

the large present excess of the annual rental over the Government demand, enables the present holders to meet that demand even in the most disastrous years." Sir Richard Temple, as may be seen from the Blue Book on the *Moral and Material Condition of India* for the following year, said:—"The deficiency of the collections consequent on the famine, was very small, and such suspensions of revenue as were granted were given as a reward for exceptional exertions in relieving distress. The result is creditable to the working of the permanent settlement." Sir Ashley Eden, the present Lieutenant-Governor, in a speech in December 1877, shortly after receiving his appointment, said, in reference to the Eastern districts which he had just visited:—"Great as was the progress which I knew had been made in the position of the cultivating classes, I was quite unprepared to find them occupying a position so different from that which I remembered them to occupy when I first came to the country. They were then poor and oppressed with little incentive to increase the productive powers of the soil. I find them now as prosperous, as independent, and as comfortable as the peasantry, I believe, of any country in the world; well fed, well clothed, free to enjoy the full benefit of their labours and to hold their own and obtain prompt redress for any wrong."

In the Western districts of the Presidency the condition of the cultivators is less prosperous; but the foregoing remarks regarding the great

extent of cultivation and the punctual payment of the land revenue apply to these districts as well as to Eastern Bengal.

*Periodical Settlements for Long Terms.*

In Bombay and the North-Western Provinces agriculture had suffered from the wars which preceded the introduction of British rule; and the return to prosperity was very slow under the system of temporary land settlements, which was adopted in those provinces. Over-assessment of the land-tax was the main cause which checked progress and kept the agricultural classes in poverty and destitution. This statement is fully borne out by the settlement reports of 1840-50, from which it may suffice here to give the following extracts taken from the Blue Book on the *Deccan Riots Commission*, 1878, page 10, paragraph 33 :—

“The over-estimate of the capabilities of the Deccan, acted upon by our early Collectors, drained the country of its agricultural capital, and accounts for the poverty and distress in which the cultivating population has ever since been plunged.”—“This district is suffering from the evils that a high nominal assessment, with constant remissions and balances, is certain to produce.”—“Under our management the district appears to have recovered little, if at all; and even now little more than a third of the arable land is cultivated. . . . All this betokens a state of abject poverty.”—“In the Ahmednagar district the rates adopted in 1818-19

proved much too high, and it was necessary to resort to remedial expedients to save the ryots from ruin. . . . The more unfavourable character of the results must mainly be attributed to a greater degree of over-taxation."

Many years elapsed before the baneful effects of assessing the land-tax too high were officially recognised and denounced. As late as the year 1841 it was found necessary to warn over-zealous settlement officers against that fatal error, and the late Sir George Wingate, a highly-distinguished Revenue Officer in the Bombay Presidency, recorded in that year the following sentence in one of his settlement reports:—"No unnecessary reduction can injure the country, and the Government revenue can only suffer to the extent of such reduction. An error upon one side involves the ruin of the country; an error on the other, some inconsiderable sacrifice of the finance of the State; and with such unequal stakes depending, can we hesitate as to which should be given the preponderance?"

A similar state of things obtained likewise in the North-Western Provinces, which came under British rule in 1802, and were subjected to frequent revisions of the land-tax until 1834, when wiser counsels prevailed and assessments were fixed for thirty years. These long settlements afforded the encouragement of which agriculture stood in need, and when the Crimean war and the hostilities in the United States of America led to an active

demand for Indian agricultural produce, causing a considerable rise in its market value, and the opening of railways further aided in the development of trade, the Indian cultivator was enabled, not only to satisfy the land revenue demand in full, but also to improve his farm and his dwelling; to increase his stock of cattle, excavate irrigation wells, and even lay by savings for future contingencies. This statement likewise finds confirmation in passages of the Blue Book already mentioned:—

“The re-action in agricultural prosperity under light assessment and a system at once simple and rigid, was as rapid as the decline of the district had been under the opposite conditions. During the period which followed, the district reached a very high standard of prosperity before the year 1860. In 1862 began the period of extraordinary prosperity caused by the rise in the price of cotton, which followed the American blockade. In those years the ryots would, under ordinary circumstances, have suffered severely from the constant deficiency in rainfall during five successive seasons. In 1862 the Poona and Ahmednagar districts had enjoyed fixed assessments, the former for twenty years and the latter for ten years.” Pp. 11 and 18, paragraphs 34, 35, and 51.

In the midst of this sudden prosperity, the land settlements, commenced in 1834, began to fall in, and the Government, regardless of the transient nature of the circumstances whence the prosperity



had chiefly arisen, based the new settlements on the exceptionally high prices of produce which had ruled for a short period only. The land-tax was suddenly increased by about 60 per cent. on an average, the enhancement in some cases exceeding 100 per cent. of the rates previously in force. Meanwhile the restoration of peace in Europe and America caused the produce markets to subside into their normal condition; but the new settlements, in spite of protests from the people and warnings from revenue officers, were maintained with slight modifications only, and soon resulted in agrarian disturbances and in a steady decline in agriculture; while the sole object for which the tax had been enhanced, viz.: the raising of additional revenue, remained unaccomplished.

For a time the cultivators met the increased demand from their savings, and, when these were exhausted, with the assistance of the money lender: but the new tax was so much out of proportion to the productive value of the land, that a great number of cultivators became hopelessly indebted and the money lenders were not disposed to risk further advances. The revenue, in consequence, fell into arrears, and thousands of farms in the Bombay Presidency were annually put up for sale, for the recovery of the land-tax, many of which found no purchasers; while in the North-Western Provinces and in Oudh, a large number of landed proprietors became deeply involved in debt. The same Blue Book might again be quoted in con-

firmation of the foregoing statement: it says at page 27, paragraphs 72 and 73: "During the same period (1870-74) there has been a very marked increase in the difficulty of collecting the land revenue: at the same time the area of cultivation contracted all over the Presidency wherever the poorest soils had been brought under the plough during the period of artificial prosperity from 1862 to 1866. In the Appendix will be found the opinions of revenue officers connecting this decrease in cultivation with the pressure of debt."

Much land had thus been thrown out of cultivation, and the people had been stripped of the greatest part of their savings, when the drought of 1876-77 overtook the country: this will account for the appalling severity of the famine which followed, and the helpless condition of the people under that calamity. The millions which were then expended in attempts to save life have imposed a burden that far exceeds any additional revenue which the recklessly enhanced assessments could reasonably have been expected to yield. This consideration alone should suffice to show the great advantage of permanent fixity in the land-tax over the system of periodical and arbitrary revisions: but irrespective of the large expenditure necessitated by the famine, the periodical system failed in its direct and sole object, which was the increase of revenue, as may be seen from the following figures taken from the thirteenth number of the Statistical Abstract.

