England's Work in India.

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PREFACE.

IN this little book I try to show what British rule has done for India, and the work which now awaits it. The first two chapters deal with the primary duties of every Government—namely, the protection of its subjects, and the development of the country. The last two chapters treat of what may be called the secondary, but not less important, functions of an Asiatic administration, connected with the food-supply and self-government of the people. The former, when delivered separately as lectures gave rise to a too favourable, the latter to an unduly despondent, view of our position. I hope, when read together, they will leave behind only a calm resolve, that as Englishmen in time past faithfully did the work which fell to them in India, so Englishmen will now with a firm hand enter on the new duties which are there being forced upon us.

W. W. H.

December 1880.

The Work Done.

The Work to be Done.

ENGLAND'S WORK IN INDIA.

THE WORK DONE

I. PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY.

BRITISH rule in India is again upon its trial. On the one hand, the Government finds itself face to face with problems which, on a much smaller scale in Ireland, are the despair of our wisest statesmen. On the other hand, doubters have arisen who dispute whether our supremacy in the East is a gain either to ourselves or to the peoples over whom we rule. The question as to the benefit of our Indian connection to ourselves is a rhetorical rather than a serious one. For with the downfall of British rule in India would disappear that security of person and property which forms the first essential for our commerce with the East. I, for one, am not afraid of the cry of 'Perish India!' when I remember that that cry means, Perish the greatest customer of England in all the world; perish its chief market for Manchester goods; perish 50 millions sterling of British trade per annum. What we have reason to fear

is not the cry of 'Perish India!' but the murmur against the responsibilities which our rule in India involves.

If, however, as some have recently alleged, that rule has failed to benefit the Indian races, then I can sympathize with those who question whether we should extend the responsibilities which Indian rule entails. For no government has a right to exist which does not exist in the interests of the governed. The test of British rule in India is, not what it has done for ourselves, but what it has done for the Indian people. By this test our work in the East must stand or fall. If our attempt to administer that vast and distant empire has turned out a failure; if its people are not more free, more secure, and more prosperous under British rule than they were under their native dynasties; then the wise course for Great Britain would seem to be to curtail her former responsibilities, to accept no new ones, and to withdraw as far as may be from an undertaking to which she had proved unequal.

If, on the other hand, we find that our countrymen have not failed in their splendid and difficult task; if we find that British rule in India means order in place of anarchy, protection by the law instead of oppression by the sword, and a vast free people dwelling in safety where of old each man was beaten down beneath whosoever was stronger than himself, then I think that Great Britain may with a firm heart continue to accept the great responsibility which has fallen to her, and that she may calmly face each new duty which that responsibility involves.

During the last ten years it has been my business to visit, almost every winter, the twelve provinces of India, and to superintend a survey of their population and resources. The Indian Government has, so to speak, ordered me to conduct for it a great stock-taking after a century of British rule. I have often amused myself, during my solitary peregrinations, by imagining what a Hindu of the last century would think of the present state of his country if he could revisit the earth. I have supposed that his first surprise at the outward physical changes had subsided; that he had got accustomed to the fact that thousands of square miles of jungle, which in his time were inhabited only by wild beasts, have been turned into fertile crop-lands; that fever-smitten swamps have been covered with healthy, well-drained cities, that the mountain walls which shut off the interior of India from the seaports have been pierced by roads and scaled by railways; that the great rivers which formed the barriers between provinces, and desolated the country with their floods, have now been controlled to the uses of man, spanned by bridges, and tapped by canals. But what would strike him as more surprising than these outward changes is the security of the people. In provinces where every man, from the prince to the peasant, a hundred years ago, went armed, he would look round in vain for a matchlock or a sword He would find the multitudinous native states of India, which he remembered in jealous isolation broken only by merciless wars, now trading quietly with each other, bound together by railway

and roads, by the post and the telegraph. He would find, moreover, much that was new as well as much that was changed. He would see the country dotted with imposing edifices in a strange foreign architecture, of which he could not guess the uses. He would ask what wealthy prince had reared for himself that spacious palace? He would be answered that the building was no pleasure-house for the rich, but a hospital for the poor. He would inquire, In honour of what new deity is this splendid shrine? He would be told that it was no new temple to the gods, but a school for the people. Instead of bristling fortresses, he would see courts of justice; in place of a Muhammadan general in charge of each district, he would find an English magistrate; instead of a swarming soldiery, he would discover a police.

He would also detect some mournful features in the landscape. In provinces where, a hundred years ago, there was plenty of land for every one who wished to till it, he would see human beings so densely crowded together as to exhaust the soil, and yet fail to wring from it enough to eat. Among a people whose sole means of subsistence was agriculture, he would find a landless proletariate springing up, while millions more were clinging with a despairing grip to their half-acre of earth a-piece, under a burden of rack-rent or usury. On the one hand, he would see great bodies of traders and husbandmen living in a security and comfort unknown in the palmiest days of the Mughals. On the other hand, he would ask himself, as I have often asked,

myself, whether the prosperity of the prosperous is not highly paid for by the poverty of the poor, and whether this splendid fabric of British rule does not rest deep down on a harder struggle for life.

I shall endeavour to present a few scenes of the panorama which would thus pass before his eyes. There are all the signs at present of a new departure in our dealings with India, and it is of the utmost importance that the English nation should realize the actual facts. My desire is so to state these facts that they may be read and remembered by numbers of my countrymen. It will be in no vainglorious spirit that I contrast what has been with what is. In thinking of her work in India, Great Britain may proudly look back, but she must also look anxiously forward. If, in these preliminary pages, I dwell on what England has accomplished in India, it is only that I may clear the way for stating with the greater emphasis what England has yet to do for the Indian people.

Indian frontier affairs have lately occupied much attention, and I shall commence my sketch by a glance at the frontiers of India in the last century. India is a great three-cornered country, stretching southward from Asia into the sea. Its northern base rests upon the Himalayan ranges; the chief part of its western side is washed by the Indian Ocean, and of its eastern by the Bay of Bengal. But while thus guarded along the whole length of its boundaries by Nature's defences, the mountains and the sea, it has, at its north-eastern and north-western corners, two

opposite sets of gateways which connect it with the rest of Asia. Through these gateways, successive hordes of invaders have poured into India, and in the last century the process was still going on. Each set of new-comers plundered and massacred without mercy and without restraint. During 700 years, the warring races of Central Asia and Afghanistan filled up their measure of bloodshed and pillage to the full. Sometimes they returned with their spoil to their mountains, leaving desolation behind; sometimes they killed off or drove out the former inhabitants, and settled down in India as lords of the soil; sometimes they founded imperial dynasties, destined to be crushed, each in its turn, by a new host swarming into India through the Afghan passes. In the middle of the last century, six such inroads on a great scale took place in twenty-three years. The first was led by a soldier of fortune from Persia, who slaughtered Afghan and Indian alike; the last five were regular Afghan invasions.

