and shaved off the remainder. His physiognomy was thus considerably altered. Meanwhile no one in the station knew that he had returned from inspecting his works.

Mr. and Mrs. Surkey continued to drive in their pony carriage round the various roads, but did not go to the Badminton parties. A very pretty scandal thus arose, in which Mesdames Hill, Black, and Lees, and the Misses Hills, Blacks, and Leeses all joined heartily. Meanwhile Mrs. Surkey was as innocent as—I was going to say a newborn babe—but perhaps one of her own Madrigals, Alexandrines, &c., would be a better example.

At last Mrs. Lees came over. After some preliminary skirmishing she broke out with—

"And quite a handsome man too. Now do tell me his name, dear?"

"What do you mean, my dear?" answered Mrs. Surkey haughtily.

"Oh, now that's very good—very good indeed," said Mrs. Lees, shaking her head dubiously and getting almost hysterical in the enjoyment of the joke. "Why, my dear, you surely must know."

"What?"

"Do you mean to tell me."

"Yes, I do."

"That you don't know that you are the talk of the station."

"I? what for?"

"What for, indeed. Why, for going about in such a barefaced manner with a stranger.

* * *

At this moment Surkey entered with—

"How do you do, Mrs. Lees," extending his right hand. "Glad to see you."

"Don't know you," replied Mrs. Lees, bridling. "How dare you, sir?"

"Not know me, eh! Mrs. Lees. Oh that's good." (Aside, pretending to cry.) "Oh! why did my wife cut off my pretty auburn beard."

* * * *

And so the pretty little plaything died prematurely.

No. XXVII.

THE DICTATOR MAXIMUS;

OR,

Behold a Greater than Solomon is here.

WHEN WE—the Editorial WE—wished to write this sketch, we felt as though we were the Engineer, hoist with his own petard. For we belong to the Rusticated Tribes who live in the Jangals, while the Dictator Maximus belongs to the Urbisal Tribes, who live in the hills. While meditating what we should do, the Rev. Dr. Banerji, Itinerant Missionary, passed our way. We agreed that if he sent in a decent report we would pay *bonâ fide* travelling expenses and register his name as a 3rd grade clerk *sub-*

pro tem. when a vacancy occurred in our office. We also suggested that this would be an excellent opportunity for him to sow the seeds of spiritual good *en route*.

On receiving his report we noticed the scriptural language adopted in the latter portion, to which Dr. Banerji replied—

"When treating such a sublime subject what other language would you have me adopt?"

Then we stated that we could not find Parnassus anywhere on the map of India. The reverend gentleman maintained that Parnassus was Hebrew for a well-known Indian town. As we respect his cloth and are ignorant of Hebrew, we naturally accept his answer as satisfactory.

Dr. Banerji's Report.

"The Dictator Maximus is a modern Solomon and is constantly called upon to judge between the Civil and Military Engineers. These form the two old women. The question is, whose child is promotion to be. The Royal Engineers invariably succeed in

getting the child. Like Solomon, too, the Dictator Maximus has a very fine kingdom—the Public Works Department,—but, unlike Solomon, he is a persistent eater of beef. This may be doubted, for at the Dictator Minor's tiffin a joint of ordinary beef is seldom seen. Again, unlike Solomon, the Dictator Maximus does not restrict himself to building temples or barracks, but engineering works of all kinds. Hiram is the name of the Archons he consults.

"He does not hir'em, but pays them regularly through the Tahsildar. The Queen of Sheba (Indian Public) is desirous of admiring the results of the administration of the Dictator Maximus and is ever ready to prove him with hard questions.

"Now when the Indian Public had seen all the Dictator's lictors and Personal Assistants and Secretaries and Sub-Deputy Assistant Secretaries and his salary and his ascent by which he went up to Parnassus, there was no more spirit left in her. And she said to the King,—'Verily it was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy grandeur and of

thy power. Howbeit, I believed not the words, and behold the half was not told unto me. Thy salary and train exceedeth the fame that I heard. Happy are thy Personal Assistants and happy are thy Secretaries which stand continually before thee and hear thy wisdom.'

