

grass which we see in Lower Bengal. It is well fenced and provided with a shed for housing cattle. A short stake is fixed in the centre with an accompaniment of religious rites, and the wheat to be threshed is spread round it to a radius equivalent to the length of the line of ten or twelve bullocks abreast employed to thresh it out. They are tied to the stake and driven round and round belly-deep in the golden litter. They are muzzled at first: but not when the grain has separated and sunk to the bottom of the pile. Winnowing is the next operation, and it is hedged about with ceremonies. An auspicious day for beginning must be named by the village priest, who is restricted in his choice by a variety of rules. The farmer and his labourers will then proceed to the threshing-floor with the paraphernalia of sacrifice,—milk, clarified butter, turmeric and boiled wheat. These are solemnly offered to the stake, probably as a survival of Phallic-worship, and to the heap of threshed grain. The boiled wheat, *etc.*, are scattered round, to tempt the thieving *bhoots* (spirits) away from the former. Then the master winnows five baskets-full, and the chaff and grain are collected and measured. If they fill the baskets, the omen is a good one; otherwise the spot for winnowing is shifted. These first-fruits are not added to the heap but are the perquisite of Brahmins. Winnowing goes on

merrily while a wind is blowing, and employs three men, one of whom fills the basket, a second empties it, standing on a stool, while the third sweeps the grain and chaff into separate heaps. The day's work is always scrupulously measured in order to cheat the *bhoots*, who dare not pilfer when the tale of the wheat is known. Such are the simple processes by which is produced the Indian wheat so dreaded by English farmers and so familiar to frequenters of Mark Lane. Mr. Elliott considered them fairly well adapted to the conditions prevailing in Hoshangabad. He was at one time an ardent advocate for the North-Western system of high farming with irrigation, and inclined to undervalue the primitive methods which content the peasantry of Hoshangabad. An experiment made by him in 1864 confirmed this view; for he raised a crop of wheat such as had never been seen in the district from a plot manured and irrigated *secundum artem*. But riper knowledge led to a recantation. With an almost limitless extent of virgin soil awaiting reclamation, an area under tillage of three quarters of a million acres to a population under 450,000, Hoshangabad had as yet no need to adopt the scientific methods which are forced on cultivators elsewhere by the increasing difficulty of gaining a subsistence. Space fails me to describe the elaborate experiments undertaken by Mr. Elliott

in view of ascertaining the actual productiveness of the land, the analyses of soils made under his instructions, the minute enquiries into profits and cost of cultivation detailed in ~~this~~ unique volume. One lays it down, with a sigh that there should be so complete a divorce between the Bengal official and the land that supports him. No Settlement Officer in these Provinces could hope for Mr. Elliott's opportunities of penetrating the veil that conceals the peasant's life. They must be content to wear the best years of their life away in a dull and ever-increasing drudgery of routine reports, bundles and figured-statements; and the great book of nature, the short and simple annals of the poor, are alike shrouded from their view."

CHAPTER III.

THE FAMINE COMMISSION.

Mr. Elliott's splendid work for Hoshangabad was rewarded by Sir William Muir by an appointment as Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces. One of the most serious obstacles to the perfect success of our regime is the fact that the Secretariats, which are the mainsprings of the administration, have been so largely composed of men devoid of experience in the great world's ways and the microcosm afforded by the district. Mankind is not governed by bundles. On the other hand, it is difficult to overrate the advantage, both to the individual and the community, of Secretariat experience gained when the judgment is ripe and some insight has been attained into the motives of human action and the mechanism of society. Mr. Elliott's intimate knowledge of Indian character and customs stood him in good stead in this new post, carrying him far above the soul-depressing files and dockets in which so many Secretaries are content to wallow. His broad sympathies with fellow-creatures led him to enter on a crusade against the hideous practice of infanticide among Rajput clans. In official routine he inaugurated

some useful reforms. He it was who set the principle of testing Police work by the percentage borne by convictions to cases reported, and established a wholesome rivalry amongst District staffs by arranging them in a varying order of merit. On him devolved the superintendence of the Census of 1871-2 in the North-West, a task the difficulty of which his colleagues who have passed through the ordeal of 1891 may be able to appreciate.

After a brief period spent in 1877 in the "general line," as Commissioner of the Mirat Division, Mr. Elliott had the opportunity for which so many able men sigh and sigh in vain, of proving his mettle by a crucial test. A terrible famine broke out in Southern India; and officers gifted with organizing power and exhaustless energy were needed to direct the operations for relief. Mr. Elliott was named, jointly with Sir C. Moncrieff, to serve as Famine Commissioner in Mysore. In the following year the scope of his labours was enlarged by the formation of a Famine Commission for the purpose of investigating the causes of these terrible visitations and prescribing remedial action. He became Secretary to that body; and it is no disparagement to his associates to affirm that his hand is evident in nearly every page of the four large blue-books in which their report was laid before the British Parliament. His

work in this sphere has had more far-reaching consequences than any performed during a long and busy career : and we must linger awhile in describing its scope.

The instructions given by the India Office to the Famine Commission were as vague as most of the utterances of that official Delphi. They were, however, amplified by the Government of India in a minute penned with a statesmanlike breadth. The Commission were to ascertain how far local peculiarities of administration, tenure, soil, water-supply, density of population, and systems of cultivation tend to intensify or mitigate famine. They were to gauge the comparative power of the agricultural population in different Provinces to resist the effects of drought, their relative wealth, and the relation of their well-being to the varied forms of land tenure. As regards the species of relief to be afforded, the battle of large against small and scattered works was to be fought to the bitter end. The Commission were told to point out the limitations to the duty of Government in the matter of food-supply. They were to discuss the influence of forests and irrigation on food. The great question of transit was to be threshed out : how far road and water carriage were susceptible of improvement ; how the blocks on railways resulting from abnormal pressure on staff and rolling-stock might be mini-

mized. The financial responsibility for famine relief was to be defined. Finally, its whole mechanism in every shape must be scrutinized and, if necessary, remodelled. The programme was one which must have appalled even such a glutton for work as the future Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal: but he set about the task of performance with characteristic ardour. A series of interrogatories was framed and circulated to officials with special experience and others whose position had brought them in close contact with the Indian people. The replies elicited fill nearly a thousand closely-printed pages of foolscap size. This mass of information was supplemented by personal experience gained in visits paid to nearly every Province. The question of irrigation as a prophylactic was so large as to necessitate the appointment of a special committee who traversed the regions watered by canals and considered on the spot the various problems they offer. The report is in two parts, with as many bulky volumes of evidence. The first part deals with relief: the second with measures of protection and preservation. The curtain rises with a geographical sketch of the peninsula which brings into clear relief the conditions tending to produce famine. Its primary cause is drought,—an abnormal cessation of the rains at the period when the great winter rice crops is approaching maturity. The

tracts most liable to famine are those with an annual rainfall ranging between 30 and 35 inches. Famines have occurred at varying intervals since the dawn of civilization : but the earliest of which we have any detailed record devastated Bengal in 1770-1. There is too much reason to believe that this famine was intensified by the callous greed of certain high officials and their understrappers who formed a "ring," as we should call it now-a-days, for the purpose of raising the price of grain. A third of the population of the Lower Provinces, then estimated to contain thirty million souls, is believed to have perished. In 1784 scarcity ravaged Upper India, which, if less destructive to life, was far more widely felt. In 1807 Madras was a sufferer, and then for the first time we see some recognition of the principle that the adoption of relief measures is incumbent on Government. Large remissions of land revenue were granted and loans were made to landed proprietors. It was sought to stimulate private trade by bounties on grain imported and guaranteeing a minimum price to importers. A further step in advance was made in 1837-8, when the Upper Provinces and the adjoining Native States suffered grievously from a failure of their crops. The principle was then laid down that employment must be provided for able-bodied sufferers by Government ; while the maintenance of the helpless was primarily a

charge on private charity. Public works which cost twenty lakhs of rupees were set on foot, and relief committees were organized in each district to administer funds derived from public subscriptions, supplemented by State grants. Thirty years passed by without a serious failure of the crops; and our rulers had begun to flatter themselves that the spectre of famine had been laid. Their optimism received a rude shock in May 1866 when the discovery was suddenly made that the markets throughout Orissa were depleted. Ere supplies could be furnished the monsoon set in, cutting off access by sea; while the only land communication available was an unmetalled road which each rainy season made a quagmire. The peasantry died off by hundreds of thousands, and the mortality was only stayed in November when the Bengal Government, rushing from the extreme of apathy to that of unreasoning panic, poured forty thousand tons of rice into the country, much of which was sold for a mere song.