*Land Revenue collected in ten years.*

	1869	1870	1871	1872	1873	1874	1875	1876	1877	1878	Average of the ten years.
	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.	£.
North- Western Provinces )	3,991,958	4,089,889	4,135,518	4,129,444	4,159,228	4,209,704	4,259,179	4,245,745	4,298,908	4,063,647	4,158,322
Madras ..	4,068,789	4,482,706	4,397,803	4,440,313	4,693,469	4,451,489	4,655,487	4,545,013	3,296,575	3,494,884	4,250,653
Bombay ..	3,549,757	3,568,102	3,595,895	3,402,790	3,751,050	3,683,461	3,688,076	3,690,354	3,344,664	3,662,346	3,593,649
Total ..	11,610,504	12,140,697	12,129,216	11,972,547	12,603,747	12,344,654	12,582,742	12,481,112	10,940,147	11,220,877	12,002,724

Thus, notwithstanding the large increase made in the assessments previously to 1869, the collections of the above ten years exceeded on an average those of 1869 by only £392,220, a sum insufficient to cover the additional collecting charges which are incurred in the provinces subject to periodical settlements, as compared with Bengal, where the permanent settlement facilitates the recovery of the land revenue. These additional charges in 1878 may be estimated at £625,355, thus:—in Bengal £302,946 was spent in collecting £3,696,210 of land revenue. On the same scale the collection of £11,220,877 would have cost £919,676, while the actual cost shown in the *Finance and Revenue Accounts* of the year (pp. 16 to 18) was—

	£.
In the North-Western Provinces . . . . .	402,269
Madras . . . . .	465,354
Bombay . . . . .	677,408
Total . . . . .	<u>£1,545,031</u>

Whence it appears that the land-tax in these provinces, had it been permanently fixed in 1869, would have yielded annually £233,135, or in the above ten years £2,331,350 of net revenue, in excess of the sums actually realized: while, judging from the effects of permanent settlements in other parts of India, much of the heavy expenditure incurred for famine relief would have been spared, and other sources of revenue would have become more productive from the prosperity which the

permanent limitation of the Government demand upon land would have been instrumental in creating.

*Annual Settlements.*

In small portions of the Madras Presidency the land-tax is permanently fixed, producing annually half a million sterling, and further small portions consist of estates granted for services, or belonging to religious institutions, which are held at quit rents: the remainder, or about four-fifths of the cultivable area, is subject to the Ryotwaree system under which the ryots or cultivators are looked upon as the tenants of the State, and the Government demand upon them is annually liable to revision and enhancement. Under this system the land-tax is designedly fixed at so high a figure that it could be completely realized only in years of exceptional prosperity; while ordinary seasons invariably have resulted in heavy uncollected balances, which are held over for recovery in prosperous years, and portions of which have, from time to time, as ryots are found to have been hopelessly ruined, written off the registers as irrecoverable.

The inevitable consequence of such a system is that the cultivators are kept in a chronic state of indebtedness, and have little or no inducement to improve their farms, a state of things which will at once account for the destitute condition of the Madras peasantry, and the low standard of

agriculture in that Presidency. It can, therefore, be no matter for wonder that the effect of the prolonged drought of 1876-77 upon a population thus impoverished and on land so poorly cultivated, should have been the death of millions of the inhabitants and the loss of one-fourth of the land revenue. The collections in 1876-77 amounted to £3,296,575, or £1,248,438 less than in the previous year, the deficiency being entirely in respect of the annually settled fields, the owners of the permanently settled estates having, in spite of the famine, been able to satisfy the revenue demand in full. In 1877-78, about 3,000,000 acres of the land subjected to the Ryotwaree system were thrown out of cultivation; and in 1878-79 (the latest year for which the Administration report has been published) the Ryotwaree cultivation was still short of the average before the famine by about two millions of acres. The collectors of the revenue, moreover, had to resort in that year to coercive measures of severity (such as the imprisonment of defaulters in addition to the sale of their personal property and their farms, their families meanwhile being left destitute), in a considerably larger number of cases than in preceding years.

It might be unnecessary to prosecute further the examination of the results of the Ryotwaree or annual settlement system, as its short-comings have recently been brought to light in so appalling a form by the famine in Madras. Besides, all

authorities on the subject of the land revenue in India are now agreed in condemning annual revisions of the tax, and opinions are divided only as to settlements for thirty years and settlements in perpetuity.

We purpose therefore reverting to a consideration of the condition of things in Bengal under the permanent settlement, and in Bombay and the North-Western Provinces, under periodical settlements. The facts stated in preceding pages, and which rest, as may have been observed, upon authentic testimony, irresistibly point to the conclusion that a permanent settlement of the land-tax, while it is nowise detrimental to the interests of the Exchequer, is essential to the prosperity of a people subsisting by agriculture. The question which naturally arises then is,—Why have permanent settlements not long since been introduced in all the provinces in India?—The answer will suggest itself upon a review of the following circumstances.

*Why has the land-tax not been permanently fixed throughout India?*

The Government of India twenty years ago clearly perceived from the beneficial development of the settlement in Bengal, and the unsatisfactory condition of the other provinces, that a permanent limitation of the revenue demand upon land was essential to the prosperity of the country. The President of the Commission appointed to enquire

into the circumstances of the famine of 1860, after comparing them with those of the famine of 1837, when the drought had been less severe, observed in his report: "Foremost among the means whereby society in Northern India has been so strengthened as to resist, with less suffering, far heavier pressure from drought and famine in 1860 than in 1837, I place the creation, as it may almost literally be called, of a vast mass of readily convertible and easily transferable agricultural property. I have before described the condition of agricultural property antecedent to these settlements,\* and it will probably be admitted, without serious qualification, that a state of things more likely to weaken the society living under it could scarcely be conceived. To great and unequal pressure of public burdens . . . and arbitrary interferences, have succeeded assessments rarely heavy, titles recorded and easily understood, long leases, and the enjoyment of all the profits during the currency of such leases. The natural results of such a change in so vital a part of the social economy have grown more and more apparent. Land has obtained an increasing marketable value. Its value as a security has doubtless been largely made use of in mitigating the pressure of famine. Such then having been the general results of the protracted fixity of the public demand, the security of titles, the general moderation of assessments,

\* The thirty years settlements commenced in 1834 and completed in 1842.



the recognition and general record of rights . . . . the inference seems irresistible that, to intensify and perpetuate these results, we must proceed still further in the same healthy and fruitful direction. The good which has been done by partial action on sound principles is both a justification and an encouragement to further advances; and entertaining the most earnest conviction that State interests and popular interests will alike be strengthened in an increasing ratio by the step, the first and, as I believe, most important measure I have respectfully to submit, is the expediency of fixing for ever the public demand on land, and thus converting the existing settlement in a settlement for perpetuity."

The above Report was fully endorsed by the superior officers of the Government. Mr. Money, of the Revenue Board, North Western Provinces, said:—"The policy of removing the bar to improvement, which is now presented by the uncertainty of the Government demand, and the arguments which have been adduced in favour of a permanent settlement, appear to me unanswerable." Mr. Muir, now Sir William Muir, summed up the benefits to be derived from a permanent settlement in the following terms:—

1. Saving of the expenditure now incurred by the necessity of periodical assessments.
2. Deliverance of the people from the vexations prevalent at every settlement.
3. Freedom from the tendency to depreciation

of property towards the close of each temporary settlement.