"And she gave to the king one hundred and forty shekels of advice and of calumny and sarcasm a very large store. There came no such abundance of advice and sarcasm as these which the Indian Public gave to the Dictator Maximus.

"Now the Dictator Maximus' wisdom and understanding was exceeding much, even as the sand which is upon the seashore. He was wiser than all men, than the Dictator Major, than Hammer the Estimator, than Accounts the Son of Sundries. And his fame went forth to the uttermost parts of Parnassus and Mahalshahr. And he wrote one lakh thirty-nine thousand and sixteen letters and his reports were seventy-seven thousand, three score, and five.

"Now it came to pass that the Dictator

Maximus did not love the wily Hindu, so he did evil in the sight of the Government of India. Moreover, he had ninety Secretaries, five hundred and seventeen Personal Assistants, and two thousand seven score and six brothers-in-law, who turned away his heart. Then the Government of India was wroth with the Dictator Maximus, and said, 'For as much as this is done of thee and thou hast not kept my orders and circulars, I will surely rend thy kingdom from thee and give it to thy Babu. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for thy father's sake, who was my son-in-law, but I will rend it in the time of thy brother's brother-in-law.'

"And the rest of the acts of the Dictator Maximus and all that he did, the railways that he opened and the promotions that he made, are they not pigeon-holed in the Secretariat tables of the Archons of India? And the time that the Dictator Maximus reigned over India was five and twenty years. Twelve and a half years reigned he at Mahalshahr and twelve and a half years reigned he at Parnassus. And the Dictator Maxi-

mus retired like his predecessors and the Director-General, his brother, reigned in his stead."

DR. BANERJI'S REPORT ENDS HERE.

While these lines were passing through the press the desire of my heart has been fulfilled. I wish, therefore, to add some fresh information which occurred under my personal knowledge.

Three of us Engineers were looking at the site, where it was proposed to have a long wooden viaduct. These three were the Chief, my boss, and myself.

"I hope you understand what I mean," said the Chief looking at me.

"Yes, sir, certainly," I replied. "The idea seems a very good one."

"Do you think the Government of India will sanction it?" asked the boss.

"Of course they will. I will sanction it.

I AM THE GOVERNMENT
OF INDIA."

I nearly jumped out of my skin. Here face to face was the very thing I desired to

see all my life. I had also paid Dr. Banerji a handsome reward which might have been saved or bestowed upon some deserving charity.

Kind and gentle reader, I am sure you are desirous of knowing what the Government of India is like. If you will promise not to tell if I will whisper into your left ear.

Are you ready ?—— Here goes—

"The Government of India is a long—thin—hairy—man, with—a—red—beard."

Treasure up that sentence, every word of it is of importance. He walks so straight and eats so heartily that you would never know that he carried on his shoulders the welfare of 255 millions of immortal souls.

The last time I saw him he was living at Westbourne Park. In other words, the Government of India no longer resides in India. Please do not disclose my secret, or I am sure to get into trouble. For example, what would the Bengali Babu say if he only knew that such a state of things existed. Also what would the National Congress say ? And, lastly, what would the Patriotic Association say ?

No. XXVIII.

THE NATIVE SUBORDINATE;

OR,

The Black Whitewasher.

'Tis an old maxim in the schools
That flattery is the food of fools,
Yet now and then your men of wit
Will condescend to take a bit

MOST amiable of readers, have you ever had a native subordinate? If you have, I am sure you are fond of him. I have many native subordinates and I love them all. Do you know why? Not because the Bible tells me to do so, not because they are my Aryan brethren, but because they flatter my vanity and I am particularly partial to my

vanity being tickled. The native subordinate says deliberatively to his superior,—"Sir, you are the greatest genius the world has ever seen, all arts and all sciences have succumbed to your powerful influence. Pray inform me, how you attained this wonderful state of perfection." As every European has been told the same tale in different words, we must all be mighty geniuses, and the only question is who is super-excellently-superlatively so. Another important point is that we cannot help believing the native when he tells us these pleasant truths, and so we try to get him promotion out of his turn.

