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FAMINE TRUTHS,—HALF TRUTHS,—  
UNTRUTHS.

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*Sed veteris populi Romani prospera vel adversa consilium  
mihi tradere,—sine ira et studio quorum causas  
procul habeo,—TACITUS ANNALS.*

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BY  
CHARLES W. McMINN,  
*I.C.S., Retired.*

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## PREFACE.

IN the Report of the Indian Famine Commission of May, 1901, Sir Anthony Macdonnell has said the last word apparently about the treatment of these frightful calamities, while his powerful individuality is strongly impressed on every page.

About the origin, the history, the etiology of famine, nothing hardly is found, nor was the subject within the scope of the Committee's instructions. To one paragraph of the report, however, 270, a foot-note is added, dealing with the land assessments of ancient India, and the "unjust comparisons" with British taxation, to the disparagement of the latter, which have appeared in the Indian press; these comparisons are declared to be of "antiquarian rather than of practical interest." I submit that this is a very partial view of the situation. Not only in the Indian press but at home, have repeated efforts been made by responsible writers, English, French, Indian, to trace the causation of Indian famine to heavy taxation and misgovernment. A comparison is made, with an outward show of candour, learning, and loyalty, between the famines of ancient times and those under British rule, by Romesh Chander Dutt, Professor of Indian History in London University, and he traces the frequency and severity of the latter to the crushing pressure of the land tax now exacted, as compared with the mild and gentle fiscal methods of Mogul and Hindu.

In other words the three hundred millions of India are informed that they have only to revert to the rule and customs of their ancestors, getting rid somehow of the British incubus, then they will find peace, plenty,



and bliss of every kind. If these things are true I for one would be foremost to exclaim with John Bright, "Perish the British empire in India."

If they are false, as I know they are, it must still be perilous to peaceful rule to permit the millions of India to be told weekly from the press, that they have only to get rid of their tyrants in order to be happy in this world as in the next.

Therefore the matter is not only of antiquarian interest but also of political and imperial importance. Professors of history, who taught such inflammatory doctrine to the rising generation, would not be tolerated in France, Germany, Italy, anywhere save possibly in the United States, which is now, after its honoured President has been murdered, deploring the license which it permitted to the preaching of fanatics. In England Mr. Dutt has not only been allowed to defame British administration unchecked, he has not been even refuted in any direct and authoritative fashion.

He is the principal champion of a section of the National Congress which is always oscillating between adulation and sedition, its professions are full of lipservice and loyalty, its doctrines and arguments all lead to the conclusion that there can be no happiness for India, whose millions are being starved to death by the British, till their rule shall cease.

The subject may logically be treated under several heads, first the causes of famine in ancient times, then their number, severity, and destructive effects. The comparative results of British famine policy would claim treatment, leading generally to the poverty of the masses, its cause, and the general trend of their environment under the white men's rule.

Since I commenced this little book there have appeared several other detailed arguments on the same subject.





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Mr. Digby's *Prosperous India* is a bulky volume: the author writes in the same spirit and on the same lines as Mr. Dutt. His Excellency Lord Curzon has reviewed the incidence of the land tax at the present day. Mr. Thurburn has addressed the Fabian Society in vague but vigorous condemnation of the British system such as he knew it in one province. Mr. Skrine has described India with great powers of imaginary narrative.

I have served in India in four different provinces for nearly forty years, and was on special duty for seven years, engaged in discovering and describing the economic conditions of the province of Oudh, past and present. I ought to know the truth and will try to tell it.



## LIST OF ERRATA.

- P. 17. marginal reference.  
Elliot VI, should be Elliot VII.
- P. 44. marginal reference 1890, should be 1900.
- Pp. 60, 61. monogram, should be monograph.
- P. 57. their widows, should be poor widows.
- P. 84. samru, should be Samru.
- P. 118. gul, should be gulf.
- P. 95. fertile, should be futile.
- P. 96. In N.-W.P. certain crop estimates were taken  
from model farm cultivation at Cawnpur.
- P. 104. coinage, should be courage.
- P. 122. nearly sixty, should be above sixty.