The precise meaning of the word invasion in India during the last century, may be gathered from the following facts. It signified not merely a host of twenty to a hundred thousand barbarians on the march, paying for nothing, and eating up every town, and cottage, and farmyard; burning and slaughtering on the slightest provocation, and often in mere sport. It usually also meant a grand final sack and massacre at the capital of the invaded country. Here is the account of the fate of Delhi in the first of the six invasions in

the middle of the last century—an account drawn up by the least rhetorical and most philosophical of Indian historians, the father of John Stuart Mill. Delhi had peacefully opened its gates to the strangers, but a brawl had afterwards arisen between the troops and the citizens. 'With the first light of the morning,' the invading leader, 'Nadir, issued forth, and, dispersing bands of soldiers in every direction, ordered them to slaughter the inhabitants, without regard to age or sex, in every street or avenue in which the body of a murdered Persian should be found. From sunrise to midday the sabre raged; and by that time not less than 8000 were numbered with the dead. During the massacre and pillage the city was set on fire in several places.' At the end of a fifty-eight days' sack, the plunderers went off with their booty, leaving the capital stripped, burned, and desolate.

On this first of the six invasions, then, 8000 men, women, and children were hacked to pieces in one forenoon in the streets of the capital. But the Persian general knew how to stop the massacre at his pleasure. The Afghan leaders had less authority, and their five great invasions during the thirteen middle years of the last century form one of the most appalling tales of bloodshed and wanton cruelty ever inflicted on the human race. In one of these invasions, the miserable capital, Delhi, again opened her gates and received the Afghans as guests. Yet for several weeks, not merely for six hours on this occasion, the citizens were exposed to every foul enormity which a barbarian army could

practise on a prostrate foe. Meanwhile the Afghan cavalry were scouring the country, slaying, burning, and mutilating in the meanest hamlet as in the greatest town. They took especial delight in sacking the holy places of the Hindus, and murdering the defenceless votaries at the shrines. For example, one gang of 25,000 Afghan horsemen swooped down upon the sacred city of Muttra during a festival, while it was thronged with peaceful Hindu pilgrims engaged in their devotions. 'They burned the houses,' says the Tyrolese Jesuit Tieffenthaler, who was in India at that time, 'together with their inmates, slaughtering others with the sword and the lance; hauling off into captivity maidens and youths, men and women. In the temples they slaughtered cows,' the sacred animal of the Hindus, 'and smeared the images and pavement with the blood.'

It is needless to quote further from the tale of Afghan atrocities in the last century. They went on year after year, the Afghans being too loosely organized to serve as a barrier against the hosts from Central Asia, and always ready for an Indian invasion on their own account. The border-land between Afghanistan and India lay silent and waste; indeed, districts far within the frontier, which had once been densely inhabited, and which are now again thickly peopled, were swept bare of inhabitants. Thus Gujránwála, the seat of the ancient capital of the Punjab in Buddhist times, was utterly depopulated. Its present inhabitants are immigrants of comparatively recent date. The district, which was thus stripped of its inhabitants in the last

century, has now a new population of over half a million souls. The Afghan question survives to this day, but its present form, although by no means easy of solution, is preferable to the shape in which it presented itself in the last century.

In the last century, however, invasions and inroads were yearly events along the whole frontier of India. The Himalayan mountains, instead of serving as a northern wall to shut out aggressors, formed a line of fastnesses from which the hill races poured down upon the plains. For fifteen hundred miles along their base stretched a thick belt of territory which no one dared to cultivate. This silent border-land varied from twenty to fifty miles in breadth, and embraced a total area of 30,000 square miles, that yielded no food for man, but teemed with wild beasts, which nightly sallied forth to ravage the herds and hamlets in the open country beyond. Such a border-land seemed to the miserable villagers on the plains to be the best possible frontier; for its dense jungles served as some sort of barrier against the invasions of the wild Himalayan races, and it bred deadly fevers which made havoc of armies that attempted a passage through it. Indeed, the ancient Hindu laws of Manu, written more than 2000 years ago, ordained, as a protection to a royal city or kingdom, a belt of wilderness twenty miles around it in place of fortifications; and the peasantry of Northern India were thankful in the last century for the tract of disease-laden jungle which, to a certain extent, defended them from the savage hillmen beyond.

Such was the state of the north-western and the long northern boundary of India before the establishment of British rule. A glance at the north-eastern border discloses a still more painful picture. The history of the fertile valley of Assam, in the north-eastern corner of India, is one long narrative of invasion and extermination. Anciently the seat of a powerful Hindu kingdom, whose ruined forts of massive hewn stone we find buried in the jungle, Assam was devastated, like the rest of Eastern Bengal, by the fanatical Muhammadan invaders in the fifteenth century from the west. A fierce aboriginal race (the Koch) next swooped down on it from the north. They in turn were crushed by another aboriginal race (the Ahams) from the east; and these again were being exterminated by the Burmese from the south, when they implored the English to interfere. During the last century, large tracts of Assam were depopulated, and throughout that province and Eastern Bengal 30,000 square miles of fertile frontier districts lay waste. In addition to these systematic invasions, the smaller hill tribes every autumn rushed down upon the miserable hamlets which were left, and drove away the women and the cattle.

The great mountain wall round Northern India failed therefore, till the British came upon the scene, to afford any security to the Indian races. The sea, which forms the natural defence of the rest of the country, was in like manner only a source of new dangers. On the Bay of Bengal, the pirates from the Burmese coast sailed up the great rivers, burning the villages, massacring or carrying

off into slavery the inhabitants. The first English surveyor, in the second half of the last century, entered on his maps a fertile and now populous tract of a thousand square miles on the sea-board, as bare of villages, with the significant words written across it, 'Depopulated by the Maghs,' or sea-robbers. A fleet was ineffectually maintained by the Muhammadan Government to keep open the river channels, and a heavy impost, whose name survives to the present day, although the tax itself has long been abolished, was in vain levied for this service. On the other side of the peninsula in the Indian Ocean, piracy was conducted on a grander scale. Wealthy rájás kept up luxurious courts upon the extortions which their pirate fleets levied from trading vessels, and from the villages along the coast. The truth is, that the natural defences of India, the mountains and the sea, were in the last century equally powerless to protect the Indian races.