There are many kinds of understrappers who permeate all departments of State. Among themselves, if Hindus, they are called Lalas, Rais, Jees, Swamees, if Mussalmans, Sahebs, Khâns, Bara Miyâns, Nawabs, Amir-ul-Mumkins, Mumtaz-ul-Mulks, or any other combination beginning with "m" and having 'ul.' The Englishman, however, in his usual levelling style calls the lot "Babu." In the P. W. D. there are draughtsmen, time-keepers, surveyors, signallers, storekeepers

(not grocers), and station-masters. There are very few Sub-Engineers.

In front of his master's face, the Babu is in an atmosphere of hurry tempered by telegrams. This he takes after his superiors. You often catch him saying to the coolie "be off quickly" or "look smart." Behind his master's back, it is a different matter, for you often catch him taking a nap, which extends to more than forty minutes.

In the majority of cases, the native subordinate suffers from a plethora of education —that's what he suffers from. At school and college his mind has been so primed that his body has shrunk up. Now-a-days we find cricket and sports spreading everywhere, and a grand thing too.

I was once looking at Buddha's "pads" or foot-marks on a tombstone. Before I had even time to reflect on the philosophy associated with the surroundings, my Babu came up with—

"Pad, Sir. Same root as Latin pes, pedis."

I turned on him with a diabolical scowl,

and I fancy I made him understand that others besides himself had read Henry's first Latin book.

"Are you sure," I said, "that it is not pes, peditis?"

Why do all Babus rush off in such a haste and say "It is done." It must be Western culture, for Oriental philosophy teaches repose or phlegmaticism or Nirvâna.

> With too much quickness ever to be taught
> With too much thinking to have common thought.

The result of competition now is that the whitewasher is in an officiating *sub. pro tem.* state. When the work for which the subordinate was engaged is done, his services are dispensed with. He goes to another job, where he finds to his surprise that he secures a place at half his previous salary. In this way, as he gets more experience, he at the same time loses his effervescence, and his salary diminishes in descending series. I wonder if Sir W. Muir and others ever thought that this would be the result of their grand educational scheme. Pray why should the natives not pay for the education of

their children as our fathers have had to pay for us.

Besides the Code holidays and privilege leave, the Babus manage to secure leave under circumstances which would not be admitted in the case of a European.

TO THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,

VALUABLE MINERAL DIVISION.

Most Respected Sir,

I have very much pleasure in informing your honour that God has this day given this slave a son, begging leave to feed Brahmins and make general tamasha.

Will ever pray for your honour's long life and for your prosperity.

Your most obedient and humble slave,
RAM DASS.

Or again—

FROM THE OFFICIATING 2ND CLERK,

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER'S OFFICE,

TO THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,

COAL SURVEY DIVISION.

Has the honour to place on record that under-

signed has taken overnight (this night) a pill for perjury and has, moreover, a boil as per margin, to which the apothecary (certificate is herewith appended) has recommended relief from going to office. And always praying to Almighty God that the shadow of such a generous officer like your honour shall ever and ever shine over our heads. Amen and again I say Amen.

(Signed) HOSEIN BAKHSH,

Offg. 2nd Clerk, Executive Engineer's Office.
Enclosure 1

The modern understrapper "at home" may be represented as lying on the broad of his back, smoking a hookah, and composing a book on abstruse subjects. We propose to "review" briefly—very briefly—a few of these books.

"On Metempsychosis or the Ever-changing Habitations of the Soul."