4. Prosperity arising from increased incentive to improvement and expenditure of capital.

5. Greatly increased value of landed property by content and satisfaction among the people.

And replying to the objection that a permanent settlement involved a sacrifice of some prospective land revenue, Sir William Muir said : "Allowing the widest scope and fullest consideration to all the objections that can be urged against departing from the system of temporary settlements, the advantage of a settlement in perpetuity appears to me vastly to outweigh them all, and I most decidedly advocate the measure."

Sir George Edmonstone, the Lieut.-Governor of the North-Western Provinces finally appended the following remarks to the Report : "I do not in the least doubt that permanency in the settlement of land revenue will be productive of all the advantages which Colonel Baird Smith and Mr. Muir in greater detail have depicted. Judging by the effect of settlements for long periods, it may safely be anticipated that the limitation of the Government demand in perpetuity will in much larger degree lead to the investment of capital in land. The wealth of the agricultural classes will be increased; the prosperity of the country and the strength of the community will be augmented; land will command a much higher price. The prospective loss which the Government will incur

by relinquishing its share of profits arising from extended cultivation and improved productiveness will be partly, if not wholly, compensated by the indirect return which would be derived from the increased wealth and prosperity of the country at large."

Lord Canning expressed the same conviction as to the great benefits which would ensue from the permanent limitation of the revenue demand upon land, and he proposed to effect such limitation—1st. Through "the sale of waste lands in perpetuity, discharged from all prospective demands on account of land revenue." 2nd. Through "the permission to redeem the existing land revenue by the immediate payment of one sum equal in value to the revenue redeemed." His opinion is recorded in the following terms in the Government Resolution of 1861 relating to the above-mentioned measures: "His Excellency in Council sees no reason to doubt that, so far as either measure might take effect, it would be in every way beneficial. As to the waste lands, there could be no question. . . . His Excellency in Council has still less doubts as to the beneficial results of permitting a redemption of the land revenue. He believes that increased security of fixed property and comparative freedom from interference of fiscal officers of the Government will tend to create a class which, although composed of various races and creeds, will be peculiarly bound to the British rule; while, under proper regula-

tions, the measure will conduce materially to the improvement of the general revenue of the Empire."

After long deliberation, the Secretary of State for India authorised permanent settlements to be granted to all estates in the North-Western Provinces where a "full, fair and equitable rent had been imposed under existing temporary settlements," and concluded his despatch in the following terms: "After the most careful review of all these considerations, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the advantages which may reasonably be expected to accrue, not only to those immediately connected with the land, but to the community generally, are sufficiently great to justify them in incurring the risk of some prospective loss of land revenue in order to attain them, and that a settlement in perpetuity in the districts in which the conditions required are or may hereafter be fulfilled, is a measure dictated by sound policy and calculated to accelerate the development of the resources of India, and to insure in the highest degree the welfare and contentment of all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in the country."

This was in 1862. Meanwhile, the remarkable prosperity which had sprung up among the cultivating classes in India, under the circumstances already mentioned, attracted the attention of revenue officers; some of whom, failing to perceive that the profits of agriculture could not per-

manently be maintained at the extraordinary height which had been reached through exceptional and temporary causes, argued that a great advantage would be gained for the Government if the existing settlements which were about to expire could be revised and enhanced in proportion with the increased ability to bear taxation, which they attributed to the cultivators. They went on to argue that a permanent settlement might afterwards be made at the enhanced rates, whereby a very large addition would be secured to the revenue of the State. The fallacy of these arguments has now been demonstrated by actual results, but was not equally evident at the time to those who were placed at a distance from India; while the prospect they held out of a large prospective addition to the revenue, caused the Secretary of State to hesitate in carrying out the decision arrived at in 1862. New conditions were proposed, and six years were occupied in references between England and India, which ultimately left the project of a permanent settlement in abeyance for an indefinite period.

The trivial nature of the objections raised will appear from the following passage of a Minute of the Honourable Edmund Drummond, Lieut.-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, written in reply to the Secretary of State's despatch of 1866. Referring to the possible sacrifice, alluded to in the despatch, of about £200,000 of prospective revenue contingent on

the successful development of our great irrigation works (a contingency which has not occurred), Mr. Drummond, after exposing the exaggerated character of the estimate, said : " Even if this calculation were adopted, I cannot think that for such a sum as this we should, at the last moment, hesitate to fulfil the expectations we have raised, and withdraw the promised boon of a permanent settlement ; nor does it appear to me befitting a great Government to seem to grudge a sacrifice which is as nothing when compared with that which must result from the future rise of prices and enhanced value of land generally, which has been freely accepted. . . . To sum up briefly the conclusions to which I have been led after full and anxious consideration of this difficult subject, I am of opinion that, as a measure of large and enlightened policy, the permanent settlement of these provinces should be carried generally unhampered by further conditions."

Thus it will be seen that the policy of extending permanent land settlements in India, which had been urged by the highest authorities competent to express an opinion on the subject, was eventually abandoned upon the recommendation of subordinate officials who were virtually irresponsible advisers, and upon the ground of financial advantages, which events have entirely falsified.

### *The Evil Results of Periodical Settlements.*

Before considering the objections which are still

entertained in some quarters to the policy of permanently fixing the land tax in India, it might be as well to show, in greater detail, what have been the results of the assessments which were imposed and maintained, in supersession of the Secretary of State's despatch of 1862.

It has already been seen that no financial advantage can be credited to the new settlements, and the following extracts will show the irritation and discontent they engendered, the suffering they inflicted on the agricultural classes, and the ruin they brought upon large tracts of the country.

The Administration Report, North-Western Provinces, for 1871-72, shows the increased severity which the Government had to exercise for the recovery of the land-tax, the number of *dastuks* (processes) issued during the preceding three years having been 81,891, 98,885, and 101,146 respectively. The landlords, in their turn, were compelled to sue their tenants, and an alarming amount of litigation ensued, regarding which the Lieut.-Governor appended the following significant remark to the report :—"The antagonism of classes whose interests lie so closely together, and who have hitherto been connected by so kindly a bond, is one of the greatest political dangers of the day." The following extracts will show, in a still more direct manner, the disastrous action of the enhanced assessments on the material condition of the country. The Commissioner of Allahabad says in his report on the Futtehpore district :—"The

imposition of the ten per cent. cess fell heaviest on the villages which were least able to bear it ; many villages broke down and many more were threatened with ruin ;" and the Collector of the district reported, at the same time, that "many of the landholders who had failed to pay the revenue were imprisoned ; that their personal property had been sold, and their estates been attached for arrears of revenue." The *Pioneer*, the organ of an official section, remarked about the same time, with reference to the Bundelkund district, "if speedy relief be not given, the entire social order will be in danger of dissolution ; the people are crushed by misfortunes ; the landlords are hopelessly involved in debt ; the population has diminished ; the land is going out of cultivation, and the cattle and farm stock are deteriorating." The Collector of Cawnpore, in a paper on the settlement of that district, said :—"The margin left for the cultivator's subsistence is less than the value of the labour he has expended on the land. . . . This district has the benefit of water communication by both the Ganges and the Jumna ; it is intersected by the East Indian Railway, and is partly traversed by the Ganges Canal, yet the land is only worth five years' purchase, and the state of the average cultivator is one of hopeless insolvency and misery."