This state of things could not be permitted under British rule, and the first business of the English was to secure India from foreign invasions. The sea-robbers were effectively dealt with. One of Clive's achievements was rooting out the pirate nests of the south-western coast; and the Indian navy, after sweeping the robber hordes from the sea, and rendering Indian waters as safe as the English Channel, finished its work nineteen years ago, and was abolished in 1861. The unruly tribes of the Himalayan frontiers had always their hill fastnesses to retreat to. Their subjugation took a longer time, and is less complete, as our troubles with

Afghanistan still attest. But by persuasion, and, when necessary, by chastisement, we have taught the wild races along the whole northern and north-eastern frontier, for a distance of 1500 miles, the lesson that they must please keep quiet, and betake themselves to some other livelihood than the pillage of the husbandmen on the plains. Most of them have proved apt scholars. The great kingdom of Nepal on the north, which forced us to correct its inveterate practice of raiding by two campaigns, followed by partial annexation, has, for the last sixty years, been our firm ally, and hurried out its armies to our help in the Mutiny of 1857. At one time during this long interval, the dynastic intrigues, always fermenting in a native court, threatened to bring the Nepalese into conflict with the British; and on that occasion the whole kingdom of Nepal was kept loyal to its treaties, through a prolonged crisis, by the firmness and skill of a single Englishman, Brian Hodgson. Other native states, like the principality of Kuch Behar, at once settled down into peaceful industry. Its first and only treaty with us, dated 1773, remains unbroken by either party to this day, a monument of mutual good faith.

A firm frontier being established in Northern India, the peasantry spread themselves out upon the unoccupied border lands. The task of reclaiming these tracts has been a heavy one. In some parts, as in the now prosperous district of Goalpara with its half-million of inhabitants, more money was spent, until twenty-five years ago, by Government in rewards for killing the wild animals than the whole sum realized from the land-

revenue. This broad belt of waste land along the frontier was almost the only unoccupied territory which the British Government could grant to European settlers. The first British capitalists had to do battle alike with the banditti and the wild beasts. We read in the manuscript records of 1788 of a Mr. Raush, one of the earliest English merchants in Assam, who made an alliance on his own account with the local rájá, and sent a private regiment of 700 men to the aid of that prince. While the natives of India have pushed their rice cultivation towards the foot of the mountains, English capitalists have dotted their slopes with tea-plantations. Not less than 13,000 square miles of border-districts have been reclaimed, and yield each year at the lowest estimate eighteen millions sterling worth of produce. The tea-gardens alone exported last year three millions sterling worth of tea, chiefly to England.

The unsettled frontier of the last century, meant that sixty thousand square miles of border-land (double the whole area of Scotland), were abandoned to jungle and the wild beasts, not because there were no people to cultivate the soil, but because they did not dare to do so. It signified that tracts which might have yielded, and which will yet yield, thirty millions sterling worth of food each year, lay untilled through terror of the turbulent hill races. The security given by a century of British rule in these frontier districts means 13,000 square miles already brought under the plough, growing each year eighteen millions sterling worth of produce, or more than the average normal cost of

the Indian army and the whole defence of the Indian Empire.

The task of freeing India from foreign invasion was, however, only the first of many heavy responsibilities which our acquisition of the country entailed. The dying throes of the Mughal Empire had let loose its disbanded or revolted armies upon the people. The troops, finding that their pay was no longer forthcoming from the Muhammadan treasury, lived by open pillage. In what are now the most peaceful and most populous districts of Bengal, there were, in the last century, standing camps of banditti. Many of the principal native families, being ruined by the exactions of the Musalmán tax-gatherers, betook themselves to plunder. They sheltered the banditti on their estates, levied black-mail from the surrounding villages as the price of immunity from depredation, and shared in the pillage of such as would not come to terms. Their country-houses were robber-strongholds, and the English judges of the last century have left it on record that a gang-robbery never occurred without a landed proprietor being at the bottom of it.

Lawlessness breeds lawlessness, and the miserable peasants, stripped of their little hoards, were forced to become plunderers in their turn. Many 'husbandmen,' says an official report of 1771, 'who have hitherto borne the first of characters among their neighbours, pursue this last resource to procure themselves a subsistence.' The Council at Calcutta reported in 1772 that organized gangs of robbers were burning 'plunder-

ing, and ravaging the interior districts of Bengal in bodies of 50,000 men. The English found no police in India to cope with this great evil. Each village had its watchman, but the village watchman would have been powerless against the robber-gangs, and so he entered into league with them. For a time the East India Company's troops were constantly engaged against the banditti. In 1773 we hear of our Sepoys 'being totally defeated' by a robber horde, and 'their English leader with the whole party cut off.' But by degrees these vast armies of banditti were broken up, and scattered themselves over the country in smaller gangs.

Such lawlessness was the normal condition of all India for a full half-century, and in some provinces for many centuries, before the advent of British rule. A long succession of invaders during 700 years had crushed beneath them the preceding races. In many instances, the previous inhabitants were driven from their fields altogether and forced to take refuge in the mountains or jungles. They then became what is called in India a 'depressed race,' or a 'predatory caste.' In every province we find one or more of these depressed or vanquished races, such as the Bhars of Oudh, the Bhíls of Jalaun, the Gaulis of the Central Provinces, the Chandels and Bundelas of Bundelkhand, the Ahams of Assam, besides the numerous hill tribes scattered over the country. In the last century, there were over a hundred hereditary 'predatory castes' or marauding hill and forest tribes in India, and many of their names survive to our days in the census of 1871; that is to say,

there were more than one hundred resolute communities openly living from generation to generation by plunder.

Here, then, was a great organization of the criminal classes, which had long existed, and which the English had to put down without the aid of any regular police. At first the Company's servants attempted to extirpate crime by copying the cruel criminal code of the Musalmans. Warren Hastings, for example, made a law that every convicted gang-robber should be executed; that he should be executed in all the forms and terrors of the native law in his own village; that his whole family should be made slaves, and that every inhabitant of the village should be fined. The gang-robbers retaliated by incendiarism on a great scale throughout the country. In 1780 they were believed to have caused the conflagration of Calcutta which burned down 15,000 houses. Nearly 200 people perished in the flames. 'Deduct,' saith the deed for the Benares District for the year 1782, 'deduct the devastations, etc., of two months' disturbances, *sicca* rupees 666,666,' or over £70,000. 'A few nights ago,' says a Calcutta newspaper of 1780, 'four armed men entered the house of a Moorman, near Chowringhi,' the principal street, 'and carried off his daughter.' No native ever ventured out after dusk with a good shawl on; and it was the invariable practice, even in English mansions in Calcutta, for the porter to lock the outer door at the commencement of each meal, and not to open it again till the butler brought him word that the plate was safely shut up in its strong box.

Clear cases of fire-raising are constantly recorded, and at length it was gravely recommended 'that all those owning straw houses should have a long bamboo with three hooks at the end to catch the villains.'

All this has changed. Strange as it may sound, there is now less crime in India than in England. For each million persons in England and Wales there are about 870 criminals always in gaol. In India, where the police is very completely organized, there are only 614 prisoners in gaol for each million of the people. Moreover, in England and Wales there are 340 women in gaol for each million of the female population, while in India they have only twenty-eight women in gaol for each million of the female population. The petty offences, punished by a fine, are also less numerous in Bengal than in England, compared with the total number of inhabitants. These gaol returns are sometimes misleading, owing to differences in the class of punishment inflicted, but I have satisfied myself that the above figures substantially represent the facts. The use of troops against banditti is now a thing of the past. The existence of an army is less realised in a rural district of Bengal than in an English shire. Of the sixty-three millions of people in that province, probably forty millions go through life without ever seeing the face of a soldier.