"Eh! *met 'em cosy* did you say? Yes, thank you. I have been took that way myself frequent," as Artemus Ward would say. Of

course you require a nice female to be cosy with. Eel-pie Island, Dinan, or any other place will do. Naturally the soul does change its habitation in such situations, and perhaps other portions of the body also undergo transformations.

"On Phthisosoics or the Destruction of Animals."

Give it up. We have heard of obstrepericks, materia medica, and other difficult medical treatments, but—eh!—ph-th-fh-dh—oicks. It makes one feel quite ill. Is it a Welsh or Russian word?

"On the History of the Probability at Infinitesimal Quaternions."

What's this? We have heard of onions and bunions, anything to do with Quaternions? Anyhow, neither the smell nor the pain can be very bad, for each will be infinitesimal.

"On the Metaphysics of Theosophy."

This is a very important book and we must review it in detail. Here is a passage,—

"*Now, gentlemen, this is the sum total of the knowledge as to the foundations of Nature possessed by the Modern West. Of the Details of Superstructure it knows much, and is fussily grand over its vast heap of Insignificancies, but of first Principles and of First Causes it is, and admits itself to be, profoundly ignorant.*"

That is not a bad passage for a station-master to compose, is it? How many station-masters in England could do so. Certainly the man deserved the medal and diploma of the Theosophical Society. We only ask how about the Insignificancies of the Ancient East? We don't wish to quarrel about trifles, yet somehow we are reminded of a piece of poetry. Did not Byron say,—

> Mend, Babu! mend thy morals and thy taste,
> Be warm but pure, be amorous but be chaste?

Still the pamphlet is decidedly profound, though every second word does begin with a capital letter. Here is another passage,—

"As respects the Origin of Gravity, it can, according to the Materialistic Philosophy, only be accounted for either by the Corpuscular Conflux theory or the Corpuscular Efflux Theory."

Dear reader, kindly just keep this passage waiting for a second, while I have some conversation with the author—or station-master.

"Babu, did you ever hear the story of the Philosopher and the Boiling of the Egg?"

"No, sir. Will your honour be pleased to relate."

"Well, England's greatest philosopher was Sir Isaac Newton. Now one day when his *bawarchi* had left him because he was so irregular in habits, he was obliged to cook his own *khanah*."

"Does your honour have bawarchis in England?"

"Of course we do. With this difference, that they are nice, clean, fat women, not dirty, lean, unkempt men. Well, Sir Isaac Newton went to the kitchen to boil an egg, then what do you think he did?"

"Can't say, sir."

"Why, he put his watch into the degchi

and looked at the egg. When the Hon. Mrs. Newton returned from the bazaar she gave her husband a thorough good scolding for spoiling his brand new chronometer which he had partially made and partially bought at great expense in order to find the Time of Oscillation of a Simple Pendulum."

"And then, sir?"

"Well, isn't that enough? But if you will have the *then*, it is this. The Corpuscular Conflux Theory or Corpuscular Efflux Theory may be a very good tonic to take after dinner on a full stomach, but if you go reflecting on this theory when the mail is expected, instead of attending to signals, you will run your train into a dead siding and have a d—d accident. That's all. Good-day."

No. XXIX.

THE INDIAN MISTRI;

OR,

Artless Art.

THE Geologist would tell us that the fossil mistri belongs to a fauna which has a long range in time. The species commenced in the Palæosoic Period, was most numerous in the Mesosoic, and finally the genus as well as the species died out in the Cainosoic.

The Indian mistri was born about B. C. 250, in the time of Asoka, was a young man about A.D. 500, got very ill about 750, when he had to take to his bed to hide himself (fact), became convalescent in A. D. 1000, was in his prime during the middle ages, and

died in 1883, when the Native Jurisdiction Bill became law.

I dug him up once when I was a Pioneer of Civilisation in an outlandish part of Her Majesty's dominions While looking at a splendid dome he was building I said in the purest vernacular,—

"Kindly let me see your plan."