This prodigality was repeated on a vaster scale in Behar, where acute distress followed the failure of the autumn rain in 1873. Sir Richard Temple, who then occupied the Belvedere *gadi*, saw in this calamity an outlet for his almost superhuman activity. He laid it down as an axiom that in times of famine private trade was but a broken reed to lean on; and that it was

incumbent on Government to prevent mortality and distress at all costs. With this end in view nearly half a million tons of grain were imported, mostly from Burma, and distributed by way of loans to agriculturists from depôts scattered over Behar. The landless class were enabled to earn a liberal grain wage on what were euphemistically termed relief works; but the tests exacted were little more than nominal, and, in point of fact, the staff of life was distributed freely to all comers. In fine, a quarter of the population of Behar was supported for several months at a cost to the State of six and a half millions sterling, much of which went to swell the gains of middlemen. But for the self-reliance and self-respect inherent in the Indian character the entire fabric of society would have received a fatal shock. Far different was the fate of sufferers in the Madras Presidency during the famine which followed a drought in 1876 and an irregular monsoon in the following year. At the very outset much precious time was wasted owing to a difference of opinion between the Supreme and the Local Government as to the character of the relief works which should be set on foot. The first preferred small and scattered ones, bringing relief home to every man's door: the second strenuously advocated large and highly centralized operations. Taught by the bitter experience gained in Behar the

Government of India impressed on its subordinates that while no pains were to be spared to save life, it was futile to aim at the prevention of all suffering. Everyone is agreed on the folly and worse of indiscriminate private charity; but the fact often escapes recognition that the evil is multiplied a thousandfold when Government is the offender. The maxim is unimpeachable; but it must have been due to a sense of humour unsuspected in so august a body that led Lord Lytton's Council to despatch Sir Richard Temple to preach the new Gospel in the benighted South. The Madras famine, however, set economy at defiance and cost the State eight and a half million sterling.

The inferences to be drawn from past history are set forth with great precision in Mr. Elliott's report. We must be prepared, it seems, to face a scarcity with partial distress in some portion of the Empire in two years out of nine, and a famine once in twelve years. Every province may expect drought with its inevitable result once in eleven or twelve years; and a great famine twice in a century. The greatest number ever likely to be simultaneously afflicted is thirty millions. As distress or plenty varies directly with the harvests, it is well to know that a peasant who gathers in half an average crop can 'scrape along' till the earth shall again yield her increase :

but famine becomes a certainty when the produce falls below a quarter of that of an ordinary year. Taking price as a criterion we find that when rice sells at eight to ten seers per rupee, the danger signal must be considered as hoisted; but material conditions vary so enormously that the price-test is not of universal application. The direct mortality from famine is by no means so great as is commonly supposed—far less, in fact, than that resulting from epidemics which often occur in times of plenty; but distress undoubtedly impairs fecundity and causes a drop in the birth-rate. It is cheering to learn that India has a marvellous recuperative power; and that famines show a tendency to become less acute in modern times.

Turning from cause to effect, Mr. Elliott's Commission laid it down as a fundamental dogma that the battle with famine lies within the scope of the duties of an Indian Government; first, because such calamities transcend all private effort, and secondly because the State is here the landlord. But the interference of Government must be beneficial, and not such as to check the operations of thrift and self-reliance. Indian Society rests on the ties of family and village; and these primitive organizations, combined with the national frugality and foresight, enable it to resist a strain which would ruin communities more highly developed. The first symptoms of famine are never

shown by the enormous class which tills its own land ; for it has resources in the shape of stocks or credit which enable it to hold out for several months, perhaps, even to tide over the crop-failure. It is the landless labourer, the artizan and small trader, the beggar, the cripple and the leper, the dependent on a family well-to-do in ordinary times, who feel the first pangs of want. Candidates for relief are ranged in two classes—those who are incapable of work and those from whom some form of labour may be exacted. In the case of the first it is of great importance that the inception of relief works should not be too long delayed for then the constitutions of the distressed may be fatally enfeebled. It is, therefore, essential that a list of public works to be undertaken in the event of famine should be prepared in each district in advance. These might be connected with roads, drainage or water supply and should be placed in as close proximity as possible to the habitations of the distressed. The “distance test” as it is called, *i.e.* insistence on candidates for employment traversing a certain distance in search of work, is condemned, and very rightly so, by the Commission. They object, too, to the intervention of the contractor, while admitting that a gang or two of the more able-bodied might be employed on piece work. Organization and control should rest primarily on trained Engineers

under the general supervision of the District Collector. The task exacted should be seventy-five per cent. of that rendered by a labourer in ordinary times; the dole, whether in grain or money, should be such as to furnish subsistence to the labourer and his helpless dependents. The case of those unable to work is to be met by alms, distributed, as far as possible, in village centres through the duly-controlled agency of village officers. The camp and poor-house-organizations with which it was sought to stem the tide of famine in Madras are open to grave and radical objections. It is our primary duty to preserve the mechanism of village and family intact. The principle in dealing with the great question of food supply is non-interference with private trade, save in such exceptional cases as a combination among dealers to raise prices, or communications so defective as to deter enterprise. Then and then only should the State intervene and import grain into famine-stricken tracts. That old-fashioned nostrum for famine, the storing of grain in times of plenty, is utterly futile in dealing with the vast population of Upper India. In this respect the duty of Government is to watch over the course of trade, and facilitate it by providing communications and canals. Minor, but still important, measures of relief are the grant of remissions of revenue and loans to the landed classes. The first should be made con-

ditional on similar concessions being made to the peasantry. In regard to the second, the Behar Famine of 1874 elicited the fact that advances by Government are faithfully repaid, and involve small risk of financial loss. They should be devoted primarily to the purchase of bullocks and seed grain. Lastly, the responsibilities of local bodies—Municipalities and District Boards—as to co-operation in Famine prevention and relief must be declared and defined with strictness. The chain of official subordination in relief measures, should range from the Head of the Administration through a new Department to be termed that of the Director of Agriculture and Famine relief, Commissioners of Divisions, District officers, those in charge of Circles or groups of villages, down to the village headmen. In order to secure uniformity of procedure, a draft Famine Code was submitted by the Commission. It needs but a superficial acquaintance with the public measures of the decade which has followed this epoch-making report to recognize the fact that nearly every recommendation it contained has been adopted by the Indian Government. Would that the work of the Commissions which succeed each other as winter does the scorching heats were as pregnant of great and lasting results!

CHAPTER IV.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF ASSAM.