A century of British rule has, therefore, not only secured the Indian frontier from invaders, but it has freed the interior of India from banditti. How has this result been achieved? Partly by legislation and partly

by police. The English in India recognised the fact that they had a special class of crimes to deal with, and they framed a special department of criminal law to put those crimes down. 'The *dakaits* or gang-robbers of Bengal,' so runs a State paper written in 1772, 'are not, like the robbers of England, individuals driven to such desperate courses by sudden want. They are robbers by profession and even by birth. They are formed into regular communities, and their families subsist by the spoils which they bring home to them.' These spoils were frequently brought from great distances; and peaceful villages 300 miles up the Ganges lived by housebreaking in Calcutta. A special law was therefore framed against the crime of *dakaiti*, or gang-robbery, that is to say, robbery committed by five or more persons. Another special crime was *thagi*, or strangling dexterously performed by bands of professional murderers disguised as travelling merchants or pilgrims. The *thags* and *dakaits*, or hereditary stranglers and gang-robbers, thought none the worse of themselves for their profession, and were regarded by their countrymen with an awe which in the last century could hardly be distinguished from respect. 'I am a *thag* or strangler of the Royal Records,' one of these gentlemen was good enough to explain to an English officer: 'I and my fathers have been professional stranglers for twenty generations.' Accordingly special laws were framed to deal with the crime of 'being a *thag*' or professional strangler.

Special laws, however, would have done very little

without special police. A separate department of the criminal administration was therefore created to deal with these widespread special crimes of India. It has effectively done its work. Some time ago, I was taken to visit the principal gaol of one of the Indian provinces. At parting, when I was thanking the governor of the prison for all he had shown me, he exclaimed: 'Ah! there is one thing more we must not forget to see.' He took me to a well-ventilated, comfortable room in the gaol hospital, where, lolling upon pillows, reclined a reverend, white-bearded man. 'This,' he said, 'is the last of our *thags*. He alone survives of the batch which we received twenty-five years ago.' I found that the venerable strangler had been for fifteen years enjoying himself in the hospital, the object of much solicitude to the doctors, and his life carefully prolonged by medical comforts, as an interesting relic of the past.

Nevertheless, this problem also presents itself from time to time, although in a mitigated form. The old predatory castes, the survivals of down-trodden, half-exterminated races under the native dynasties, still cling to their wandering life. But most of them, like the Bediyas, are now merely gipsy families, who roam from village to village, earning a little rice by their singing and juggling, or by their dexterity as bird-catchers, basket-weavers, and fortune-tellers. Their boldest flight in robbery is the pilfering of a stray chicken or kid. In recently annexed parts of India, however, as in the province of Oudh, the old predatory clans still give trouble. A special law, entitled 'the

Criminal Tribes Act, has accordingly been levelled against them, and is occasionally enforced. For example, in the Gonda district of Oudh, which passed under British rule only in 1855, there is a caste of professional thieves called Barwárs. They spread over the country in communities of forty or fifty, and have no objection to rob temples, but will not steal cattle. They go on more distant expeditions in parties of two or three. Their plunder is fairly divided, a portion being set apart to buy offerings of goats and ardent spirits to their patron goddess, and a fixed percentage being paid to the landholder of the village. They carry on their trade with hereditary skill; but the rules of their religion sternly restrict their operations to the daytime, between sunrise and sunset. Any Barwár stealing by night is ignominiously turned out of the caste. In 1869, these scrupulous gentlemen numbered 2500 in a single *pargana* or parish. But they have, under British rule, sunk from their ancient dignity as a hereditary robber-community, and, like my old friend the professional strangler in the gaol hospital, they are regarded with much interest by the local authorities as a relic of the past. They have been placed under the operation of the Criminal Tribes Act, and are now betaking themselves to the more commonplace callings of small husbandmen and petty pilferers. Throughout almost the whole of British India the ancient special crimes have been extirpated. The old criminal tribes find it more profitable to be on the side of the law than against it, and now seek employment as detectives or house-watchmen. We have seen how

the Indian navy, after having swept the sea of piracy and cleared out the robber-nests at the river mouths, finished its work, and was abolished nineteen years ago. In like manner, the old lawlessness in the interior has now disappeared, and the special branch of the criminal administration known as the *Thagi* and *Dakaiti* or Stranglers' and Gang-robbers' Department, has practically ceased from its operations in British India.

We have of late years heard a great deal about Indian famines. The heart of England has been touched by tales of suffering and privation on a vast scale, and the charity of England has flowed forth on a scale equally munificent. Famine is now recognised as one of the most difficult problems with which the Indian Administration has to deal. A hundred years ago it was regarded not as a problem of administration, but as a visitation of God utterly beyond the control of man. When the rains, on which the crops depended, fell short, no crops were reared, and the people perished. Sometimes their failure was confined to a single district, and only a few thousand families starved to death. Sometimes their failure extended to a province, and the victims were counted by hundreds of thousands. More rarely the rains failed over a still greater area, and, as in 1770, a third of the whole population perished. The loss of life was accepted in each case as a natural and an inevitable consequence of the loss of the crop. The earth had yielded no food, and so the people, in the ordinary and legitimate course of things, died. The famine of 1837 left behind so terrible a memory, that to this day the

peasants of Hamirpur employ it as an era by which to calculate their ages. Such calamities are accepted as the ordinary and inevitable visitations of Providence in Asia. It is said that the recent famine in Northern China stripped large tracts of one-half their inhabitants.

Here is a bird's-eye view of a single famine in the last century, taken almost word for word from the official records. 'The fields of rice,' one of the native superintendents of Bengal reported in the autumn of 1769, 'are become like fields of dried straw.' 'The mortality,' wrote the President of the Bengal Council in the following spring—'the mortality, the beggary exceed all description. Above one-third of the inhabitants have perished in the once plentiful province of Purniah, and in other parts the misery is equal.' All through the stifling summer of 1770 the people went on dying. The husbandmen sold their cattle; they sold their implements of agriculture; they devoured their seed-grain; they sold their sons and daughters, till at length no buyer of children could be found; they ate the leaves of trees and the grass of the field; and in June 1770, the Resident at the Darbar affirmed that the living were feeding on the dead. Day and night a torrent of famished and disease-stricken wretches poured into the great cities. At an early period of the year, pestilence had broken out. In March we find small-pox at Murshidábád, where it glided through the viceregal guards, and cut off the Prince Saifat in his palace. The streets were blocked up with promiscuous heaps of the dying and dead. Interment could not do its work quick enough; even the

dogs and jackals, the public scavengers of the East, became unable to accomplish their revolting work, and the multitude of mangled and festering corpses at length threatened the existence of the citizens.

Two years after the dearth, Warren Hastings made a progress through Bengal, and he deliberately states the loss to have been 'at least one-third of the inhabitants,' or probably about ten millions of people. Nineteen years later, the next Governor-General, Lord Cornwallis, had still to report to the Court of Directors that one-third of the Company's territory in Bengal was 'a jungle inhabited only by wild beasts.'