He was astonished—was that uncouth barbarian—and stared at me as though I was a Civil servant who had gone mad, for some of these have gone daft lately, or perhaps he thought I was a micaceous gelatinous albumenoid. Shaking his hoary locks he muttered something to the effect,—

"You don't get change out of me so easily as that, young man."

"What?" I exclaimed. "Have you no longitudinal or cross-section, no Everest theodolite, Cook's level or Gravatt's staff, no Isometric projection, Eno's fruit salt, elaborate centering or steel tape, no Pear's soap, back elevation, or type-drawing. How *can* you get on without all these accessories?"

"Well, you see," he replied somewhat haughtily, "to tell you the truth, we *think* you copy. We are never in a hurry, you always are. We work for future fame, you work for present promotion. Somehow we *do* manage to get on without these luxuries, thank you, and, what is more, we do not require any of your sublime pity."

Fergusson tells us that "Indian buildings contain nothing so intellectual as the Parthenon, nor so constructively grand as a mediæval cathedral, but they display an exuberance of fancy, a lavishness of labour, and an elaboration of detail not to be found anywhere else." Those who have eyes to see, hearts to feel, and understandings to understand aright, will agree with the late Mr. Fergusson. There are no flying buttresses, no ribbed vaulting, no pillar clustering, no window tracery. Instead we have the great caves of Nassick, Karli, and Elephanta hewn out of solid rock by chisels. There are the topes of Manikaila and Sarnâth, the rails of Sanchi, the Sikras of Palitana, the great dome of Bijapur. The gateways of Coomba-

conum and Trichinopoly, the exquisite Taj. There are noble ruins in Delhi and Agra, with beautiful pendants. Lastly, everywhere there are luxuriant gardens, bathing ghâts, cool bawlis, and dharmsalas.

The Bird of Avon must have heard of Bijapur when he said—

> The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the *great globe* itself.
> Yea, all which it inherits shall dissolve,
> And, like an unsubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind.

It is possible that classical influence spread to India with the Bactrians. If so, the effect of that influence was very small. Shade, *Shade*, SHADE is what the Indian architect wants, and shade he is determined to have at any cost. So he sticks to the principle of the "Beam" rather than that of the "Arch." Hence we see so many projecting corbels, deep verandahs, and flat roofs.

Religion is inseparably associated with architecture in India as with the mediæval architects. There are few frescoes and no painting, but a profusion of architectural

ornament and sculpture. The sculpture of the Western architects was bold and refined, that of the Eastern architects is bold but forbidding. I am afraid we must agree with Fergusson in that the sculpture often depicts immortal gods and goddesses making "violent love to one another and drinking something stronger than water."

I have seen St. Mark's at Venice, St. Peter's at Rome, and the duomo at Florence, and I firmly believe that if the Indian mistri had been at Rome during the Cinquecento Period he could have given the Italian architects a wrinkle, for he would have built St. Peter's without a centering. It is unnecessary to go into details.

The Indian workman not only shines in architecture, but also in industrial arts of all kinds. Who first made Damascened steel? Can finer filigree jewellery be obtained anywhere? The Mosaics of the Vatican may have more art, those of Agra have certainly more science and skill. Has stone ever been carved in such detail as during the Moghul period? Can anything beat the

brightness of the Jeypur enamels? The answer is certainly not—not even the Champlèvés of Paris.

Let us hope that the schools of art will develope the native talent.

We have been very iconoclastic, and have used Asoka's pillar as a roller for macadamising the road at Allahabad. I hope, however, that we are not so cold-blooded as some natives think.

Heaven forbid that Ruskin should make a cold weather tour in India. Everything would then become a parasitical sublimity or a "detestable excrescence." The very kankar —I mean stones of Allahabad—would be imbued with life and would learn to speak. Perhaps they would request the Government of India to oust this learned pedant. We should all have to subscribe to knock something down or build something else up. As we are all suffering from the appreciation of gold, our pockets might not stand the strain, and so we would lose our appetites and sleep.