Mr. Elliott's labours on the Famine Commission had scarcely terminated ere he was called to functions equally onerous in connection with the Indian Census of 1881. As Commissioner he organized the victory won by less conspicuous agents over the blind forces of ignorance and prejudice. In this capacity he visited every province with the exception of Assam during the cold weather of 1880-81, leaving the task of tabulation and report to his successor, Sir W. Plowden. He became Chief Commissioner of Assam in March 1881 in the room of Sir Steuart Bayley, translated to the Residency of Hyderabad. Some of our so-called non-regulation provinces seem to exist mainly to serve as stepping-stones to the Bengal *gaddi*. There the future Lieutenant-Governor may linger awhile and try his prentice hand on material more suited to experiments in the art of governing than our own. Not that Assam is devoid of complex problems. It is cut off from our railway system; inhabited by a sturdy race of European settlers who are proverbially less amenable to discipline than are the children of the soil; and hemmed in on three

sides by vast highlands peopled by tribes ranging in point of social development between the unredeemed savagery of the Lushais and the semi-civilization of Manipur and Tipperah. In the year prior to Mr. Elliott's advent to power a high British officer had been inveigled into a trap by the Angami Nagas and massacred with the greater portion of his escort.* Nor is the danger to public peace confined to the belt of frontier tribes. Soon after Mr. Elliott's arrival a serious rising took place in the old-settled district of Cachar. A certain Sumbhudan set up as a god and pretended to convey a divine afflatus to many deluded followers. So unbounded became his influence that none could be found to serve a process on him. The Deputy Commissioner who endeavoured to bring these fanatics to reason was charged furiously by them and received a wound which caused his death. Mr. Elliott's policy towards his dangerous neighbours during his term of office in Assam was one of conciliation coupled with firmness. The practice of wholesale village-burning which had hitherto served as a punishment for raids was discouraged: but the frequent incursions of these tribes into British territory, generally undertaken in order to bring back refugees to allegiance, were sternly repressed. To the tact and vigilance displayed during his four years' tenure of office may be ascribed the ab-

sence of serious outrages on our North Eastern frontier.

Turning to internal administration we find that this once backward province owes to Mr. Elliott the large measure of self-government, she enjoys. On the basis of Lord Ripon's famous circular of May 1882 he framed a scheme for entrusting the people with the management of their own public affairs. Boards, charged with the supervision of roads and schools, were organized in every district. In Kamrup and Sibsagar, once the seats of government and still possessing a strong leaven of influential families, the Native members of these boards were elected by the whole body of ryots paying revenue to government. In Sylhet, which is virtually part and parcel of Bengal, the Deputy Commissioner nominated an elective body consisting of a local notable residing in each census circle, which, in its turn, selected representatives on the board. Elsewhere the native members were nominees of government; but where the tea-planting interest predominated, as it did in five of the eight plains' districts, half the non-official members were elected by vote from this class. The influence of officialism was restricted by a proviso that its representatives should in no case exceed one third of the total. All means were taken of increasing the Boards' prestige and interesting them in their

work. The Executive Engineer had hitherto been independent of the civil officer, and treated as a separate and equal authority. The resulting friction ceased when he was placed under the Deputy Commissioner, and afterwards under the Boards with the title of District Engineer. Some idea of the utility of these new bodies may be gathered from the fact that the expenditure on public works, including two short lines of railway, rose from ten lakhs in 1879-80 to twenty-six during Mr. Elliott's last year of office in Assam: and that Rs. 2,84,000 was devoted to maintaining 1,200 schools during the year first mentioned as compared with Rs. 4,50,000 in keeping up 1,800 schools at the later epoch. The benefits to the planting community from the large outlay on roads and bridges has been incalculable. Nor was this the only advantage desired by it from Mr. Elliott's view of the importance of improving methods of locomotion. Assam had always been terribly handicapped by her antiquated system of river traffic. The journey between Calcutta and Sibsagar was made in large steamers, each towing a pair of cumbrous flats; and often occupied a longer time than that from England to the Metropolis. Planters were therefore cut off from the cheerful ways of man as effectually as the Britons of old from Roman civilization: and a profound stagnation overspread the province. To Mr.

Elliott it owed the establishment of the fast daily mail service on its great rivers which has done more than aught besides to bring Assam within the pale of progress. But if its principal trade was hampered by defective communications it was not less so by well-meaning but mischievous legislation. The labour question is a burning one with Assam planters. To hold their own against the fierce competition of China and Ceylon they must have coolies on reasonable terms: and their efforts in that direction were thwarted by the operation of laws and rules which appeared to have been framed in view of discouraging emigration from less sparsely populated districts. The Inland Emigration Act of 1882 introduced four drastic changes in principle. It promoted free emigration; gave preference to recruitment by garden agents over recruitment by contractors; raised the maximum period for which contracts could be made from three to five years: and legalized such contracts within the province itself. Under these fostering influences the production of tea rose from thirty-one million pounds in 1879-80 to fifty-one million in 1883-4 an increase of 60 per cent. in four years.

The interests of the native population of Assam were not less considered by Mr. Elliott. He paid yearly visits to every District and nearly every Sub-division of his extensive charge, and

ascertained local wants by personal conference with the members of the various boards. District officers were specially enjoined to do likewise. In a resolution which foreshadowed those orders issued in October last which have evoked so much criticism in official circles, he imposed on these subordinates the duty of spending at least four months of each year in the interior of their charges. This prolonged sojourn in tents was, he said, rendered possible by the Assam climate, whose mildness in mid-April is in sharp contrast with the intolerable heat of early summer in other provinces. The revenue-law of Assam had been in state bordering on chaos. Every variety of organization known to India was at work : and the confusion was more confounded by an absence of system in attempts to deal with the numerous difficulties attending on land administration. Mr. Elliott's Code, founded on a draft originally prepared by Mr. W. Ward when Judge and Commissioner, simplified the process immensely. He remodelled the subordinate collecting agency by substituting tehsildars, as seen in the North-Western Provinces, for the *mauzadars*, or revenue contractors who had oppressed the cultivator and intercepted a large share of the revenue. The future of the waste lands, amounting, in the Assam valley alone, to nine million of acres, occupied his close attention. These were not, as he

remarked in the Administration Report for 1881-2, overgrown with forests, but good, flat, alluvial soil, covered only with grass and reeds which required nothing but the sickle and the match to turn them into excellent ash manure: while the abundance of bamboo and cane made the building of a comfortable hut the work of a few days. This settler's paradise awaited occupants principally because the absence of any limit to appropriations favoured the growth of a squatter-community similar to that which has so greatly hindered the legitimate expansion of our Australian Colonies. Mr. Elliott took the first step towards the destruction of these monopolies by ordaining that no grant should in future exceed 600 acres: and that the cultivation of a grant should be a condition precedent to any further concessions. In 1883 a survey was commenced of waste lands in the Lakhimpur District, which was carried out by a private firm at the cost of grantees. No fewer than 134,000 acres were thus demarcated in three years. Those who are familiar with Sir C. Elliott's recent utterances will be prepared to learn that he attached great importance to such operations while in Assam. In 1882 he formed a special department, the Directorate of Agriculture, for the purposes of systematic surveys; and thus anticipated events in Bengal by nearly two years. The first task undertaken by the new

Director was the cadastral survey of 228 square miles in Kamrup at a cost of only 6 as. 9 pie per acre. In 1884-5 a further area of 450 square miles was thus treated. In order to provide the necessary staff for the maintenance of the splendid cadastral maps, seven survey schools were opened which imparted technical instruction to officers employed on this duty and issued certificates of proficiency.

There was, indeed, no branch of the administration from which Mr. Elliott's reforming hand was absent. In the management of the Excise, for instance, it had been the practice to let the exclusive rights of opening shops in a given area for the vend of spirits, *ganja* and opium. This system favoured the growth of middlemen; for the purchasers invariably sublet the shops within their *mahals*, as they were called, and thus intercepted a large proportion of the profits which should have enriched the exchequer. Mr. Elliott directed that all shops should be let directly by government; and partly by this change and partly by judicious enhancement of the selling price of stimulants he raised the excise revenue from eighteen and a half to twenty-two lakhs in three years.

We have seen enough of Mr. Elliott's Administration in Assam to recognize its fundamental maxim. It was justice for the children of the

soil ; justice for the European settler ; justice for the government he served. It was thus with the illustrious Turgot, when governor of a province of old France before the Revolution. The key-note to his policy, writes a biographer, was not pity or benevolence, but justice. "We are sure to go wrong he said," when pressed to confer a benefit on the poor at the expense of the rich, "the moment we forget to hold the balances true amongst all claims and all interests " Such must be the watch-word of our Empire wherever Britain's flag waves on the breeze, if we would avoid a cataclysm such as wrecked the proudest monarchy of Europe and shook the whole fabric of civilization.