Nor do the above-mentioned facts (and many others of a similar nature might be quoted from official documents) disclose the full extent of the



evil. The settlements, which are incessantly at work in one district or another, are a constant source of irritation and suspicion; while the employment of a host of underlings for collecting the data upon which the settlements are based, offers a wide field for bribery and corruption, extortion and oppression. The following short extract from Mr. Auckland Colvin's admirable book entitled *Memorandum on the Revision of the Settlements in the North-Western Provinces*, will suffice to show how urgent the necessity for relieving the distress and anxiety of the cultivating classes is considered by the revenue authorities themselves, that is, by those who have the best opportunities of forming a correct judgment on the subject. Writing in 1872 Mr. Colvin says :—"In 1874, twenty-six years will have elapsed from the date on which the first districts in the North-Western Provinces were placed in the hands of a settlement officer. Others were begun twelve years ago, and are not yet sanctioned. One of these is not yet even completed. These facts are significant to those who know what the settlement of a district means; the value of property depreciated until the exact amount of the new assessment is declared, credit affected, heart-burning and irritation between landlord and tenant, suspicion of the intentions of the Government, a host of official underlings scattered broadcast over the vexed villages. Nothing can equal the injury inflicted by a slow, uncertain settlement, dragging its length along, obstructed

by conflicting orders and harassed by successive administrations, and finally threatened with annihilation at the moment when it seems to have nearly finished its course. Little wonder that we hear of the land needing rest ! ”

*Objections entertained at the present day to the extension of permanent settlements in India.*

It may now be desirable to weigh the objections which are taken, at the present day, to the policy of extending permanent land revenue settlements in India. Those who are opposed to such a policy may be classed under three heads :—

- I. Indian officials who opposed the movement twenty years ago, and recorded their opinion on the subject in official documents.
- II. Authorities in England who are personally unacquainted with India, but who, believing that the difficulties of the land question at home might have been avoided, had the land been held as State property, desire to experiment upon India. Their objections practically, however, are based upon certain evils alleged to have resulted from the permanent settlement in Bengal.
- III. Disinterested persons whose judgment on the matter has been formed upon the opinions of individuals belonging to the first or second of the above-mentioned classes.

*Class I.*—The Indian officials under the first head are now few in number, and they base their opposition at the present day upon the same arguments as those which served them twenty years ago, ignoring the subsequent events which have exposed the fallacy of those arguments. Of the rest of the Indian officials, all those who have had long experience in the land revenue department, recognise the very serious evils which are inseparable from periodically recurring settlements; and many of them are eloquent in their description of the sufferings and injustice which similar settlements are instrumental in inflicting. Moreover, actual results having now shown that periodical settlements, in order to prove financially successful, need an amount of judgment and independence on the part of settlement officers, such as, on a continuity, has been found unavailable; and that apparently small errors in assessments may bring ruin upon the country, the majority of Indian officials, who have acquired experience in both permanently settled and periodically settled districts, will be found in favour of an extension of the system of permanent fixity in the land-tax.

*Class II.*—The second class bring the following charges against the permanent settlement of Bengal:—

- 1.—That it involves a sacrifice of revenue.
- 2.—That it gratuitously conferred proprietary rights which have led to sub-infeudation

or under-tenures, whence a landed class has sprung up, which intervenes between the landlord and the cultivator, and intercepts a material portion of the produce of the land, to the detriment of the country.

3.—That the cultivators, among whom some were believed to have possessed proprietary or permanent occupancy rights, were all promiscuously placed by the settlement in the position of tenants-at-will, whereby a number of them suffered injustice, and all were subjected to oppression at the hands of the landlords.

1.—The first objection has, by the facts mentioned above, already been shown to be entirely groundless; and while experience has further disclosed the fact that attempts to increase the revenue by means of periodically enhanced assessments, have almost invariably resulted in over-taxing the capabilities of the country, the following figures will show that permanent fixity in the land-tax, irrespective of the regularity which it ensures in the collections, leads to the creation of wealth whence additional revenue is obtainable. At the time the permanent settlement was introduced in Bengal, the income of the State was derived almost exclusively from land; but new sources of revenue were developed under the influence of that settlement, which at present yield considerably more than the land, and the productiveness of which has been steadily on

the increase. The figures alluded to are taken from the *Finance and Revenue Accounts for 1877-78* :—

BENGAL.—		Revenue from sources other than	
Land Revenue.		land.	
Gross .....	£3,696,210	Excise .....	Net £656,206
Charges .....	302,946	Stamps .....	„ 1,048,757
		Salt .....	„ 2,679,405
		Customs.....	„ 1,090,385
		Provincial taxes „	2,691,103
<hr/> Net ..... £3,393,264 <hr/>		<hr/> Total ..... Net £8,160,856 <hr/>	

In the other Presidencies the same items were—

MADRAS.—			
Gross .....	£3,494,884		
Charges .....	465,354		
<hr/> Net ..... £3,029,530 <hr/>		<hr/> Total ..... Net £2,214,650 <hr/>	
BOMBAY.—			
Gross .....	£3,662,346		
Charges .....	677,408		
<hr/> Net ..... £2,984,938 <hr/>		<hr/> Total..... <sup>a</sup> Net £4,130,260 <hr/>	

Thus the produce of the miscellaneous taxes was greater in Bengal by  $28\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. than in Madras and Bombay taken together ; and the above figures, moreover, point to the injurious effect which oppressive land settlements have upon the prosperity of the country. In Madras, for instance, where the evil in question, under the annual settlement<sup>o</sup> system<sup>o</sup>, operated with con-

tinuous severity, the miscellaneous taxes, which are derived from accumulated wealth, produced much less than the land revenue; while, in Bombay, where long settlements permitted the accumulation of wealth, the miscellaneous sources were much more productive than the land.

It is true that the total revenue per head of population is larger in Bombay than in Bengal, but the revenue is steadily increasing in the latter presidency, while it tends to decline in the former. In Bombay much of the land revenue during the past ten years, ever since the enhanced settlements came into force, has been recovered through the sale of farms, entailing ruin upon cultivators and the destruction of agricultural capital. Many of the farms attached for arrears found no purchasers, and much land has in consequence been thrown out of cultivation. In the Administration Report for 1877-78, the area assessed as arable, but which was not taken up for cultivation, was returned for the surveyed districts alone, or about half of the Presidency, at 2,238,272 acres. A similar course cannot fail to lead to a diminution of revenue from land; while the wealth whence the other items of revenue are derived, and which owes its own creation to the prosperity of agriculture, cannot be expected to increase while agriculture remains depressed.