## CHAPTER I.

Causes of famine in Oudh and elsewhere.—Extravagance of King and Nobles.—Taxation generally under British rule, salt tax and land tax.—Taxation under ancient Hindus.—The Greek travellers.—The Buddhist traveller.—Mogul Taxation.—The Jesuit fathers.—Ovington.—The *Jizya* a Hindu poll-tax.—Insults and tortures used in tax-collection.—Moslem punishments.—Jahangir.

FAMINES were in almost every case originally caused by drought in India at least, though sometimes their severity was enhanced by wars, rebellion, or heavy taxation. Thirty years ago I took up the subject in my preface to the *Oudh Gazetteer* but I then, however imperfectly, dealt with several cognate subjects, which have, I think, not been treated in any of the famine reports, cyclopedic as they are. I touched upon the withdrawal of enormous numbers from industrial pursuits to be employed as bandit bodyguards by the great nobles or the sovereign. I mentioned the frightful extravagance of the Oudh Court, the Prime Minister would get 150,000 £ per annum, and a coronation would cost two millions.

The Viceroy and all the governors of Indian provinces, the rulers of 230 millions, get about half the amount which this one Deputy Governor of six millions received each year.

I mentioned the enormous amount of food grain required for the maintenance of elephants. One Raja in Oudh has now above one hundred elephants. The king kept 500. The Delhi sovereigns, according to their royal chronicler had, Akbar 32,000 elephants, Jahangir 113,000.

Allowing for exaggeration, the amount of human food and labor which were squandered on this item, when every

Jahangir's  
memoirs,  
pp. 17-45.



other potentate also kept as many elephants as he could, must have been prodigious. In order to support the extravagance of the court the taxation must have been heavy, and the peasantry always on the verge of inanition.

Mr. Dutt in his work on famines properly lays great stress on the amount of the land tax under ancient and modern rulers and on the mode in which it is expended. Obviously a famine which began in drought would be continued and aggravated by the resourceless condition of the peasantry crushed by taxation, and if the British Government by its grinding enhancements, and enormous remittances home, has added to the burthens of the unfortunate people, so as to increase the famine mortality, it should be impeached before the public opinion of the civilised world. In treating of famine causation therefore it is right to consider taxation as a most important factor.

The Famine Commission have dealt with taxation only as regards land tax. I may briefly refer to British taxation before describing ancient systems. We are informed that in the Central Provinces for instance the average yield and value per acre of staple food crops are respectively 595 lb per acre and Rs. 15-5, and that land revenue is less than 4 per cent. of the crop.

Famine  
Report of  
1900, p. 88.

In Bombay Government takes 7 per cent. of the crop, and in other provinces varying proportions rising to 20 per cent. in Gujarat alone, averaging 7 per cent. for all India. The Commissioners differed in opinion about Bombay. Of course as a whole this is moderate, though there is no sufficient explanation given as to why it should be 20 per cent. in Gujarat; possibly one reason was that drought and famine were practically unknown there of old.

The Famine Commission say nothing about other forms of taxation. I treated the subject of the salt tax in 1870 possibly in too controversial a tone. Mr. Alan Hume, the old Salt Commissioner, now the father of the Congress, in his endeavours to prove that the salt tax was a most light and righteous imposition, had fallen into two serious mistakes as to the weight of the burthen on the Oudh peasant and as to the success of local manufacture; as Gazette officer working with fuller information and at greater leisure I detected these errors: of course my note was suppressed, and I had to suffer the consequences when





Mr. Hume was Home Secretary. They are not worth mentioning here I admit. Mr. Hume declared that the salt tax was a mere trifle less than one per cent, I think, on the peasant's income. I proved it to be about 3 per cent. if men and cattle got proper allowances.

Mr. Hume made no provision for women and children, which no doubt was due to hasty and eager departmental advocacy. Since I wrote about 1870 railways have cheapened the carriage, and probably 2 per cent. of a peasant's income would now represent the incidence of salt tax, and that is too much.

Sir Richard Temple in Chambers' Cyclopedia makes the incidence of the salt tax six pence per head; this would be about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.\* on farm labourers with families.

The small farmer has to pay nothing else to Government unless he drinks liquor or smokes opium, he is free from income tax, his tobacco, sugar, and simple condiments are untaxed, and unless he goes to law he has little to complain of.