CHAPTER V.

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

The decentralization of finance was, perhaps, the most beneficent measure of Lord Mayo's brief regime. Up to his time the provincial governments had dipped at their own sweet will into the imperial exchequer, and extravagance with its inevitable results was universal. In 1871 came into force that which is known as the contract system; by which local governments were allotted certain definite sums to cover the charges of the chief departments under them, and were informed that any excess on the debit side of their ledger must be covered by local taxation. The weak point in this scheme was the inelasticity of the resources placed at the disposal of the provincial authorities. This inconvenience was remedied in 1878 by the assignment to them of the revenue derived from certain branches of the administration such as excise, stamps, law and justice, and the like; the Supreme Government reserving to itself a share only in the future increase of revenue under these heads. This statesmanlike measure infused new life into the dry bones of provincial administration. Satraps had now for the first time a direct interest in economy and the deve-

lopment of their resources From the epoch of the contract system dates that steady expansion of our revenues which has enabled the exchequer to meet the heavy losses entailed by the depreciated rupee. The term of the contracts between the Imperial and Local Governments is five years ; that entered into in 1882 expiring in 1887. To facilitate the impending reorganization of finances Lord Dufferin, in March 1886, appointed a Committee of experts with power to scrutinize the Expenditure of every department of the Empire and to suggest large economies. Mr Elliott's vast experience of similar functions pointed him out as the man of all others for the direction of this enquiry. He was, therefore, named Chairman of the Committee. With him were associated Sir Henry Cunningham, Sir W. Hunter, the Hon'ble M. Ranade, Colonel Filgate and Messrs. T. Westland, Bliss and Hardie. The Committee's preliminary labours were facilitated by the appointment of Sub-committees to deal with the various departments Printed notes were drawn up summarizing the information required and suggestions received, and were circulated among departmental chiefs. On receipt of replies to these, all persons responsible for expenditure were invited to confèr with the Committee and clear up points of doubt. Visits were paid by delegates from the Committee to the head quarters of each

government : and strenuous efforts were made to digest and systematize the enormous mass of details within the limited period allowed by the Government of India. The task proved impossible of fulfilment : and, in December 1886 the Committee submitted a report which was necessarily incomplete. It is comprised in two folio blue-books of nearly a thousand pages. The first part relates to the forthcoming contracts for 1887, and the second to departmental and miscellaneous expenditure. To follow the Committee through the labyrinth of facts and figures in which their enquiries are recorded would require a volume ; and it is to be feared that my readers would find it as imbued with "disgusting dryness" as Bishop Burnet did the *magnum opus* of Lord Clarendon. That which shines conspicuous throughout is Mr. Elliott's amazing power of manipulating figures and his capacity for entering into details. His conclusions were not accepted without demur from some of his colleagues : Sir H. Cunningham and Mr. Ranade being conspicuous in the extent and number of their protests. A large majority, however, were accepted by the supreme government : and the contracts which are now about to expire were based on the Committee's recommendations. The annual gain to the Indian exchequer by the economies suggested was, in round figures Rx. 1,280,000—nearly a

million sterling at the rates of exchange then current. In the course of 1887 the threads laid down by the Committee were taken up by Mr. Elliott in the capacity of Finance Commissioner with the Government of India; and a blue-book of 660 pages compiled by him discusses the subjects untouched by the defunct Committee. The insight which the three volumes afford into the mechanism of administration in British India leads us to question the universal applicability of Count Oxenstiern's views as to the little wisdom shown in the art of government. We are most of us too prone to accept the noiseless working of the state machine as a matter of course; and to ignore the vast amount of skill and labour it involves, while we lay the utmost stress on the failures which must beset the course of every human institution. Mr Elliott's Committee dragged many anomalies and some abuses to the light of day. It is tolerably certain, however, that no other empire in the world has less to conceal or would have borne so successfully a piercing scrutiny.

Hardly had Mr. Elliott completed this task ere he was called upon by Lord Dufferin to assume the portfolio of Public Works Minister, for such *de facto* is the Member of Council who has this great department in his charge. Every high official who has illustrated this office has had his peculiar hobby. Mr. Elliott's bent lay strongly

towards our railway system. There was doubtless much in its complicated mechanism and the immense variety of economic questions which its working involves that appealed to his severely practical mind and to his instincts as a born administrator. Hardly had he taken his seat in Council than he threw himself with characteristic vigour into the great controversy of private *versus* public enterprize in railways. The question is destined to exert so vast an influence on the history of civilization that a brief retrospect of its phases may not be out of place. England, the mother of railways, was at the time of their birth permeated with the doctrine of *laissez-faire*. Statesmen and economists were for the most part agreed that the function of the state stopped at the preservation of order, and that the fullest scope should be given to the impulse they were pleased to term "enlightened self-interest." There was much in our past history which justified this view. Our commerce, and indeed our Empire itself, had been the slow evolution of private enterprize. Hence an inactivity which was the reverse of masterly characterized the attitude of the state towards the wondrous discovery. The right of constructing new lines was allowed to become a bone of contention between rival promoters, whose struggles for victory in the courts and before Parliamentary

Committees increased three-fold the initial cost of our railways and has left England with a system, marred by many serious defects. Our example was followed by the United States, where 160,000 miles of railways are in the hands of 600 private companies. With few exceptions the lines are exploited by unscrupulous wirepullers who pile up vast fortunes at the expense of a long-suffering public. In Italy the Government has endeavoured to keep private enterprise under some control by granting concessions to competing lines throughout the length of the peninsula: but it is understood that most of them have combined against the common enemy—the traveller, the merchant and the producer. The springs of authority are stronger in France; and the state has reserved to itself the option of purchasing many existing lines, which are at present under private management. French railways are proverbial for combining a maximum of charges with a minimum of speed and accommodation. In northern and central Europe, on the other hand, the state, from motives connected with strategy, has retained a firm grip on the railway network. The result has fully justified this policy. The zone system, by which railways having termini at a common centre are divided into sections over which coaching and goods charges are identical, must revolutionize the working of lines throughout the world. Its success

has been demonstrated in Austro-Hungary, and it is only possible where railways are owned by the state. Though much diversity of practice still prevails, public opinion is slowly veering round towards the theory that the enormous powers now necessarily vested in companies can only be successfully wielded by the governing power. The splendid success of our postal and telegraph system has opened men's eyes to the advantage of state control over methods of inland locomotion. We are beginning to doubt the wisdom of the old war-cries. Enlightened self-interest is often synonymous with selfishness; and *laissez-faire* with a criminal abnegation of the first duty of a state—the protection of the weak against knavery and strength. Mr. Elliott, therefore, was in sympathy with modern thought when he pronounced strongly against the surrender of our Empire to the railway promoters. A patient trial had indeed been given to private management and it had been found wanting. All the conditions necessary for economical working were absent. Minute division of responsibility and close supervision are the A.B.C. of railway management. Neither was possible with Boards of Directors sitting 6,000 miles away; always readier to gain the good-will of their subordinates by sanctioning extravagant expenditure, than to seek the best interests of their shareholders.