2.—With reference to the second objection, it must be observed that there is at present no question

of either conferring proprietary rights or of altering titles; the question is simply whether the land tax, where it is now periodically revised, is to be permanently fixed. Then as regards the under-tenures complained of, it is an error to look upon them as an evil; they consist of leases and sub-leases for limited periods or in perpetuity, by means of which the large landed proprietors obtained the funds they needed for clearing their waste lands and assisting ryots to settle upon and cultivate them; and the return enjoyed by the lessees is the price which the landed proprietors paid for the pecuniary assistance afforded to them. The arrangement had this advantage over mortgages, that it interested the lessees in the work of clearances and extended cultivation from which their remuneration was to be derived, while it proportionately relieved the landed proprietors, many of whom found the task set them by the permanent settlement to be above their powers. These under-tenures, therefore, while they have not been prejudicial to the landlords, appear not to have proved injurious to the cultivators either, judging from the generally prosperous and still improving condition of the Bengal ryot, as compared with the poverty in which, according to official reports, the cultivators in periodically settled provinces are still plunged. It might be supposed that the multiplicity of under-tenures, by leading to complications and the chances of error, would interfere with the free transfer of interests, and

require establishments burdensome to the State ; but such in reality has not been the case, transfers of landed interests being quite as numerous in Bengal as in any of the other provinces, while the charges in the land revenue department in Bengal are considerably lighter than in the presidencies where periodical settlements prevail.

3.—The third objection consists of two parts, viz., the alleged violation of the proprietary rights of certain cultivators, and the subjection of all the ryots to the oppression of landlords. Official documents anterior to the Permanent Settlement of 1793 state that several years were employed in efforts to ascertain all existing rights, and that the information obtained was of so conflicting a character as to be practically useless. At all events, the question as to proprietary rights having been violated by the settlement of 1793 is irrelevant to the present discussion, since it is not proposed, when permanently fixing the land-tax, to make any alteration in respect of private rights, which would continue to be protected, as they are now, by the law courts of the country. Then, as regards the charge of allowing the ryots to be oppressed, it would imply that the cultivators who are not tenants upon estates included in the permanent settlement, are better off than those of Bengal. Facts, however, point in exactly the opposite direction, showing the Bengal ryots to be generally prosperous and those of Madras, Bombay, and the



North-Western Provinces to be more or less impoverished and destitute, in proportion to the frequency and severity of the settlements to which they have been subjected.

*Class III.*—Opponents under this class, namely persons who have formed their judgment on the matter in question, upon the opinions of others, are perhaps the most numerous. One typical case may, however, suffice to show that the ground upon which they base their antagonism to permanent settlements, has been accepted by them without that scrupulous examination which the importance of the subject requires.

Mr. James Caird, C.B., in his *Notes on the land and people of India*, published in the *Nineteenth Century* for August last, said: "There are believed to be twelve millions ryot holdings in the province of Bengal one half of which yield less than 10s. each of yearly rental to the proprietors. The latter pay to the Government, under permanent settlement, £3,600,000, and receive from their tenants £13,000,000. The difference, upwards of £9,000,000 a-year, is not the whole cost to the Government of the permanent settlement, for thousands of acres of fertile land are left in jungle in many parts of the Presidency, from the inertness of the descendants of the fortunate zemindars to whom the public property was made over for a quit rent about a century ago. The object of introducing a class of large proprietors was attained by

elevating the revenue agents to that rank, and overlooking the interests of the ryots who for the most part were the real landowners of the country . . . . Whatever may be said of the principle of that settlement, the inconsiderate haste with which it was carried out, has, in more than one shape, entailed a heavy loss on India."

Nothing, however, can be more mistaken than the account thus given of the permanent settlement by Mr. Caird.

To reckon the loss of revenue from the permanent settlement at the difference between the actual revenue and the rental of the landlords, implies that, but for that settlement, the entire rental could be taken by the Government as revenue. If this were possible, how is it that in the North-Western Provinces, where no permanent settlement exists, the Government demand is computed at only half of the landlord's rental, and, even in this proportion, is not realisable with regularity? Unrecovered balances have annually to be held over in those provinces, and remissions have frequently to be made of revenue found to be irrecoverable. There is nothing to show that the Government could collect in Bengal a larger proportion of the rental as revenue, than it has been able to do in the North-Western Provinces, and Mr. Caird's error in this respect will, when rectified, reduce his estimated loss by £6,500,000. But there is another error in his account; his estimate implies that £13,000,000 of rents could be collected

from twelve millions of tenants at the same cost as £3,600,000 of revenue is now collected from a comparatively small number of landlords. It has been seen that the charges incurred in collecting £11,220,877 of land revenue in Madras, Bombay and the North-Western Provinces amounted in 1877-78 to £1,545,031. On the same scale, the collection of £13,000,000 would cost £1,790,002 or £1,487,056 in excess of the present charge, £302,946 incurred in Bengal. The alleged loss, by the rectification of the two errors, would therefore be reduced from £9,400,000 to £1,412,944. But even this reduced estimate rests upon the supposition that Bengal would have been as extensively cultivated and yielded as large a rental as at present, even if it had not received the encouragement and protection afforded by the permanent settlement. Such a supposition is inadmissible in the face of indisputable evidence to the contrary and against the unanimous declaration of all the authorities on the subject.

Mr. Caird goes on to charge the legislation of 1793 with a further loss of revenue, viz. :—of that revenue which the Government might have obtained from the thousands of acres of land which he says are left uncultivated in Bengal. Now the area of Bengal is 156,200 square miles; that of Bombay, 124,102. In the latter Presidency (or rather in a portion of it only, as has already been seen) 2,238,272 acres of arable land were returned as left uncultivated in the last published report on

the subject. On what ground then does Mr. Caird assume that the non-cultivation of a few thousand acres in Bengal is due to the permanent settlement, when a much larger proportion of the Bombay Presidency, to which the permanent settlement does not extend, is likewise left uncultivated?

The other inaccuracies in Mr. Caird's statement, such as styling the zemindars of 1793 *fortunate*; alleging that they had previously *not been landed proprietors*, and that *inconsiderate haste* had marked the introduction of the permanent settlement, do not affect the question with which we are immediately concerned. Nevertheless, it might be as well to notice them, as they are parts of a statement which seems to embody all the objections hitherto raised to the settlement of 1793. By that settlement the landlords were permanently taxed to the extent of nine tenths of their rental; and, as the small margin left to them was insufficient for management and maintenance, a great number of the so-called *fortunate* zemindars lost their estates through their inability to satisfy the revenue demand; while the others had, for a series of years, to raise funds in order to make up the amount of the tax payable to the Government. Few of the descendants of the original zemindars are now possessed of the lands which their forefathers held, the majority of the present landowners or their immediate ancestors having purchased their estates from the Government or from previous holders, at prices based on the

condition of permanent fixity in the revenue demand.