At any rate the land tax is not on the whole heavy. Seven or eight per cent. of the gross produce of the soil is far less than any former Government took; in fact, as I shall proceed to show, there is too much reason to fear, if contemporary travellers are to be believed, that whatever were the precepts of the Koran and of Manu, the Governments, both Hindu and Mussulman, too often took three-quarters of the produce, that is 75 per cent. or more than ten times the proportion which is now demanded in most provinces. I will briefly refer to the few authorities which we possess for the early days of Hindu and Buddhist rule.

Mr. Dutt might be supposed to know something of India under Hindu Sovereigns, even if, as we shall see, he is absolutely ignorant of his country's annals during the 750 years of Moslem rule.

He states that the "Greek and Chinese travellers who visited India between the fourth century B.C. and the seventh century A.D. attest to the mild and moderate land tax of India," and the "testimony of all travellers

Famines,  
pp. 226-227.

\* Among the benefits of British rule to Bengal, may be reckoned the cheapening of salt since the days of Warren Hastings. Good salt sold at 680 R per hundred maunds in 1788. This would be by retail seven seers per rupee, it is now about eleven in Lower Bengal.

Seton Karr  
Selection,  
Calcutta  
Gazette,  
p. 244.

McCrindle's  
Ancient  
India, p.  
48.  
Indika of  
Megasthe-  
nes, pp. 30,  
42, 84, 210.

who visited India in the ancient times" proves this. He goes on to quote Megasthenes, who does not say a word about land tax so far as quoted, and he omits the portion of the text which follows, and which indicates that the ancient Hindus paid a very heavy land tax. The exact statement may be given so that we may thoroughly appreciate the methods of Bengali historians, when they become politicians. Megasthenes quoted by Strabo describes at length the immunity of the Indian cultivators from all molestations by the soldiers, who might be fighting fiercely while ploughmen peacefully drove their oxen beside the contending armies. Megasthenes proceeds to make another remark touching the rent or land tax and this is what Mr. Dutt omits; it is as follows :—

"The whole of the land is the property of the King, and the husbandmen till it on condition of receiving one-fourth of the produce," that is, Government took three-fourths.

Diodorus, another traveller, states to the same effect, viz., that the husbandmen "besides the rent pay into the royal treasury one-fourth." Here are two different travellers in different centuries, who give different accounts of the land tax, but both agree in representing it as extremely high; they refer to different periods, and each may have been quite correct in recording what was the custom during his time.

Ancient  
India,  
pp. 60, 44.

Megasthenes was at any rate a far more careful observer than the Buddhist priest. That he relates several marvels is true, and Strabo attacks him as if he were the author of these fabrications. The apology which is made for the Greek is the same which is now tendered for the authorities at home who have so often been misguided. Generally speaking writes Strabo, "the men who have hitherto written on the affairs of India were a set of liars. Deimachos holds the first place on the list, Megasthenes comes next, while Onesikratos and Nearchus with others of the same class manage to stammer out a few words of truth. They coined the fables concerning men with ears large enough to sleep in, men without any mouth, without noses, with only one eye."

McCrindle adds: "Strabo was however quite mistaken in supposing that these stories had been coined by the Greek writers, they were but "fictions of the Indian ima-



gination." These fables as Schwanbeck remarks "could not be disregarded by the companions of Alexander, and scarcely any of them doubted their truth since they were communicated to them by the Brahmins whose learning and wisdom they held in the utmost veneration."

We must always remember when reading works written by or at the instigation of these Bengali patriots that as they could impose upon the observant Megasthenes who lived many years at Patna above two thousand years ago, it is still easier for them to delude the British public from Calcutta now; the "fictions of the Indian imagination" through twenty centuries' practice are now more artistic and veiled with a modest affectation of candour. In reality Mr. Dutt's statements about taxation and famine will be found not less imaginative than the tales of his ancestors about the people who used one ear as a mattress while the other served for a blanket.