"Enlightened self-interest" in railway management takes the form of unfair competition, of such devices as the lowering of junction rates in order to block rival lines, and of endeavours made to drive traffic into the longest "lead." The injustice thus involved cannot be remedied by state control. An attempt was made in that direction in 1887, when it was sought to impose on the principal companies a schedule of uniform maxima and minima goods' rates. It was frustrated by a declaration on the part of the E. I. R. authorities to the effect that they reserved to themselves the right of varying the classification as their interests might demand. Two years later a fierce contest began between that line and the new Indian Midland. The Cawnpore traffic was the aim of each; and the former company sought by every means in its power to force it through the longer 'lead,' *via* Jabalpur. The Government, after taking the opinion of eminent counsel, declined to interfere for the protection of exporters. During the term of office of Sir Charles Elliott (he had at last obtained the long deserved distinction of K.C.S.I.) a half-hearted step in the direction of control was forced on the Indian government by the home authorities. Under instructions from the Secretary of State an Act (1 of 1890) was passed which provided for the appointment of a commission to

settle disputes between rival companies. It is very doubtful, however, whether this imitation of English practice will be aught but a dead letter in India. The companies here can fall back on their contracts and evade compliance with any decision at which a commission might arrive as regards rates. One is driven to the conclusion that the State can exercise no efficient control over a vast commercial railway in private hands. Companies must be suffered to prey on each other or combine against the public till the evil grows too great for bearing. The question of the construction of railways is intimately connected with their management. Our policy in this respect was, till Sir Charles Elliott's regime, marked by a singular absence of consistency, and, indeed of common sense. The older lines were built on loans in the English market raised by the glittering bait of a gold guarantee so heavy that shareholders were content to rest on their oars, certain that, whether their lines were well or ill managed, the capital invested would always bring a handsome return. Though this system has been justly exploded the interests of the tax-payer have been, on more than one occasion of late years, sacrificed by the transfer of new lines to private management on most inequitable terms. When the Council were allowed a free hand, as in the case of the purchase of the Oudh and Rahilkhand and

the construction of the Amballa-Kalka lines, a far better bargain has been secured. Sir Charles Elliott's attitude as regards construction was logical enough. With the completion of the East Coast and the Assam-Chittagong lines, the trunk system of this Empire will be fairly complete; and branches, or feeders, will alone remain to be embarked on. It is preferable that such works should be undertaken by the government or by public bodies under governmental control on capital borrowed with the Secretary of State's guarantee. But the interest must be payable in silver and the guarantee must not exceed three per cent. If private promoters are willing to accept these terms there is abundant room for them; for government has its hands full, and the new-fledged public bodies have at present neither the means nor the knowledge to fit them for great enterprizes. The function of the constructors must, however, cease with the completion and equipment of the new lines. Experience has shown that trunks can work branches more economically than the latter can work for themselves. Therefore feeders should be leased out to lines with which they are connected at a fixed proportion of their gross earnings. Fifty per cent is a ratio which is fair to all concerned.

The battle of the gauges is a minor phase of the railway controversy. The broad gauge, so

called—5' 6"—is that which finds most favour at home: and it has been adopted on most of our trunk lines. Without pronouncing positively for the metre gauge, or underrating the evils of a break, Sir Charles Elliott, to judge from his public utterances, looks with favour on a system which favours extreme cheapness of construction and protects the permanent way from the wear and tear of heavy engines and high speeds. The question of breaks is another burning one in the railway world. After directing a series of elaborate experiments Sir Charles Elliott has pronounced in favour of the Vacuum break, influenced by its greater simplicity and the power it possesses of bringing a train to a complete stop without the intermittency in working needed in the case of its rival, the Westinghouse. These breaks have, therefore, been fitted to all the N. W. R. trains and to those on the E. B. S. and Oudh and Rohilkhund which carry mails. Here, at least, government management is in advance of that of any private company in India.

But Sir Charles is something more than a mere theorist. Besides formulating a policy to govern the relations of the state, with railway enterprise he devoted close personal attention to the development of the net-work of lines. Projects embracing 1064 miles of permanent way, begun before his term of office, were completed

during its course. Twelve lines, aggregating 596 miles; were carried through from their inception. Nine, including 1671 miles, were begun but were unfinished when he vacated his seat in Council. Surveys in 18 more projects were ordered; and in 12 of them the plans and specifications were ready at the close of his functions as public works minister.

Though railways were evidently Sir Charles's hobby, the interests of their rivals, the canals were not neglected. Two new systems came under construction. The first is the Peryar Canal in the Madras Presidency; a splendid work from an engineering point of view, but one which is not likely to bring a larger area than at present under cultivation. The second is that known as the Sirsa and Chenab Canal. The Panjab alone of Indian Provinces possesses every factor necessary to the success of artificial waterways. It is a dry and thirsty land, in spite of its historic rivers. Good water runs to waste, while acres untold lie fallow for want of it. The sturdy peasantry have turned their spears to ploughshares, and bring to bear on cultivation the dogged determination with which they once fought for the Khalsa. In Bengal proper, with the sole exception of South Behar, irrigation by means of canals has been a failure. Other provinces are either well provided already or enjoy climatic condition which render canals

superfluous. That the grand scheme connected with the Jhelam, which has been surveyed and has received the sanction of the Secretary of State, should still hang fire in the absence of allowed funds is deeply to be regretted in the interests of Upper India.

The personal equation is of the first importance to the smooth working of so vast a department as that of Public Works. When Sir Charles Elliott took his seat in council the civil branch was seething with discontent. Loud complaints were heard on all sides of retarded promotion and undue preference shown to Royal Engineers. The first grievance is a very real one. No attempt had ever been made to ascertain the strength at which the staff of engineers must be maintained, or to adjust recruitments. The wildest guesses at Indian requirements were made: and when Cooper's Hill College was set on foot the annual supply of young Civil Engineers was fixed at fifty. In 1874 no fewer than eighty were launched on an Indian career. Sir Charles Elliott's enquiries as to the real needs of all branches of the P. W. D. resulted in placing it beyond all doubt that the staff, exclusive of the military works branch, should be kept down to 730 officers; 600 of whom should be civil engineers. Actuarial computations proved that twenty-four men were required annually to fill vacancies caused by deaths and retire-

ments among the latter. Half of these will in future be supplied by Cooper's Hill and half by Indian colleges or recruited from deserving subordinates. Under this arrangement the utility of Cooper's Hill appears open to grave doubt. The Indian tax-payer has every right to protest against the maintenance of an expensive establishment at home which turns out a dozen young engineers annually. A vast impetus would be given to technical education in this country were twelve additional appointments in the upper grade of the P. W. Department allotted to candidates from our engineering colleges. The other ground for discontent among the civil engineers has less foundation in fact. There had, doubtless, been an undue weight given to tact and pleasant manners in selecting men for the secretariat and the Consulting Engineer's branches. On the other hand no dispassionate observer can doubt that these qualities are conspicuous in the products of Woolwich and Chatham. Outside these very small sections there is really no ground to suspect partiality in the authorities for Royal Engineers. The department is divided into several wholly distinct branches—those of Road, and Buildings; Irrigation, and Railways. An officer who has cast his lot in with the first may find that his coevals in other lines have distanced him; and that owing to no fault of his own. But inequalities of promotion

must always arise where a profession affords and careers so diverse. It is precisely the same with the regular army. In one regiment a captaincy is reached in eight years: in another a subaltern may pine for sixteen ere reaching the proximate goal of his ambition. The grievances of the civil engineers are, therefore, either incurable or illusory but where palliation was possible it was secured by Sir Charles Elliott's anxious care for the interests of his subordinates

CHAPTER VI.

ADMINISTRATION OF BENGAL.