When the mukkadum or tindal becomes a Government servant, he loses his indivi-

duality of character, pines away, and becomes merged in orders, resolutions, longitudinal sections, and type-drawings. He had previously learned to work in stone and brick, he is now expected to work chiefly in iron. He is thus led to give up mechanical problems, and takes to singing while hoisting the bridge girders,—

Piné ka panee,
Heigh yah!
Kuch parwanee,
Heigh yah!
And all that kind of Blarney,
Heigh yah! Heigh yah!

Disintegration is beginning to set in. Nothing can save him now. He absolutely phonetinises the English language.—Zugativ Anjanîr (Executive Engineer), ballut (bolt), or rav-rat (equal to rivet).

In my youth my father used often to give us one of his little jokes, namely,—Once upon a time there was an unscrupulous shop-keeper, who religiously said his prayers. Before closing the shop for the evening, the grocer would call out to his assistant,—

"John, John, have you sanded the sugar and watered the tobacco?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then come to prayers."

Ram Bakhsh's occupation is now gone, for the contractor being the shop-keeper, the engineer, the customer, the Indian mistri becomes the shop-boy. He has now to look after the watering of the tobacco (masonry), the sanding of the sugar (lime), and then he goes to say his prayers.

THE POSTFACE.

THE POSTFACE;

OR,

Taking a Backsight.

DEAR READER,

It is possible you may ask my reasons for writing this book. Well, they are "private—purely private"—as a great man once said to his hearers. That great man is an Author, a D.C.L., and an F.R.S. Perhaps, if you and I follow in his footsteps we may each become a D.C.L. and a F.R.S.

Again, I am a lonely bachelor, who in the jangles and am suffering

"blighted affections." Now, this being Leap Year, it struck me that you might know some nice young person who does not object to jangal life. If so, would you mind asking her to propose for my h * * * * and h * * * . Mind, this is private—intensely private. Of course, the offer could not possibly be refused under such circumstances. If more than one application is received, it will be considered *seriatim* and in order of merit. You will thus see how I arrived at the number of sketches, namely, 29. It is true that not being a Civil Servant, nor a Royal Engineer, I have no brains, it is also true that my position and prospects are poor, and that my pension is rupees only, still I will promise that SHE be kindly treated, shall not be allowed much of her own way, and shall be amused. I only stipulate for one con-

dition, and that is, that there is not to be a going up to the hills *every* year while I grill in the plains.

Once more, my Friend. The P. W. D. has never yet had a faithful Historian all to itself, why, then, should I neglect this opportunity? There is material enough probably to compile 100 volumes, only these would be as dry as dust. I have endeavoured to boil down the dry bones into a good, clear, healthy soup. If the soup is taken in the spirit in which it is intended, it is possible that a further dole with additions may be served "later on." I have an idea or two, only it takes me a long time to work up these ideas. For instance, a C. S. or an R. E. could write ten pages of foolscap in as many minutes "On the Physical and Mathematical Developments of Zero," while it would take me at least

ten days to do so. I also doubt if my labours would be worth much after all.

I hope the Government of India will order a large consignment of this Manual as a Text-Book for the use of their offices. A reduction will be made for large orders to Messes and Clubs. The morality is unimpeachable, and, what is so important in India, there are no Politics and very few Grievances. Chiefly facts have been given and seldom inferences drawn.

Finally, my brother Aryan, Turanian, or Scandinavian, if you ask what I mean by taking a backsight, I would beg to say that the term is simple enough, though generally used in a technical sense. Nearly every Author thinks it is necessary to have a Preface. Now I maintain that the Preface is written after the rest of the work is completed, and its meaning is quite in-

comprehensible to the Reader till the book has been perused, so to save you the trouble, I have put the Preface at the end and called it a Postface. Are you not grateful?

With kind regards, and hoping you will recommend this book to your friends, but pray don't lend him *your* copy,

Believe me,

Yours truly,

GURY PURWAR.