India may have been prosperous and fertile in the ancient times, but not one of the numerous travellers who described it, Greek, Sicilian, Bithynian, during eight centuries stated that taxation was light, as not one of them seems to have heard of the laws of Manu. They are the only witnesses to the ancient order of things up to the fifth century, A.D. For it must be remembered we are indebted to Greeks, Chinese, Arabs for all we know about the history of the country; we can gather curious facts from the laws of Manu, from the Mahabharat and Ramayana, from coins and inscriptions, but the history of Hindu mankind has never been written by Hindus. No one even attempted it till within the last two hundred years one or two court chroniclers appeared, who have been abstracted by Elliott in brief and depreciatory notes. There was a chronicle of Cashmere, but Cashmere is not India. The Greek travellers give no record after the third century, the Chinese take their place. I must deal with Hiouen Tsang at more length, because he is quoted to show that under Hindu rulers the state of things was infinitely more prosperous than under the British. Whoever studies the three bulky volumes which we possess concerning the Buddhist pilgrim's life and travels will see that the Hindus were then much as they are now, only far less numerous, while the



national failing, the love of a lie, seems to have been equally prevalent. The Chinese master of the law was not so critical as the Western historians who from Strabo down to Macaulay have detected the tendency and refused to be misled by it. The Bengali is only the product of his ancestral environment during two thousand years and more. There was perhaps a golden age under the Buddhist sovereigns when for a few years peace, prosperity, and light taxation prevailed generally and Utopia was realised. Under Sandracottas and his grandson Asoka the Behar kingdom became an empire which extended far over North India.

p. 227.

Mr. Dutt assigns the merit of all the light taxation to the "Hindu law books," for Manu had laid down one-sixth to one-twelfth as the Government share of the produce, and this was "followed in practice" as "proved by the testimony of all travellers in ancient times." To prove this he quotes Hiouen Tsang's travels from Beale's Buddhist records, and possibly in some places there were then halcyon days for the poor and for religious bodies, "when a fourth of the crown demesne is for charity to religious bodies" and "those who cultivate the royal estates pay a sixth part of the produce."

p. 298.

But Beale is a mere paraphrase, even Elphinstone abstracts more correctly.

The correct translation, see Stanislas Julien's Buddhist travels, Vol. I, p. 90, of the first extract is, that the fourth of the demesne is "to cultivate the field of merit, and to give alms to divers sects of heretics"; from the second extract is omitted the statement that the cultivator borrows the seed from the State.

I do not say that these corrections materially alter facts as regards the condition of the people, but it is clear from them that this halcyon era of rural bliss was under a Buddhist dynasty, which regarded the Hindu as a heretic. Hiouen Tsang is stated by Mr. Dutt to be an "observant and generally accurate traveller."

His observations for a man who spent seventeen years in the country seem extremely imperfect, while as to their accuracy they absolutely abound in contradictions and impossibilities. We are told that the pear, the peach, the grape, the orange are found growing on every side, which may be true about some little sub-Himalayan kingdom, but never can have been correct for India as a whole.





"The governors, magistrates, officials," we are told, "have each a portion of land consigned to them for their support," no doubt each when off duty might be found at the plough like Cincinnatus of old, yet in Julien's translation we find that their sovereigns were wealthy and prodigal, that a hundred thousand pieces of gold were given to the barber who cut the king's hair, and the same sum to him who discovered the track of a boar which the monarch was pursuing. We are told that those who eat the flesh of the pig are universally despised, and yet, see Mr. Dutt's Hindu Civilization, Buddha himself at the age of eighty died of a surfeit of pork chops.

That there was peace under Asoka for a time may be granted, the dynasty was a strong one, Chandracottas his grandfather married the daughter of Seleucus the Greek. Asoka was not a Hindu either by race or religion; he was the first great half-caste, and he probably derived his warlike energy from his ancestor who had been a general under Alexander the Great, while the teaching of Plato and Socrates had moulded his youthful mind.

Hiouen Tsang in numerous places details facts altogether inconsistent with the glowing picture of peace and prosperity which he says prevailed in India. Benares was then surrounded by a vast forest; North and East, where now spread the teeming plains of Jaunpur and Gorakpur, there was a vast forest "full of wild beasts and robbers." For two hundred miles along the Indus the country was occupied by fanatics "whose only occupations were cattle tending and murder." Again a people is mentioned who are "habitually devoted to robbery, fraud and cruelty." Lastly, life was so unsafe even close to sacred Ajodhia, that the holy pilgrim himself was seized by robbers and was about to be sacrificed to Kali when he was rescued. Buddhism and Brahmanism persecuted each other, for any one who calumniated the worthy pilgrim was to have his tongue cut out, and he saw the place where a Brahmin's daughter calumniated Buddha and was therefore "cast alive into hell." Nor were the peace and plenty which Hiouen Tsang witnessed lasting. If Mr. Dutt who describes the good days had read a few pages further he would have discovered that five years after the pilgrim left India, that is in 650 A.D., famine raged throughout

Life, p. 424.  
Life, p. 117.  
Life, pp. 125.  
246.  
Life, p. 215.