In November 1890 Sir Charles Elliott received the offer from Lord Lansdowne of the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal, which was about to be vacated by Sir Steuart Bayley. He hesitated long ere he accepted the thorny crown. Difficulties which would have dismayed a less vigorous mind lay before him. Bengal, as he told the guests at a farewell dinner given by the covenanted service to its retiring chief, is second only to Russia in the demand it makes on the administrative faculties of its ruler. He was new to the Province, and unknown to nine-tenths of his future colleagues. How far he has justified the expectations of his friends must be discussed at that date, which Bengal hopes is yet distant, when he shall seek the well-earned repose of private life. We live too near the events which have followed on his accession to power to judge them from the historian's stand point. And then, though we seldom recognize the fact, all human actions are links in a chain of causation stretching through unnumbered ages. The true value, therefore, of isolated facts cannot be appraised until time shall have displayed their ultimate consequences. Our judgment, too,

is apt to be distorted by passion or prejudice, disturbing the attitude of calm scrutiny which the historian must adopt if his work is to be aught save a nine days' wonder. "We may blush to think," writes Lord Mahon, "that even those years which, on looking back, are universally admitted most prosperous and those actions now considered irreproachable were not free at the time from most loud and angry complaints. How much has prosperity been felt, but how little acknowledged! How sure a road to popularity has it always been to tell us that we are the most wretched and ill-used people on the face of the earth! To such an extent, in fact, have these outcries proceeded that a very acute observer has founded a new theory on them; and, far from viewing them as evidence of suffering, considers them as one of the proofs and tokens of good government." It is only natural that the policy of an ardent reformer—of one who is not content that a thing should be done well if it can be done better—should excite acrimonious and unreasoning criticism; and that the aspirations which prompt it should be persistently misunderstood. A recapitulation of the chief measures which have characterized Sir Charles Elliott's brief career as Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, may serve to correct misapprehensions and pave the way for the future annalist.

Among the drawbacks of our executive system, is the fact that offices which make the heaviest demands on the bodily and mental vigour often devolve on men who are long past their prime. Hence the dread of responsibility, the laxity and the want of backbone which have again and again led to disaster during the past decade. No part of India stood in greater need of a reformer than this fair province of Bengal, when, in December 1890, Sir Charles Elliott was called on to guide her destinies. His exhaustless energy and self-reliance led him to take nothing for granted, and to place the most venerable institutions on their trial. This apparent oblivion of the labours of former travellers on well-beaten paths, and of the fact, as true in our day, as in Horace's, that many strong men lived before Agamemnon, is a characteristic perchance better suited to the government of a brand-new colony than of a province where intense conservatism underlies an apparent assimilation of western ideas. But no one who knows him will deny that he has sufficient patience to listen to the views of others and sufficient candour to give them their due weight.

Recognizing the fact that sound finance is the mainspring of good government, Sir Charles Elliott's most strenuous efforts have been directed to increasing the scanty resources which imperial exigencies, real or supposed, place at his disposal.

The quinquennial revision of the financial relations between the supreme and the provincial governments took place during the current year. The Lieutenant-Governor seized the opportunity thus afforded of expressing his views on this point with no uncertain voice. Full justice was done by the Government of India to the efficiency with which the revenues of Bengal had been administered during the term of the expiring contract. The income from civil services had expanded from Rx. 3,410,000 to Rx. 3,610,000; that from railways from Rx. 2,200,000 to Rx. 2,975,000. But it proposed to sweep a portion of a prospective increment, which might be as much as Rx. 190,000 annually, into the imperial coffers. The Bengal Government was deprived of control over the Tirhut State Railway, and of all income derivable therefrom: and the project of imperializing that main source of our provincial revenue—the Eastern Bengal Railway system—was also mooted. Sir Charles Elliott, who is blessed in an eminent degree with the courage of his opinions, protested strongly against any further curtailment of the revenues. The period to which the contracts were restricted was, he argued, too short; for the consequences of good finance or of the reverse cannot be fully developed in five years. Better far it would be to declare the whole revenue of Bengal provincial and levy certain fixed percen-

tages for imperial needs, than make each period of revision a signal for more exorbitant demands. The Government of India is nought but a vast spending department. Incalculable sums are flung into the abyss of frontier defence: while, owing to the apathy with which the glaring defects in our monetary system are regarded, we see the volume of home charges constantly swelling. Unproductive expenditure must be controlled with jealous care; or in other words, the credit side of the imperial budget should be stationary, or at least, slowly progressive. On the other hand there are no limits to the benefits which would flow from a policy of real decentralization in finance. Bengal labours under climatic disadvantages such as no other tract of the like area endures. Vast systems of drainage are urgently needed if the central and eastern districts are to be anything but a hot-bed of disease. Roads, feeder railway-lines, water-supply, medical relief—such are a few out of many pressing wants. All might be supplied in a decade or two if the government had but the power of granting adequate assistance by way of loans or subsidies to local bodies charged with the construction of works of public utility. The same fearless eagerness to stand up for the right was exemplified in a protest against that fanaticism which deems the revenues of India and the health of countless millions as nought compared with a

passion for notoriety and hysterical sentiment. In answer to that baneful influence commonly known as "Exeter Hall" he pointed out that the increase in our revenue for opium consumed in India had been barely eight per cent in ten years—not more than was proportionate to the growth of population in consuming districts. He urged that the closure of licensed shops for the sale of opium would certainly drive men to lose their health and money in illicit dens. He put in a good word for a much-abused and misunderstood drug by asserting, that it enables its votaries to do heavy tasks at a minimum cost of tissue, and is reputed to be a prophylactic of malaria in the steamy swamps of Lower Bengal. Ever eager to develop the resources at his disposal, the Lieutenant-Governor directed that the manufacture of salt by Government agency should be resumed in districts on the Bay of Bengal, where its cost is hardly a sixth of that entailed by the produce of Cheshire. Of equal importance with sound finance is a good judicial and policy system. Here, too, Sir Charles Elliott's ceaseless activity has found a useful outlet. The working of the Calcutta Small Cause Court—an institution corresponding with our English County Courts but vouchsafed larger powers—had been the subject of hostile criticism, due, perhaps, to the fierce light which beats about all forms of governmental agency in the metropolis, rather than

to its inherent defects. A close enquiry made it clear that the method of transacting business there compared favourably with that of kindred institutions in Bombay and Madras, except as regards the duration of contested cases. The excessive delays were largely due to a want of method in framing the cause list and too frequent postponements. These have now been reduced by the device of postponing cases not reached or part-heard *de die in diem*. In consonance with the views of the native community Sir Charles Elliott protested against a proposed reduction of the Small Cause Court Judges' jurisdiction from suits of Rs. 200 in value to those of half that amount; and objected to the option of an appeal to the High Court being permitted. He remarked that the arrears would be sensibly lessened by an indulgence in fewer holidays and a lengthening of the hours spent in Court. There can be no doubt that some curtailment is needed in the licence in regard to vacations arrogated by our Civil Courts. It is a survival of the usages imported from England by the old Supreme Court. The re-organization of the subordinate judicial service was a matter of still greater urgency. Yearly swells the volume of litigation; and everywhere a cry rises for more civil courts of the first instance. The intense monotony of life in the interior leads men to give vent to their surplus energies in the arena

offered by the courts of law. An experienced district judge, who had been employed in enquiries as to the need of strengthening our judicial staff, had recommended large additions in the lower grades. Sir Charles Elliott supported his proposal, observing, however, that newly-founded Civil Courts rarely paid their way at first; and that the Supreme Government must expect a heavy addition to our liabilities for the cost of the additional establishments. It was only fair, he argued, that a large proportion of the loss should be met by a reassignment of provincial revenues. The administration of criminal justice is still more closely connected with executive functions. Here the local knowledge gained by His Honor during his extended tours stood him in good stead. He had, too, before him the report of a strong committee appointed by his predecessor to enquire into the admitted defects of our police system, which is largely dependent on the working of the courts. A lack of close supervision on the part of the district chief; irregularity in attendance at court on that of his subordinates; frequent and unnecessary remands—such were a few of the many defects revealed by these enquiries. They have been, in large measure, remedied. Deputy Magistrates now make it a point of honour not to plead want of time as an excuse for adjourning a case and a greater degree of zeal has been infus-

ed into all ranks of public servants. The internal organization of the police has not been neglected. Increased pay and allowances have been conceded to the rank and file; and superior educational qualifications insisted on in those which we may call the non-commissioned grades. The reserves have been reorganized, on a military basis; and legislation has been sketched out in view of improving the condition and increasing the powers of that backbone of good district government, the village watchman. Convinced by personal experience of the benefit to the people resulting from frequent tours by heads of departments, Sir Charles Elliott framed a code of rules prescribing a minimum period to be spent in the interior by each officer. The resolution embodying these orders excited considerable comment, and the wisdom of fettering the discretion of high officials was questioned far and wide. It must, however, be admitted, that in this and other respects, Sir Charles's theory and practice coincide. He shuns delights and lives laborious days. No considerations of personal comfort are allowed to outweigh those connected with this primary duty: and few portions indeed of the vast province committed to his care have not been passed in review by him.