Then, with regard to the alleged *inconsiderate haste*, it is negatived by the Governor-General's Minutes of 18th September, 1783, 3rd February, 1790, and numerous other documents, which forecast the permanent settlement, and show that the measure had been under consideration for at least ten years. Lastly, as regards the proprietary rights of the zemindars prior to the permanent settlement, Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst, in the case of *Freeman v. Fairlie* (*Moore's Indian Appeals*, vol. I. page 341) says:—"These documents are, in the first place, the Regulations of 1793, distinguished by the name of permanent regulations. I think that it is to be collected from these regulations that the proprietors of land in India had an absolute ownership of the soil; that the soil was not vested generally in the sovereign, but that the proprietors held the property as their own, with the power of disposing of it absolutely; and that, if not disposed of, it descended to their families."

It is deeply to be regretted that, upon a question of vital importance, a question literally of life and death to millions of our fellow subjects in India, Mr. Caird, when making his statement, should have omitted all notice of the overwhelming authorities which I have quoted on the other side; authorities which include Governors-General, Governors, and other Indian officials of the highest rank.

The eminent position in which Mr. Caird stands before the public, as a member of the Indian Famine Commission, entitles him, of course, to respect; but it would be idle to set his testimony on a point of this kind above the authorities I have named. This much it would be reasonable to say even if his statements in the *Nineteenth Century* were the result of his personal observations. But upon a closer view, it will be seen that the particular statements which are alluded to here, were recorded upon the writer's very first entrance in Bengal, when he could but very partially have observed the condition of things in that province. This becomes clearer still when it is found that facts more relevant to the object of his journey, such as the greater extent of cultivation, the more prosperous condition of the cultivators and the consequent power of the people to tide over seasons of drought, in Bengal than in the provinces he previously traversed, are passed over in silence; and that, while attention is drawn to the large rental in Bengal; its rapid growth, under the influence of the permanent settlement, from £3,000,000 to £13,000,000, is passed over without observation.

### *Conclusion.*

Enough has doubtless been said in the foregoing pages to show the great importance of the questions which are raised in the petition of the British

Indian Association of Calcutta. Of the six points specified at the commencement of this Paper, four need little discussion under a Liberal administration, since the principles involved in them and their applicability to India, have repeatedly been proclaimed by the leaders of the Liberal party; while the prayer for judicial reform and for the fulfilment of a pledge given in the Queen's proclamation on a most solemn occasion, will doubtless enlist the sympathy of Conservatives and Liberals alike. The Press Act and the Arms Act were, it is true, passed under a Conservative Government; but to a large number of Conservatives they seemed to have been based upon an erroneous estimate of public opinion and feeling in India; and as Indian questions have hitherto, as a rule, been dealt with, uninfluenced by party feelings, it is earnestly to be hoped that those, upon whose decision the fate of India so greatly depends, will consider with impartiality the suggestions submitted in the memorial.

Opinions are likely to differ chiefly upon two points. Few, perhaps, will deny the necessity or the expediency of granting popular representation to the people of India, as the principle of the measure was recognised twenty years ago by Parliament; but opinions differ as to the form and extension which should be given to such a measure. Difficulties in these respects, however, are lessened by the extraordinary moderation which marks the request of the petitioners, and by their suggestion

that those forms should be adopted, which have already been tried with partial success and are susceptible of extension and improvement.

Then as regards permanent fixity in the land-tax, it must be remembered that the policy is one which, after a long investigation, has not only been approved, and its application strongly urged by the highest authorities, but that the Secrerary of State for India declared in reference to it, that "after a careful review of all the circumstances, Her Majesty's Government were of opinion that a settlement in perpetuity (under the conditions mentioned in the despatch) was a measure dictated by sound policy and calculated to accelerate the development of the resources of India, and to insure in the highest degree the welfare and contentment of all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in that country."

It should further be remembered that land owners in India, on the faith of the above-mentioned despatch of 1862, laid out capital and otherwise exerted themselves towards fulfilling the conditions imposed in it; and that the realization of the hopes held out in that despatch has been left in abeyance without any public declaration having been made of the reasons for which a policy initiated upon such high grounds was tacitly annulled. To those who inquired into the subject it is known that the retrograde move was made on the representation of subordinate officials whose influence exceeded their responsibility, and



whose good intentions seem likewise to have been greater than their sagacity—this seems to be acknowledged in official circles.

The position of the Government in the matter is therefore an anomalous position, and one which they cannot continue to hold without loss of dignity, until they have satisfactorily accounted for the abandonment of a policy so unreservedly announced. Meanwhile they are open to the charge of neglect in respect of a measure publicly declared to be necessary for the welfare and contentment of all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in India.

The fallacy that pervades the reasoning adopted by the opponents of the perpetual settlement will be apparent when that reasoning is applied to other lands and other settlements than those of Bengal. Since 1793 millions on millions of acres in Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand, Nova Scotia, Canada, and other vast territories, have fallen to the disposal of the British Crown. In dealing with them, the Crown, or the local authorities empowered by the Crown, preferred the mode of selling for a capital sum, to that of reserving the consideration money by the stipulation of a quit rent proportioned to the capital value at the time of the sale. Financially, however, the result would have been the same had a quit rent been agreed upon, since such rent would have been necessarily the equivalent of the interest derivable from the capital sum. If, therefore, the whole

increase in the rental in Bengal, since the introduction of the permanent settlement, constituted a loss to the Government of India, as Mr. Caird asserts, the increase in the rental value of all the lands in the colonies, sold by the Crown during the same period, must likewise be taken as the measure of the losses sustained by the Crown upon the latter transactions. But has any economist or statesman ever represented these transactions in such a light? The above logical deduction from the principle adopted by Mr. Caird, leading, as it does, to an obvious absurdity, might of itself suffice to expose the fallacy of his reasoning with regard to the permanent settlement of Bengal.

The great value of the settlement in question is now apparent, not only in the punctual realization of the land revenue, but in the vast increase in the cultivated area of Bengal, in the value of the products raised in that province, and in the general prosperity of its inhabitants. In short, the effect of that settlement has been to change into a comparative garden what had literally been a howling wilderness filled with wild beasts in Lord Cornwallis's time. In the minutes drawn up by that large minded and far-seeing nobleman may be found a whole armoury of weapons in defence of the course which he pursued. In the settlement so made by him he conceived that he had laid the foundation of the people's prosperity, and he knew that their prosperity was the surest

guarantee of their loyalty and reverence towards the sovereign he so long, so well, and so faithfully served. And events have shown that he was not mistaken ; for in the prosperity of the people, and in the loyalty to their rulers which they have always shown, no part of India can rival Bengal. Such is the tree, and such have been the fruits ; and the Government would consult its own interests best by extending the system that has produced such results, and by not listening to the suggestions to its detriment which I have had to combat.