In that terrible summer of 1770, in which ten millions of peasants perished, only £9000 were distributed to aid the starving population of Bengal. A century later, in the much milder Bengal scarcity of 1874, the British Government spent close on four millions sterling, and during the five years ending 1878, it devoted over fourteen millions sterling in feeding its people during famine. Here is one great difference between the last century and the present one. But it is by no means the most important difference. In the last century, neither the Government nor the people thought that it was possible to deal with a great Indian famine. Any such efforts were, in the words of the Bengali proverb, merely *watering the top of a tree whose roots are cut.* In the present century, earnest efforts have been made to bring famine within administrative control. A vast organization of preventive and remedial agencies is constantly kept in readiness to deal with the periodically recurring dearths.

Canals, irrigation works of many kinds, railways, roads, steamboats, and every improved form of modern communication, together with State charity in India and the munificent benevolence of the British nation at home,—these are the weapons with which the Indian Government now does battle against famine.

That battle is not yet won. Many Indian administrators of great experience, both English and native, still believe that, when a real famine has once developed itself, it is impossible to prevent a terrible loss of life. This is a subject which will require very faithful dealing. The temptation in modern times is not to grudge State aid during famine, but to lavish the public funds with an open hand, so that each official may be able to say that *nothing which money could accomplish for the starving* population was left undone. The problem of Indian famine is still unsolved; but it has been accepted by all earnest administrators as one for which we must find a solution. The famine of 1877 and 1878 is supposed to have raised the mortality from 35 to 63 per thousand, causing from disease and starvation throughout all India an excess of 5¼ million deaths. But the cultivated area in the stricken tracts was greater, by 120,000 acres, after the famine than before it. Heartrending as was the calamity, it produced no results analogous to those of famines in the last century and early years of the present one, when 'half the *ryots* were credibly reported to have perished,' when the landed classes were completely disorganized, and a third of the land relapsed into jungle.

The effect of famine in modern times upon the growth

of the population is almost imperceptible. Taking the whole scarcities of the past thirty years, the Commissioners estimate the annual deaths from the diseases and all other causes connected with famine at 'less than 2 per 1000' of the inhabitants. Permanent depopulation from any cause is now unknown. No frontier belt is left waste through fear of invasions from the north, no provinces are swept clean by Marhatta cavalry from the south, no villages are laid waste by internal banditti, and no districts are now stripped of inhabitants by famine. In the last century all these causes of depopulation were at work. The quick-growing jungle spread over the deserted land, and the fierce beasts of the tropics were the undisputed lords of fertile tracts. In the old revenue accounts of the native Government during the last century, there was a column in each district for *palátika* or deserted lands, literally 'the lands from which the people had fled.' Even ten years after the famine of 1770, a once populous district was a silent jungle; and in 1780 a small body of Sepoys could with difficulty force its way through its forests. 'For 120 miles,' says an eye-witness, 'they marched through but an extensive wood, all the way a perfect wilderness; sometimes a small village presented itself in the midst of these jungles, with a little cultivated ground around it, hardly sufficient to encamp the two battalions. These woods abound with tigers and bears, which infested the camp every night, but did no other damage than carrying off a child and killing some of the gentlemen's baggage-bullocks.'

As the rural communities relinquished their hamlets

and drew closer together towards the centre of a district, the wild beasts pressed hungrily on their rear. In vain the East India Company offered a reward for each tiger's head sufficient to maintain a peasant's family in comfort for three months—an item of outlay which our officers deemed so important, that when, in the financial crisis of 1790–91, the Treasury had to suspend all payments, it made the tiger-money and diet allowance for prisoners the sole exceptions to the rule. In vain it spent the whole land-revenue of a frontier district in rewards for killing wild beasts. A belt of jungle filled with ferocious animals lay for years around the cultivated land. The official records frequently speak of the mail-bag being carried off by tigers, and the custom of the mail-runners carrying a bell to scare away the wild beasts survived to our own day. Lord Cornwallis, in 1789, had to sanction a grant of public money to free the military road through Bengal from the depredations of these animals.

The ravages of the wild elephants were on a larger scale, and their extermination formed one of the most important duties of the British officers after the country passed under our rule. Tigers, leopards, and wolves slew their thousands of men and their hundreds of thousands of cattle. But the herd of wild elephants was absolutely resistless, lifting off roofs, pushing down walls, trampling a village under foot as if it were a city of sand which a child had built upon the shore. In two parishes alone, during the last few years of the native administration, fifty-six hamlets with their surrounding lands 'had all been destroyed and gone to jungle, caused by the

depredations of wild elephants.' Another official return states that forty market villages throughout Bírbhúm district had been deserted from the same cause. Large reductions had to be made in the land-tax, and the East India Company borrowed tame elephants from the native Viceroy's stud in order to catch the wild ones. 'I had ocular proof on my journey,' writes an English officer in 1791, 'of their ravages. The poor timid native ties his cot in a tree, to which he retires when the elephants approach, and silently views the destruction of his cottage and the whole profits of his labour.' 'One night,' writes an English surveyor in 1810, 'although I had a guard, the men of the village close to my tent retired to the trees, and the women hid themselves among the cattle, leaving their huts a prey to the elephants, who know very well where to look for grain. Two nights before, some of them had unroofed a hut in the village, and had eaten up all the grain which a poor family possessed.' 'Most fortunately for the population of the country,' wrote the greatest elephant-hunter of the last century, 'they delight in the sequestered range of the mountains; if they preferred the plains, whole kingdoms would be laid waste.

All this is now changed. One of the complaints of the modern Englishman in India is that he can so seldom get a shot at a tiger. Wolves are dying out in many provinces; the ancient Indian lion has disappeared. The wild elephant is so rare that he is specially protected by the Government, and in most parts of India he can only be caught by official licence

and under official supervision. Many districts have petitioned for a close season, so as to preserve the edible game still remaining. The only animal that has defied the energy of the British official is the snake. One may, however, judge of the loss of life by wild beasts in the last century from the deaths caused by this, their chief survivor at the present day. The ascertained number of persons who died from snake-bite in 1875 was 17,000, out of a total of 21,391 killed by snakes and all other wild animals. The deaths from wild beasts in the last century were probably not under 150,000 a year.

I shall now briefly summarize some of the outward and obvious results of a century of British rule. As regards the northern or Himalayan frontier of India, the wild hill tribes are no longer invaders, but are employed as loyal soldiers or border police. As regards the southern frontier of India, the sea, the pirate races have been converted into cheap and excellent seamen. Indian waters are now as safe as the English Channel, and the Indian navy, having finished its work, is disbanded. As regards internal disturbances, banditti are unknown, breaches of the law are rarer in India than in England, and the special department which was created to deal with the old special crimes of India now finds no more work to do within the British provinces. Famine, which in the last century was considered as the act of God, beyond any help of man, has been accepted as the great administrative problem of our day; and a vast organization

of public works, State relief, and private charity, is interposed between the Indian races and the merciless calamities of nature. As regards the reclamation of waste land, formerly the local hero was the man who cut down the jungle; now a special branch of legislation is required to enable the Government to conserve what jungle remains, and to plant fresh forests. These are a few of the outward and visible results of a century of British rule in India.

II. DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY AND ITS PEOPLE.

THERE are other and less obvious results of British rule; and perhaps foremost among them is the development of new industries and the growth of great centres of trade. Commercial cities, in our sense of the word, did not exist in ancient India. The capital was the standing camp of the monarch; its trade depended upon the presence of the court. Magnificent emperors required magnificent cities around them, and an inconsiderate or a tyrannical prince ordered the movements of the citizens as he ordered the movements of his troops. One cruel emperor of the house of Tughlak forced the whole inhabitants of Delhi, in the north of India, to migrate to his new capital, Daulatábád, 700 miles away in the distant south. Thousands perished on the road. The king twice changed his mind. Twice he allowed the miserable people to return to Delhi; twice he compelled them on pain of death to leave it One of these forced migrations took place during a famine; a great part of the citizens died of hunger, the rest were utterly ruined. But, says the historian, 'the emperor's orders were strictly complied with, and the ancient capital was left desolate.'

A large external trade was indeed an impossibility at

the native metropolis, Delhi, which lay more than a thousand miles from the river's mouth. But even the capitals of the sea-board provinces were chosen for military purposes, and with small regard to the commercial capabilities of their situation. Thus, in Lower Bengal, the Muhammadans under different dynasties fixed in succession on six towns as their capital. Each of these successive capitals was on a river bank; but not one of them possessed any foreign trade, nor indeed could have been approached by an old East Indiaman. They were simply the court and camp of the king or the viceroy for the time being. Colonies of skilful artisans settled round the palaces of the nobles to supply the luxurious fabrics of oriental life. After the prince and court had in some new caprice abandoned the city, the artisans remained, and a little settlement of weavers was often the sole surviving proof that the decaying town had once been a capital city Thus the exquisite muslins of Dacca and the soft silks of Murshidábád still bear witness to the days when these two places were successively the capital of Bengal. The artisans worked in their own houses. The manufactures of India were essentially domestic industries, conducted by special castes, each member of which wove at his own hereditary loom, and in his own village or homestead.

One of the earliest results of British rule in India was the growth of great mercantile towns. Our rule derived its origin from our commerce, and from the first the East India Company's efforts were directed to creating centres for maritime trade. Other European nations,

the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danes, and the French, have rivalled us as merchants and conquerors in India, and each of them in turn attempted to found great seaports. The long Indian coast, both on the east and the west, is dotted with decaying villages which were once the busy scenes of those nations' early European trade. Of all their famous capitals in India, not one has now the commercial importance of Cardiff or Greenock, and not one of them has a harbour which would admit at low tide a ship drawing 20 feet.

The truth is that it is far easier to pitch a camp and erect a palace, which, under the native dynasties, was synonymous with founding a capital, than it is to create a centre of trade. Such centres must grow of themselves, and cannot be called suddenly into existence by the fiat of the wisest autocrat. It is in this difficult enterprise, in which the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danes, and the French had successively failed, that the British in India have succeeded. We make our appearance in the long list of races who have ruled that splendid empire, not as temple-builders like the Hindus, nor as palace and tomb-builders like the Musalmáns, nor as fort-builders like the Marhattas, nor as church-builders like the Portuguese, but in the more commonplace capacity of town-builders, as a nation that had the talent for selecting sites on which great commercial cities would grow up, and who have in this way created a new industrial life for the Indian people.

Calcutta and Bombay, the two commercial capitals of India, are essentially the creations of British rule.

Shortly after Bombay was ceded by the Portuguese to the British Crown in 1661, as part of the dower of the wife of Charles II., the king was glad to hand over his unprofitable acquisition, which was then considered the grave of Europeans, to a company of London merchants for an annual payment of £10 in gold. Bombay city has now close on three-quarters of a million of inhabitants, living entirely by commerce. It ranks next to London (if we except Calcutta and its municipal suburbs) in the cities of the British Empire. Its population is nearly one and a half times that of Glasgow or Liverpool, and nearly double that of Manchester or Birmingham.

The history of Calcutta, the metropolis of India, is still more striking. Together with its municipal suburbs, it has a population exceeding three-quarters of a million, or nearly double that of any city in Great Britain except London. Less than two centuries ago, when our countrymen first settled at Calcutta, they were a poor band of fugitive merchants seeking shelter from the extortions of the native ruler of Bengal; and the future City of Palaces consisted of three clusters of mud huts on the river bank. It was not their first attempt to found a city where they could trade in peace. The sea-board of Bengal was the scene of many an earlier and unsuccessful effort. Sometimes the English were driven away by the exactions of the native general in charge of the surrounding district; sometimes the river on which their little town was rising shifted its course, and left their wharves high and dry; sometimes the estuary

which they had fixed upon as a harbour silted up, and long banks of sand rose between their port and the sea. Calcutta on the eastern coast of India, and Bombay on the west, are the results of a long and patient series of unsuccessful efforts—they represent the survival of the fittest; and many an English heart was broken, and many a hard-earned fortune lost, in attempting to found ports at the mouths of silting rivers, and amid the dismal Bengal swamps, before Calcutta rose to its proud position, next to London, as the metropolis of India and the second city of the British Empire.

In one of these deserted seats of the early British trade, I have seen the husbandman driving his plough over what were once the wet docks, and turning up spars and rotten fragments of sloops from the furrows. Others of them have entirely disappeared from the map. For example, the harbour on the Orissa sea-board, which was officially reported, as late as 1809, to be the safest and most frequented port on that coast, has now ceased to exist. The mouth of the river has so completely silted up, and is so perfectly concealed by a dense fringe of jungle, that it is almost impossible for a strange vessel to discover it. A similar ruin has, in a milder degree, fallen on every ancient seaport of India. All round the Indian coast, from the Gulf of Cambay to the mouths of the Irawadi, the silt-bearing rivers and the sand-charged tides have built up barriers of mud between the old historic harbours and modern commerce.

This fate would long ago have overtaken Calcutta but for the strenuous efforts of our countrymen. The Húglí

river, upon which Calcutta lies, forms one of the chief mouths of the Ganges. Six great historical ports have been built upon its banks. The oldest of them, Sátgáon, the ancient royal port of Bengal under the native dynasties, has been completely deserted by the navigable channel, and is now a thatched village crumbling upon the banks of a muddy ditch. The Dutch, the French, and the Danes each set up capitals and ports of their own on the Húglí river, off which vessels of the largest tonnage in the last century used to lie. Every one of these once famous emporiums is now blocked up by banks of sand and silt, and is unapproachable by sea-going ships at the present day.