The well-being of the agriculturist is of greater importance in Bengal than in any other Presidency. Various causes had conspired to

impair it. The Permanent Settlement left the immemorial rights of the tenantry at the mercy of an unscrupulous landlord. The fierce competition for land, resulting from the advance of population and the ruin of handicrafts by English competition, had riveted the chains imposed by Lord Cornwallis and his advisers. The first really successful attempt to protect the tiller of the soil was made in the much abused Tenancy Act of 1885. One of the most important clauses in this, the ryots' Magna Charta, renders it possible for the authorities to insist on a survey and record of rights being carried out in any tract which had not been subjected to these processes. The necessity of putting this law in force is felt more or less in every district, but nowhere more pressingly than in Northern Behar, where rack-renting and extortion of all kinds leave the unhappy ryot within a hair's breadth of famine. Sir Charles Elliott pleaded the cause of these really dumb millions. He pointed out that a cadastral survey was merely an importation of accurate methods and skilled supervision into a process which all Zemindars are forced by self-interest to attempt for themselves. The proposed survey was therefore, in a good landlord's interest: for it would enable him to recover large tracts which carelessness and rule-of-thumb have left in the possession of squatters. The ryots on the other hand, would

secure a bulwark against invasion of their rights by village tyrants. Who shall say that these advantages are dearly bought at an expenditure of seven annas—hardly as many pence—per acre? His Honor admitted frankly that furious and obstinate opposition would be excited by the survey. Ignorance would conspire with an interest in maintaining the countless abuses arising from the existing chaos to prejudice mens' minds against a most useful reform. Sir Charles Elliott, however, argued that the results would be well worth the cost: and urged that a cadastral survey of 12,500 square miles in North Behar, to be completed in five years, might receive the sanction of the Viceroy and Secretary of State. These high functionaries acceded this warm support to the proposal; and in spite of keen opposition the great measure has been definitely resolved on.

His Honor is, indeed, the last man to shrink from personal odium when it is entailed by a course dictated by his sense of duty. Nowhere is the need for sanitation more pronounced than in our most advanced Province; and nowhere, alas, is it less understood and recognized. The public bodies which are the fruits of Lord Ripon's policy of Self-Government, have not invariably risen to the occasion. Our towns are hotbeds of disease. Sir Charles was forced to admit that

the well-meant attempt to associate the people in the management of public affairs was half a century in advance of the times we live in. While the power of municipalities must be enlarged, the bonds uniting them with the authority of Government officers stand in equal need of strengthening. The Sanitary Commissioner had been little else than a quasi-ornamental appendage of Government. He has been developed into a Sanitary Board with greatly enlarged powers, and special engineering experience at his call. The Vaccination Department too has undergone drastic reform. Centralization had been pushed to external limits, and no pains had been taken to gain the help and countenance of local officials. All this is now changed. The district is now the unit in vaccine operations. Civil Surgeons, who are posted at each head quarters, are responsible for work within their several charges, and a strong staff of inspectors and sub-inspectors have been placed under their supervision. Education in the true sense of the word must precede the attempt to enforce sanitary rules. Sir Charles Elliott has given free scope to his predecessor Sir George Campbell's far-seeing policy which dotted the provinces with primary schools. Municipalities are enjoined to devote a larger share of their revenues to the support of such. That which is called high education is too firmly established to need state

bolstering. The District High Schools will, therefore, be surrendered to the care of local bodies. The too long neglected cause of technical education has received his earnest support. Amongst his reform has been an entire re-casting of the Engineering College at Sibpur. It occupies the site selected by that gentle enthusiast Bishop Heber for the cherished foundation by the aid of which he hoped to bring the best traditions of our English Universities to bear on the training of young converts for the Christian Ministry. His Honor declared that the increase in the number of youths educated for engineering pursuits and qualified to develop the resources of the province was an object on which he was justified in incurring a large outlay, inasmuch as he was confident that all such outlay would be fully reproductive. The College now consists of an Engineering section and one devoted to the technical training of apprentices. Four appointments in the upper subordinate grades of the Department of Public Works are now filled by competition amongst its pupils. The College examination, with two years' practical training, is accepted as qualifying for the post of Engineer under the District Boards. The technical schools which those bodies are forming throughout the interior will, in time be affiliated with Sibpur. We are, in fact, in a fair way of seeing the reproach removed

that English rule has done little towards reviving the technical skill for which India was once world-renowned, but which has been crushed beneath the heel of Western competition.

The tribes on our eastern frontier have made themselves unpleasantly conspicuous of late. Nowhere are civilization and utter barbarism in closer contact than in the rich tracts bordering on the habitat of the fierce Lushais. This country has lately been made a separate administrative change, and the task of overawing them facilitated by a very large expenditure on roads and bridges.

Nor amid the care and drudgery of his high office has the cause of charity and social progress been neglected by Sir Charles Elliott. He is a warm supporter of that movement for bringing skilled medical and surgical aid home to the helpless women of this country which will illustrate Lady Dufferin's name when the political and diplomatic triumphs of her husband shall have passed into oblivion. The Fund owes to him a donation of Rs. 15,000, which should serve as a stimulus to the generosity of others who have far fewer claims on their purses than a Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. There is, indeed no movement which aims at lessening the sorrows of life or increasing its innocent pleasures which does not find in him a warm supporter. The task thus imposed would be beyond his strength but for the active sympa-

thy of Lady Elliott, who nobly seconds his efforts for the common good.

This imperfect sketch of a great and useful career speaks a moral which he that runs may read. High aims persistently followed lead to honour and renown, and, that which is sweeter still to noble minds, they bring with them the consciousness of talents well applied, of evil impulses eradicated, of good instincts fostered and strengthened. Of Sir Charles Elliott may be said that which John Stuart Mill proudly records of his father, the historian of British India :—

“ His moral inculcations were at all times, those of the *Socratici Viri*—justice, temperance (to which he gave a very extended application), veracity, perseverance, readiness to encounter pain, and especially labour, regard for the public good ; the estimation of persons according to their merits and things according to their intrinsic usefulness ; a life of exertion in contradistinction to one of self-indulgent ease and sloth.”

APPENDIX

CONTAINING SELECTED PUBLIC ADDRESSES BY SIR CHARLES
ELLIOTT AS LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR.

SPEECH ON THE INAUGURATION OF THE DUF- FERIN HOSPITAL, CALCUTTA, 2ND MARCH, 1891.