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# RUSSIA AND INDIA

IN 1903.

BY

COL. SIR C. E. HOWARD VINCENT,

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*Aide-de-Camp to the King.*

LONDON:

P. S. KING & SON,

ORCHARD HOUSE, WESTMINSTER.

1903.



MY FRIENDS

THE ELECTORS OF CENTRAL SHEFFIELD

Prevented by passing illness from addressing you, as arranged, upon my return from the Great Coronation Durbar at Delhi, it has been suggested that I should republish in connected form the following articles recently written for your information of my latest impressions in Russia and India.

I do so, aware of the intelligent and far-seeing interest you take in the great Asiatic problem of the near future, from which the British Empire may hide its eyes, but will have inevitably to face.

C. E. HOWARD VINCENT.

1, GROSVENOR SQUARE,  
*April, 1903.*

# RUSSIA AND INDIA IN 1903.

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## THE RUSSIAN ARMY OF TO-DAY.

MORE than five-and-twenty years ago the opportunity was afforded me of contributing to *The Daily Telegraph* detailed accounts of the great Russian Army massed north of the Danube for the invasion of Turkey in Europe. Indeed, the issue of June 4th, 1877, gave an entire page to a single letter, which was widely reproduced. I had just returned from the headquarters of the Commander-in-Chief, His late Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Nicolas Nicolaivitch, and, having previous knowledge of the Turkish forces in camp and in the field, I was able to forecast the result with some degree of accuracy. Re-reading those letters by the light of subsequent events, it is satisfactory to note how little there is to alter. Nevertheless, the view taken was far from being the popular one, either in England or Germany. The most sinister reports of the organisation, equipment, and discipline of the Russians found ready acceptance at the hands of a public, feeling the confidence, kindled by sympathy, in the Turkish cause. We readily believe what we wish to believe. The popular delusion before the South African War in the summer and autumn of 1899 is but an instance in point. On both occasions it was my fate to have to take a contrary line. The

Turks fought with all their accustomed gallantry. But want of officers and want of organisation proved disastrous. These are elements of success which cannot be improvised. The State which neglects them is bound to suffer reverses.

Ever since 1877 reform has been the order of the day in the Russian Army. The last years of Alexander the Emancipator, as the whole reign of Alexander III., were devoted to it, and in the same course the Government of Nicolas II. perseveres. I will not enter upon any detailed narrative of the manœuvres in September, 1902, in the vast province of which the city of Kursk is the capital. There were 163 battalions of infantry, 85 squadrons of cavalry, and 480 guns, with 90 generals, nearly 4,000 officers, and 89,000 men. They were divided into a Northern Army, under the Grand Duke Serge, Governor-General of Moscow, and a Southern Army, under General Kouropatkin, Minister of War. But manœuvres on a large scale are more or less the same all the world over. They are largely influenced by the movements of Imperial, Royal, and other illustrious personages. They are to a great extent dependent upon local, climatic, and provisioning conditions. The Kursk manœuvres were no exception to the rule. There was an advance and a retirement, the passage and repassage of a river, and then preparations for a great review before the Tsar and the Shah. The march past commenced at 11.25, and was over at 1.40. That is proof that there was no delay. The Persian monarch, who had lingered by inclination in London and in Paris, was little disposed to tarry in the railway carriages which were the resting-places of both Sovereigns, after seeing six army corps and 480 cannon paraded before him by His Imperial neighbour. His Majesty left for Teheran an hour after luncheon, well under the overpowering weight of Russian influence.

*Recruiting in Russia.*—The liability to military service is, of course, general between the twenty-



second and the forty-fourth birthdays. The only exemptions are in favour of the Cossacks of the Caucasus, who have a special organisation; the settlers in Turkestan and the territories of the Amur; and the non-Russian population of Astrakan, the Asiatic provinces, and Archangel. A million of men have every October 1st attained the military age. But as only 300,000 are required to bring the Standing Army up to its peace establishment, conscription presses less severely upon the young Russian than upon the young Frenchman, German, or Austrian.

In every urban area or rural district there is a Recruiting Board, which in each Government is supervised by an Imperial Recruiting Council. Between October 15th and November 15th selection is made of those who are required to serve in the Standing Army or Imperial Navy. Every board is informed of the number of recruits it will be required to furnish to each arm, and proceeds to eliminate those exempt or non-eligible, usually 48 per cent. of the number of conscript candidates. Exemptions are in four classes:

(1) Complete exemption on physical grounds (6 per cent.), or because of family circumstances constituting the conscript a necessary breadwinner. This category numbers about 24 per cent. of the whole.

(2) Exemption in time of peace. This frees medical men, veterinary surgeons, chemists, teachers, and winners of learned scholarships. The category usually numbers 20 per cent. of the year's class.

(3) Deferred liability, on the ground of special studies, special circumstances, employment abroad, etc. This privilege extends to about 5 per cent.

(4) Lastly, there is the shortened liability. This class includes members of learned professions, proficient in technical studies, etc., and is very numerous.

Needless to say that the examination of these grounds of exemption or privilege involves much labour. If, after those in the four categories have been eliminated,



the number remaining over is greater than the number the locality is required to furnish, those declared liable draw lots, the highest numbers exempting about 3 per cent. The remainder are given furlough until the New Year, when their service begins.

As far as practicable each section of recruits is drawn from the same area. But no regiment receives more than three-fourths of its deficit from its local source. The remaining fourth is made up of non-Russians—Poles, Finns, Jews, and others—26 per cent. of the whole.

The Grenadiers, the Rifles, the Cavalry, the Horse Artillery, and the Engineers have no fixed recruiting areas, but receive their contingents from several districts. The Guards recruit from the whole Empire, with the exception of Jews, who are ineligible. Every regiment of the Infantry of the Line has a definite recruiting ground.

It is calculated that from 60 to 70 per cent. of the recruits are illiterate. If, however, they fail in education, no army is manned under such excellent physical conditions. Mature age and hardy training make the tall, broad-chested Russian an excellent soldier from the very first. The French, Italian, or Spanish conscript is hardly to be compared with him, and he also surpasses both the German and the Austrian. Of the 6 per cent. rejected upon physical grounds, 11 per cent. are fit for the first class of the Reserve, a state of affairs superior to any in Europe, and less than 3 per cent. of the recruits accepted are found unable to bear the strain within the first year of service.

The colour service is nominally five years, but in the Field Artillery and Infantry it is reduced to four. Often, too, the Minister of Finance brings such strong arguments to bear upon his colleague at the War Office that this is often diminished to three, or even less.

But whatever the colour term may be, the balance of eighteen years' service has to be made up in the

Reserve, subject to liability to be called up for two trainings of six weeks each. More than one training of a fortnight is, however, rarely insisted upon, unless the colour service has been less than three years, when the Reservist is usually called up twice for three weeks.