Calcutta has been saved from the same isolation by a system of river-engineering which forms one of the memorable triumphs in the contest of man with nature. The river Húglí has ceased to be the direct channel of the Ganges; but Calcutta alone, of all the successive river capitals of Bengal, has overcome the difficulties incident to its position as a deltaic centre of commerce. Strenuous efforts of engineering are required to keep open the three offshoots of the Ganges above Calcutta which combine to form the Húglí. Still greater watchfulness and more extensive operations are demanded by the eighty miles of the Húglí itself below Calcutta, to save it from the fate of other deltaic streams, and to prevent it from silting up. In 1853, the deterioration of the Húglí channel led to a proposal to found an auxiliary port to Calcutta on the Matlá, another mouth of the Ganges farther east. A committee then appointed

to inquire into the subject reported that 'the river Húglí was deteriorating gradually and progressively.' At that time 'science had done nothing to aid in facilities for navigation;' but since then, everything has been effected which the foresight of modern engineering could suggest or the power of modern capital could achieve. Observations on the condition of the Húglí channels are taken hourly, gigantic steam-dredgers are continually at work, and the shifting of the shoals is carefully recorded. By these means the port of Calcutta has been kept open for ships of the largest tonnage, drawing 26 feet, and almost seems to have outlived the danger which threatened its existence.

I have dwelt on the rise of our commercial capitals in India, because the development of city life in India means the growth of a new industrial career for the people. Formerly, as we have seen, the industries of India were essentially domestic manufactures, each man working at his hereditary occupation, at his own loom or at his own forge. Under British rule a new era of production has arisen in India—an era of production on a great scale based upon the co-operation of capital and labour, in place of the small household manufactures of ancient times. To us, who have from our youth grown up in the midst of a keen commercial civilisation, it is not easy to realize the change thus implied. I shall briefly indicate some of the most salient features of the revolution which it has wrought in the industrial life of the Indian people.

The great industrial cities of British India are the

type of the new state of things implied by this change. Under native rule, the country had reached what political economists of Mill's school called 'the stationary stage' of civilisation. The husbandmen simply raised the food-grains necessary to feed them from one harvest to another. If the food crops failed in any district, the local population had no capital and no other crops wherewith to buy food from other districts; so, in the natural and inevitable course of things, they perished. Now the peasants of India raise other and far more profitable crops than the mere food-stuffs on which they live. They also raise an annual surplus of grain for exportation, which is available for India's own wants in time of need; and there is a much larger aggregate of capital in the country, that is to say, a much greater national reserve or staying power. The so-called 'stationary stage' in India has disappeared, and the Indian peasant is keenly alive to each new demand which the market of the world may make upon the industrial capabilities of his country.

Thus, up to 1850, cotton was produced on a small scale in India, and the total value exported averaged during the previous five years only 1¾ millions sterling. Ten years later, the American war gave rise to a sudden demand; and the Indian cotton exports rushed up, till, in 1865, they exceeded the enormous value of 37¾ millions sterling. This vast amount of money went into the pockets of the cultivators, who, the moment that they had found a more profitable crop than their old food-stuffs, quickly began to cultivate it on a large

scale. What the American war was to the Bombay peasant, the Russian war had been to the Bengal husbandman. The blockade of the Baltic ports put an end to Great Britain's supply of fibres from Russia during the Crimean campaign. Forthwith the Bengal peasant enormously increased his production of jute. In 1852–53, before the Crimean war, the whole export of jute from Bengal was about £100,000. In 1872–73, it exceeded 4¼ millions sterling, an increase of fortyfold.

The Indian peasant knows, however, not only how to take prompt advantage of a rise in prices, he knows also how to quickly recoup himself for the loss of a market. The re-extended cultivation in America led to a drop, eventually reaching to 30 millions sterling, in the Indian cotton exports. But the Indian peasant has more than made good the loss by the growth of other staples. The year 1865 was one of inflated markets throughout the world, and the Indian exports reached the unprecedented height of 69 millions. Last year, 1879–80, was a year of great depression in many markets, but the Indian exports again exceeded 69 millions sterling.

During the same period, vast numbers of people from the overcrowded interior of Bengal had been drafted off to the border districts, which, till the British obtained the country, were left waste through fear of the wild frontier races. These peasants, instead of starving in their old densely-populated homes, are now earning high wages on the tea plantations, and last year exported three millions sterling worth of tea.

All these are essentially rural industries, which owe

their existence to the new commercial life developed by the cities of British India. Besides such rural industries, however, there are a number of manufactures and productions which more especially appertain to the industrial life of great towns. Coal-mines have been discovered in several provinces, and now employ tens of thousands of miners. Mills and steam factories have followed the opening up of the coal-fields. Twenty-six years ago there was not a single loom worked by steam-power in India; there are now 1¼ million spindles employed in the cotton manufacture alone, and 40,000 spindles employed in the manufacture of jute.

Early in the last century, before the English became the ruling power in India, the country did not produce a million sterling a year of staples for exportation. During the first three-quarters of a century of our rule, the exports slowly rose to about eleven millions in 1830. During the half-century which has elapsed since that date, they have quickly multiplied by sixfold. In 1880, India sold to foreign nations 66 millions sterling worth of strictly Indian produce, which the Indian husbandman had reared, and for which he was paid. In that year, the total trade of India, including exports and imports, exceeded 122 millions sterling.

These figures are so great, and the material progress which they indicate is so enormous, that they elude the grasp of the imagination. It may assist us in realizing the change which they imply in the industrial life of the people to glance at the history of two single ports. I shall first take the local harbour of a rural

district, Akyab, in British Burma. In 1826, when we obtained the province in which it is situated, Akyab was merely a fishing village. Within four years, by 1830, it had developed into a little town, with a trade valued at £7000. In 1879, the trade exceeded 2 millions sterling, so that the trade of Akyab has multiplied close on three hundredfold in fifty years. The other example is one on a larger scale. When we obtained Calcutta in 1686, it consisted of three mud hamlets, scarcely raised above the river slime, without any trade whatsoever. After a century and a half of British rule, the total value of the sea-borne trade of Calcutta in 1820 was 12 millions sterling. In 1879, it had risen to over 61¼ millions sterling, besides 45 millions of trade with the interior, making a total commerce of 106 millions sterling a year at a town which had not ten pounds' worth of external trade when the British settled there.