His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, in inviting her Excellency to declare the hospital open, said:—Your Excellency,—The report which you have heard read contains so full an account of the history and objects of this institution that very few words, in addition, are needed from me on this occasion, for all of you, ladies and gentlemen, have had or will now have an opportunity of inspecting the building, and you will, I am sure, feel satisfied that it has been well and sagaciously planned, that the accommodation provided is moderate in quantity and suitable in quality, and that we have good reason for hoping that it will soon be in full working order, and that the classes for whose benefit it is designed will flock to it and will obtain relief from much physical suffering through its aid. It is a great cause for satisfaction that your Excellency is not opening to-day only the portion of the main building, the construction of which is finished, but that you are really opening the whole set of subsidiary buildings which the original planners of the institution designed. A hospital such as we see before us would be altogether unsuitable and inadequate without the addition of a dispensary and a consulting-room for out-patients, quarters for the resident doctor and matron, separate accommodation for wealthier patients and out offices. All of these, I rejoice to say, have now been provided. The offer of the money required for a children's ward has been nobly answered, and I have the great pleasure of announcing that the whole of the sum required to meet it

had been subscribed by yesterday. The list of subscribers whose names have been received since the report was printed is as follows :—

Raja Janki Bulluv Sen, of Rungpur	...	...	4,000
Nawab Bahadur of Moorshidabad	...	...	1,000
Raja Govind Lall Ray, of Rungpur	...	...	1,000
Rai Dhunput Singh Bahadur	...	...	1,000
Babu Hem Chunder Gossain, of Serampur	..	...	500
Sir Andrew Scoble	...	...	500
Fakhroonnisa Begum, of Gya	...	...	200
Nawab Syed Zaimul Abideen Khan Bahadoor,			
Teroze Jung of Moorshidabad	...	...	130
Prince Jehan Kudr (2nd donation)	...	...	125
Syed Ameer Hossein	...	...	100
Syed Ali Belgrami, of Hyderabad	...	...	100
Syed Ikbul Ali Khan, Bahadur of Hyderabad	...	...	100
Kajah Wahid Jan of Gya	...	...	100
Mr. Meugens	...	...	500
Babu Janokey Nath Roy	...	...	1,000

In addition to this, Nawab Ashanoollah Khan Bahadur, of Dacca, has intimated that he will make up any balance required. I am proud to think that Bengal has nobly responded to the call I made upon her, and that the reproaches which were levelled at her at the last annual meeting have been wiped away and cannot again be repeated (Applause). But while I mention these contributions with pride and pleasure, I would not have it forgotten that there are other contributions more valuable than money. You all remember the lines of Tennyson :—

I asked them, give me immortality,

Then didst thou part in asking with a smile,

Like wealthy men who care not how they give.

I do not undervalue the gifts of money, for we cannot do without them, but I cannot forget that many persons may appear liberal who do not deny themselves one pleasure or

luxury, or suffer one moment's inconvenience in consequence of these gifts. I do emphatically say that the hard-worked official or business man who out of his scanty leisure contributes time and thought to the furtherance of a scheme like this does more real service to the cause than many whose money contributions are blazoned abroad. Service of this sort has been freely rendered by Mr. Guyther, the Executive Engineer, who not only prepared the plans, but also supervised the whole work of construction; the names of other members of the P. W. D., who have worked with and under him with equal alacrity have been mentioned by the Honorary Secretary. It is a great pleasure to me to be able to record these good works on the part of the Department with which I was lately so exclusively connected. But the most important assistance of all of this kind has been contributed by Mr. Cotton (Applause), the indefatigable Secretary of the Bengal Branch of the Dufferin Fund. Those who know how heavily and continuous a Secretary's work is will best be able to realize the greatness of the service which Mr. Cotton has rendered to the cause by the large amount of voluntary work which he has undertaken and ably carried out in its behalf. Last, but not least, I may be permitted to say that you, Lady Lansdowne, are included in the list of benefactors of this class, both for the constant and assiduous labour you have undertaken as President of the Dufferin Fund, and also in that you have graciously consented, in spite of the burdens of your many public engagements, to favour us by your presence at this ceremony—a condescension for which, on behalf of all present, I have to tender you our sincere thanks. (Applause.) And now I will conclude with a prayer in which I am sure that all the people assembled here, whether Christians or Jews, Mahomedans or Hindus, will join—that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon this undertaking, and that the Dufferin Hospital in Calcutta may fulfil all that we expect of it, and may be the means of rescuing many of

the women and children of this great city from physical suffering and premature death. (Loud applause.) I ask your Excellency to declare the Hospital open.

SPEECH ON THE INAUGURATION OF
THE VICTORIA HALL, HUGHLI, JULY 11TH, 1891.

His Honor in reply said that he had responded with much pleasure to the invitation to declare the Victoria Hall open, because, independently of the great gratification it was to him to visit Hughli and make the acquaintance of the large, and highly-educated community of the town, it was especially interesting owing to his always having heard of Hughli as being less peculiarly Indian than most other places. Long before coming to Bengal he had more than once discussed with Bengal officers the respective merits of the Patriarchal system of Government as practised in the North Western Provinces and Upper India, where his own training had been, and of the more legal and more elaborately organized system of Government through or with the help of local bodies and the leaders of Native society. In these discussions Hughli had always been held up as a district in which the inhabitants were so educated, so loyal, and so sensible of the true requirements of the administration and of the assistance that can be given by local self-government that that district at least could do without the Patriarchal system. He now met for the first time the assembled community, and so far as he could judge from appearances this report of Hughli was true. The objects of Government seemed to be understood, its views supported by the good sense of the people, and they were ever ready to assist the local administration. The fact of their building the hall in which they were assembled in commemoration of the Jubilee of their gracious Sovereign and naming it after her showed the loyalty and good feeling that actuated their lives.

His Honor wished to lay particular stress at this particular time on this point, for just now there was a wave of disloyalty and distrust abroad the origin of which sprang from a certain Bill introduced at the commencement of the year. He wished to appeal to the good sense of such a community as that assembled to do their best to put down such sentiments. Political disputes must of necessity always have in their train feelings of bitterness; but it behoved all good citizens to abstain from prolonged agitation and to bury the hatchet as soon as possible, and also to discourage those who try to stir up a spirit of race-hatred and alienation. The good intentions of the Government should be accepted and not only should bygones be bygones, but it was through the loyalty of the upper and better educated classes that better feeling should be revived. Here in Hughli, he might just mention one particular opportunity of assisting Government and showing good feeling. It had been brought to his notice that a Hindu gentleman was in the habit of causing annoyance to his Mahomedan neighbours in the Imambara by beating gongs and blowing trumpets during their hours of prayer. Now nobody was entitled and nobody who was at all enlightened would wish, to exercise his own religious feelings in such a way as to hurt the religious feelings of others. Every man of right feeling ought to allow to others the same religious toleration and respect which he would wish for himself. His Honor said he was glad to think that so far as he could judge, his words seemed to meet with approval, and he trusted that the good sense of the community would settle matters amicably, and that he should not hear of any necessity arising for the intervention of the Magistrate and the employment of the police in this matter, but that Hughli would maintain its fair-fame as an enlightened and well ordered town. His Honor then said that he would reply to the points mentioned in the address.

First as regards drainage. He had no definite information which was with him as regards the scheme, but he understood

that such a scheme had been prepared and it would be called for. If it appeared to be good and sufficient then he would assist by sanctioning a Government loan on easy terms, as had been done in the cases of Howrah, Utterpara, &c., under the conditions laid down by the Supreme Government.

The second point was the water-supply. This was one he had very much at heart. There were at present two schemes before the Sanitary Board for the supply of water to riparian Municipalities. The first was that works were to be established opposite and similar to those of Futta for the supply of all riparian Municipalities on the right bank. This seemed the better scheme in some ways, but the chief difficulty would be the allotment of fair proportion of expenses to the several riparian Municipalities. The second scheme was that each Municipality should have its own pumping, settling, and filtering machinery for its own supply, and this would be cheaper in some respects, as for instance in necessitating a much less length of piping; but the cost of machinery and working would probably be much greater. Whatever the scheme might be, however, he expressed a hearty desire to see during his term of office a supply of good water to all riparian Municipalities. As regards railway stations by the Hughly Bridge the question had been brought forward once before, and should be again enquired into, as it was possible that local wishes might, at any rate, be met so far as the establishment of a narrow passenger platform was concerned.

SPEECH ON THE PRESENTATION OF ADDRESSES AT MYMENSINGH.

His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor (replying thanked the representatives of the several Associations for their very friendly and loyal welcome, and expressed his gratitude for the kind expressions contained in each and all. He was glad to see that they had not only noticed, but had