In the Imperial Navy the service is seven years afloat and three in the Reserve.

*Standing Army.*—The Standing Army numbers in time of peace over a million rank and file, or 4 per cent. of the male population between 21 and 60 years of age. There are on a peace footing :

627,000 infantry, in 25 army corps, 52 divisions, 209 regiments, and 836 battalions.

117,000 cavalry, in 23 divisions and 634 squadrons.

138,000 artillery, with 412 batteries of field artillery and 46 of horse artillery.

34,000 engineers.

34,000 commissariat, transport, medical, and other departmental troops.

60,000 Cossacks.

### *The Reserve.*

The Army is mobilised by Imperial ukase to the Senate. It recalls to the ranks, in classes, all the regular soldiers below thirty-nine years of age, or, allowing for casualties, a total of 2,900,000, thus bringing the Regular forces up to a strength of nearly four millions. But there is a still further reinforcement available of trained men. In addition to the Standing Army and its Reserve there is

### *The Opoltschenie or Militia.*

It is divided into two categories. The First Class consists of :

(a) All men who, having served in the Standing Army and its Reserve, have attained their thirty-ninth

year. This liability continues until the completion of the forty-third year.

(b) All men physically capable who for one reason or another have been freed from regular service. Their liability continues until the close of their twenty-fifth year, and during these four years they can be called up twice for a six weeks' training, but in practice it is shortened by a fortnight.

The Second Class of the Militia includes all other persons exempted or rejected from the regular service upon any ground until the forty-fourth birthday. This is a nominal, rather than a real, liability, and lists are not kept of the second class.

The four junior years of the *Opoltschenie* are capable of giving an addition to the Regular Army of 800,000 men, and the four senior years of 600,000 men, bringing the total of the *mobilised* Standing Army and its Reserves to the gigantic figure of 5,400,000 men—or 21 per cent. of the male population between the working ages of eighteen and fifty-five. To these totals should be further added, in considering the armed strength of Russia, 15,000 gendarmes under the Ministry of the Interior, and 35,000 Frontier Guards under the Ministry of Finance, each representing the pick of the retired non-commissioned officers of the Army, besides 41,500 sailors.

*Officers.*—The officering of so large a force presents very serious difficulties, especially in a country which is to so large an extent destitute of the squirearchy of England, or the "kleine Adel" of Germany, whose sons make such admirable officers. The pay is necessarily small, and the increase in the opportunities of civil and industrial life, renders the retention of officers of ability a matter of much concern. Various systems are, therefore, in operation.

The first—and the best—is the maintenance of a large number of military schools in all parts of the country, giving an excellent education to over 10,000

cadets—three times as many as in Germany, and twenty times as many as in France. But even this large number barely suffices for the officering of the Guards, the Artillery, and the Engineers. The over-plus goes to the line, but although giving one or two subalterns a year to each regiment, this is only one quarter of the full number required. The remaining officers are therefore recruited

(a) From the eleven Junker schools, to which "Volunteers" from the line and deserving non-commissioned officers and men are sent for instruction.

(b) From the ranks.

The "Volunteers" can enter the Army at the close of their seventeenth year. Those who have passed through six forms, or classes, of a gymnasium or public school, serve for one year, while those who have only got through four classes are liable for two years.

In the Guards and Cavalry, "Volunteers" maintain themselves, and may live at home. But in the other arms board and lodging are provided, but in no case do "Volunteers" live with the men. The Volunteers choose their branch of the Service. In order still further to lessen the burden of obligatory service, there is another class, called "Otchoniki," whose liability is similar to that of the "Volunteers," but can be entered upon up to thirty years of age, and may also lead to the commissioned ranks.

The expenses of the Junkers are paid by the State, except in the case of those from the Cavalry, who contribute one-third. The junior Junker class gives an ordinary education; the senior is entirely military. After passing the final examination the Junker is posted to a regiment as ensign, on probation. Those who fail to come up to that standard revert to the Army as non-commissioned officers.

Three-fourths of the officers of the line come from the Junker schools, but taking the army as a whole,

the proportion is about equally divided between the military schools and the Junkers.

*Promotion.*—Examinations precede every promotion, except in the field, but they are rarely of an onerous character. There are also four military colleges for officers :

(a) The Staff College, with 314 students, and sixty passing out annually. Each staff college graduate wears upon the right side of the tunic, close to the fourth button, a silver badge—a laurel wreath encircling the Imperial cypher, and whether actually employed on the staff or not.

(b) An Engineer and Artillery College.

(c) A Military Law College.

(d) A College for Instruction in Commissariat and Transport Duty.

The military hierarchy is the same as in other Armies, except that there are no majors, and in the Guards no lieutenant-colonels. Captains in the Guards rank as lieutenant-colonels in the line, and colonels in the Guards are sometimes posted direct to the command of a regiment of three battalions of the line, without having necessarily commanded an independent battalion.

There are eleven grades of officers, and fourteen in the Civil Service. The fifth grade—Major-General—is styled "Excellency," and full Generals or Field-Generals "High Excellency."

A lieutenant becomes a captain after twelve years' service, and a captain may be promoted after seven years in that grade by seniority, or after three years by selection, the process which, in reality, constitutes the main source of promotion. Indeed, promotion from Lieutenant-Colonel to Colonel is entirely by selection, subject to certain service and age rules. Among these is found the provision that for promotion to Colonel a minimum of fifteen years' service is essential, and for further advancement to Major-General there must have



been eight years as Colonel, and again eight years before passing to Lieutenant-General.

The maximum age for captains is fifty, for the command of a cavalry regiment fifty-six, of an infantry regiment fifty-eight, for a brigadier sixty, for a divisional command sixty-three, and for an army corps sixty-seven. The average service of lieutenant-colonels is twenty-one years, of colonels twenty-six years, and of major-generals thirty-four years.

Officers can retire upon half-pay after twenty-five years' service, and upon full pay after thirty-five. The majority avail themselves of these provisions, especially if ill-fortune has attended them in promotion by selection, or officers are put over by that system—involving, as a rule, transfer from another regiment, with whom they are unable to get on.

The General Staff consists of 892 officers, of whom 282 are generals and 402 colonels. There are also, in addition, 588 staff posts.

This may be a fitting place to say a word upon the officers as a whole. It will be gathered from the foregoing that they are recruited from different sources to those of the German or the British Army. Although the grade of "noble" is one to be attained by official rank, either civil or military, and is not necessarily dependent on hereditary descent, less than half of the officers of the Russian Army are of gentle birth. The life to which they are necessarily subjected is often irksome and lonely. Owing to the deficiency of non-commissioned officers of education, many of the clerical duties in other Armies fall on the Russian officer, and without interest the prospect of rapid advancement is small. The officers represent the whole country, and, except in the Guards, it is very rare to find an officer speaking a foreign language. Even in the infantry of the Guards there would not be more than one in a battalion able to speak French. Indeed, it is now quite impossible to travel in Russia