Life, p. 237.

the miserable land from end to end. For this indeed they were preparing in his time, for one monarch displeased with his neighbours collected thirty thousand boats and twenty thousand elephants to send against him. Apparently the "generally accurate" observer romanced about ancient India, and we shall see in discussing Jahangir and Mr. Dutt, that they in turn have surpassed him.

The broad conclusion is that in Buddhist India the people were lightly taxed and prosperous save when war and famine desolated the land; they were thinly scattered among vast forests, and paid low rents, just as peasants so situated on the fringe of the wilderness pay nominal rent now. When the forests were cut down and population became dense competition rents ensued. It also appears that Mr. Dutt abstained from quoting the remarks made about famine and taxation by both Greek and Buddhist travellers, in fact did not tell the whole truth, and this course he has always taken.

For Mussulman systems of taxation which Mr Dutt blindly eulogises we have full details from the pens of their own historians, who absolutely swarm good and bad, while there never has been any one among the seventy millions of Bengal who has any pretensions as an annalist even. Ibu Batuta does state that some Hindu kings took a sixth of the crop as land tax, but no one ever imagined that any Mussulman king placed any limit on his exactions from Hindu subjects.

Elliot, Vol.  
II, p. 453.

Mahmud of Gazni laid down the principles of Moslem rule about sixty years before the Norman Conquest, which was that even tribute would be refused from idolaters as he was compelled by "religion to root out the worship of idols from the face of all India." His successors improved on this, for they took tribute and destroyed all the idols too. On what principle they assessed the land tax we are not told save that the famous Mohamed Toghlak, like his predecessor Alaaddin Khilji, increased the taxes, till at last drought and famine prevailed.

Asiatic Journal, New  
Series, Vol.  
XXXVI,  
pp. 94-131.

Sher Shah is said to have taken one quarter of the gross produce as revenue. Akbar one-third, and Alámگیر tried to take one-half. A number of valuable statistics were mentioned in the debate at the East India House, September 22, 1841. But apparently these proportions were what the Moguls ordered, their officers were allowed to take what they liked in addition



for themselves, and we shall see that they took three-quarters from the grain heaps of the wretched peasant.

Mr. Dutt has the hardihood to assert without quoting any authority that this heavy taxation of his ancestors by the Moguls is all a myth, "that no exact measurements were made, it was possible for the millions of cultivators to make the State Officers accept their own figures and estimates," and that even the collections of Aurangzeb never "actually represented more than a sixth or eighth, or tenth of the real produce of the great empire."

Nothing could be more utterly untrue. We have statements by contemporaries who saw with their own eyes the processes employed, the cruelties and insults to which the miserable Dutt was exposed in those days, the portion of the poor little grain heap which was wrung from the peasant, and finally the enormous amount of the gross revenue, which with its accompaniment of groans and curses and famine sorrow was poured into the exchequer of the mighty empire, which Dutt of the present day admires so much.

First about the sixth, eighth, or tenth, which the Mogul took, the haziness of the Professor of History may be noted, he does not say which is correct, he has no authority for any one of the three, and all are wrong.

I will quote from one of the Jesuit missionaries who lived among the people eating with and garbed like natives. Father de la Lane writes in 1709 of the condition of things since the Moguls conquered the country about fifty years before.

"The Indians are quite miserable and reap very little benefit from their labours, the sovereign of every state enjoys absolutely his demesnes and is the sole proprietor of the land. His officers oblige the inhabitants of a city to cultivate a certain spot of land which they allot them."

"When the season for Harvest is come, the officers in question order the grain to be cut; and after it is piled up, put the King's seal to it and go away. They then come, whenever they think proper, and take away the grain, of which they leave the peasant only a fourth part, and sometimes less; after which, they sell it to the common people at what price they please, no person daring to complain on those occasions."

"The Great Mogul generally keeps his court about Agra, situated near five hundred leagues from this place. The distance of these Indians from the Great Mogul is

Famine  
Report, 1880  
Appendix I,  
pp. 129-146.  
Famines,  
p. 236.