India has more to sell to the world than she requires to buy from it. During the five years ending 1879, the staples which she exported exceeded by an annual average of 21 millions sterling the merchandise which she imported. One-third of this balance she receives in cash; and during the five years she accumulated silver and gold, exclusive of re-exports, at the rate of 7 millions per annum. With another third, she pays interest at low rates for the capital with which she has constructed the material framework of her industrial life,—her railways (120 millions), irrigation works, cotton mills, coal-mines, indigo factories, tea-gardens, docks, steam-navigation lines, and debt. For that capital, she

goes into the cheapest market in the world, London, and she remits the interest, not in cash, but in her own staples, which that capital has enabled her to produce and to bring to the sea-board. With the remaining third of her surplus exports, she pays the home charges of the Government to which she owes the peace and security that alone have rendered possible her industrial development. The home charges include not only the salaries of the supervising staff in England, and the pensions of the whole military and civil services, who have given their life's work to India, but the munitions of war, a section of the army, including the cost of its recruitment and transport, all stores for public works, and the whole *materiel* of a civilised administration. That *materiel* can be bought more cheaply in England than in India, and India's expenditure on good government is as essential an item for her industrial development, and repays her as high a profit, as the interest which she pays in England for the capital with which she has constructed her dockyards and railways. To sum up, India sells 21 millions a year more of her staples to foreign nations than the merchandise which she buys from them. She takes payment of one-third of the balance, or say 7 millions, in good government, and so secures that protection to person and property which she never had before, and which alone have rendered her industrial development possible. With another third, or 7 millions, she pays for the capital with which she has constructed the material framework of that development—pays for it at the lowest interest, and

pays for it, not in cash, but in her own products. The remaining 7 millions she receives in gold and silver, and puts them in her purse.

I feel that I have taxed, perhaps too heavily, the reader's attention with so many figures. But it is impossible for any one to realize the progress made by India under British rule without having the statistics placed before him. Commerce and manufactures have been created for the people, vast outlets opened up for the productions of the country. The reader will perhaps pardon me for having wearied him with statistics when he remembers that those statistics mean a new industrial life for India—an industrial life which supersedes the sword of the invader and wholesale starvation by famine, in maintaining the balance between a population of small cultivators and the available land.

The effects of this new industrial life are not, however, confined to the great Indian cities. The new outlets for Indian staples have led to a rise in the price of the husbandman's crops, and in the value of the land on which they are grown. In many districts, during the last century, the entire price of a field was the value of the crop upon it. In fertile deltas the price of land did not exceed two years' purchase. In the same districts it is now from twelve to twenty years' purchase. It has been my duty to make inquiries in every province of India as to the interest which money yields. I find that for small loans to the cultivators, the old native rate of 37½ per cent. per annum still prevails. But if any one has a landed property to pledge, he can

borrow at less than one-third of that rate of interest; and a native merchant of Calcutta who wishes to retire and purchase an estate, thinks himself fortunate if he can invest in land yielding 7 per cent. clear per annum. Landed property, which in the last century was one of the most precarious possessions, has now become the most secure form of investment in India, precisely as it is in England. The growth of rural rights, and the increase in the value of land, have advanced side by side with the creation of a new industrial life, and with the opening up of fresh outlets for the productions of the country.

These are a few of the results of English rule on the material development of India. It is not necessary for me here to dwell on the more obvious and often-recited aspects of that progress, on the network of roads and railways which we have spread over India, on the canals by which we have multiplied and secured her internal resources, or on the spacious harbours by which we have brought those resources into the market of the world. All these and many other agencies of material progress are involved in the one great fact, the creation of that new industrial life which has taken place under British rule. But, before closing this chapter, I should like to direct attention to a few of the moral aspects of that rule.

In the last century, education in India was a monopoly in the hands of the priests,—a power which they employed to subjugate the minds of the people. Under British rule, education in India has been taken entirely out of the hands of the priests, and it has become the

great emancipator of the Indian races. In ancient India a Brahman was forbidden, on pain of death, to teach the sacred books to the masses. Under British rule, the State schools offer instruction to every one, and open the same careers to all. In the last century the Hindus were taught, from their earliest childhood, that they must remain imprisoned for life in the caste in which they were born. We have now two millions of boys and girls receiving public instruction in India. These two millions of native children are learning that every occupation and every profession in British India is open to every boy on the benches of an Indian school. The rising generation in India have been freed from superstitious terrors, they have been led to give up cruel practices, they have learned to detest and despise their forefathers' bloody rites. Widow-burning, infanticide, hook-swinging, self-mutilation, and human sacrifice,—these are a few familiar relics of the old bondage under which the Indian intellect cowered and the Indian heart bled. Great as has been the material progress of India during the past century, its emancipation from ignorance and priestcraft forms, to my mind, a far more splendid memorial of British rule. Truly the people that walked in darkness have seen a great light.

The result has been a revival of letters such as the world has never seen. On the 31st March 1818, the Serampur missionaries issued the first newspaper ever printed in a native language of India. The vernacular journals now exceed 230 in number, and are devoured every week by half a million readers. In 1878, 5000

books were published in India, besides a vast importation of literature from England. Of this mass of printed matter, only 500 were translations, the remaining 4500 being original works. The Indian intellect is marching forth in many directions, rejoicing in its new strength. More copies of books of poetry, philosophy, law, and religion issue every year from the press of British India than the whole manuscripts compiled during any century of native rule. In music, the revival has been effected on the old Sanskrit basis. One of my native friends has published a series of volumes on Indian music in English and Sanskrit; organized an orchestra of about 50 performers to illustrate the art; and presented complete collections of Hindu instruments to the Conservatoire at Paris, and other institutions in Europe. Among the earliest subjects which the new movement took as its theme, was the celebration of the Queen of England and her ancestors, in a Sanskrit volume entitled the *Victoria Gitika.*

The drama has in all ages been a great educator of the Indian races; and it was the first branch of Hindu literature to heartily accept the spoken dialects. The native theatre forms the best, indeed the only school in which an Englishman can acquaint himself with the indoor life of the people. He suddenly finds himself in an era of intense dramatic productiveness. Last year, 175 plays were published in India, and patriotic young natives form themselves into companies to produce their national dramas. Many of the pieces are vernacular renderings of stories from the Sanskrit epics. Others

have a political significance, and deal with the phases of development upon which India has entered under the influence of British rule. One Bengali play, the *Nil-darpan*, or the Indigo Factory, became the subject of a celebrated trial in Calcutta; while others, such as *Ekei ki bale Sabhyata*, 'Is this what you call civilisation?' suggest serious thoughts to a candid English mind.

I have often been asked how it is that amidst this dayspring of the Indian intellect, Christianity makes so little way. The Hindus are one of the religious races of the earth. A series of great reformations during the past ten centuries have given to their national faith a vitality which has defied alike the persecutions and the persuasions of their conquerors. Last year, there were published in India 2 books of travels, 7 on politics, and 1502 on religion, or nearly a third of the whole works which issued from the press. Every great Indian reformer, from Buddha downwards, has, in spite of himself, had miraculous powers ascribed to him by the loving piety of his followers. At this moment, there is an able and earnest man walking about Calcutta, who, if his disciples can only refrain from writing his life for fifty years, will attain the dignity of a Divine Founder. Great tidal waves of religion are sweeping over the Indian mind. The theistic element in Hinduism has powerfully re-asserted itself as the Brahmo Samáj, or Deist Church of Bengal. The old Hindu dissenters, such as the Vaishnavs, have greatly increased their following, and new popular sects are springing up. Even orthodox Hinduism has financially prospered,