Travels of  
the Jesuits,  
II, p. 374.





one of the chief causes of the cruel treatment they meet with. That monarch sends to the lands in question an officer, under the title of Governor and General of the Army, who appoints Sub-Governors, or Lieutenants, over all considerable places, to collect the monies. As their Government is but of short duration (commonly not above three or four years) they make all the haste possible to enrich themselves. These Governors are succeeded by others equally rapacious, so that it is scarcely possible for a Nation to be more miserable than these Indians are. The only wealthy persons among them are the Mohammedan or Heathen officers, who serve under the Princes of the respective states. However, these are often seized, and forced, by violent stripes with the chabouc, to give up all they had amassed by their rapine; and thus generally become as poor as when they entered upon their Government."

"These Governors administer what is called Justice without any great formality. The highest bidder generally gains the cause, by which means criminals often escape the punishment due to the blackest guilt. A circumstance which frequently happens is, as both parties offer high sums, the Mohammedans or Moors, take from each, without answering the views of either."

I should add that the author, who warmly sympathised with the Hindus, gives most accurate details about their customs, and expresses great admiration for features in their character, such as charity to relatives, and religious fervour. The rapacious greed of the Mogul officers is further illustrated by what befell another poor missionary; these men not only had taken the vow of poverty but were actually mendicants.

"The idolaters easily persuade the Moors that we are rich and on these false reports the Governors order us to be seized and confine us very long in prison. Father Bouchet so famous for the vast numbers of infidels baptized by him has experienced the utmost extent of their avarice. He had embellished a small statue representing our Saviour with false stones which some Heathen perceiving, they told the Governor of the province that this father possessed vast treasures. Immediately the father was thrown cruelly into prison where during above a month he laboured under a variety of sufferings. His catechists were also dreadfully beaten and threatened with death in case they did not discover the missionary's treasures.





Another traveller Ovington traversed the country in 1689-90 during Alamgir's reign. Among many most interesting details, in which he carefully distinguishes between what he had heard and what he had good reason to believe, he writes as follows :

"The whole kingdom of Industan is entirely the possession of the Mogul who appoints himself heir to all his subjects so that neither the widow nor children of a general can peremptorily challenge one pice after his decease without the emperor's bounteous indulgence. He that tills the ground is *allowed half the product* for his pains and the other moyety is reserved for the King." Bernier uses still stronger language about the misery of the people. Such were the dire extremities to which the Hindus were reduced two hundred years ago, the peasantry ground down by the heaviest exactions, by bigoted sovereigns who were at once the mightiest and the meanest of the rulers of the age. Akbar and to some extent Jahangir were more liberal, particularly the former who did not even pretend to be a Moslem while his favourite wives were Christian and Hindu. Even he however took one-third the gross crop, which Alamgir raised or tried to raise to one-half.

Voyage to  
Surat, p. 197.  
  
Travels, pp.  
205, 226,  
230.

One-third the gross crop contrasts, and very favourably to British rule, with the one-twenty-fifth which is taken in the Central Provinces, according to the latest estimates of the Committee of 1900 presided over by Sir Anthony Macdonnell, whose humanity and capacity are admitted by Mr. Dutt.

Famines,  
p. 236.

But argues the latter, "Akbar's figures only represented the demand," "it was the custom to fix the demand high in order to collect as much as possible." The "collections of Akbar nor those of Aurangzeb never actually represented more than a sixth, eighth or tenth."

Now either Mr. Dutt, professor of Indian History, has read the authorities on this subject Bernier, Catrou, Hawkins, Thomas, Blochmann, who all derive their facts from Mogul authorities, or he has not. If he has not, considering how easily available they are, he is pretending to teach and he receives pay for teaching a subject which he has not even commenced to learn. If he has read them and still perverts the facts which they relate, then he is a very dishonest pamphleteer and wholly unworthy of serious notice.

The sums stated by the various authorities represent



the actual collections which are often in Native States more than the recorded State demand because there are cesses, and extra payments, and old balances. I myself as the Manager of H.H. the Maharaja of Tippera, have during the last three years collected between three and four lacs more than the recorded land tax.

Chronicles of  
Pathan  
Kings, pp.  
444-5 and  
corrigenda.

At any rate the sums recorded by the various authorities represent the collections, not the demand. Thomas, admittedly the first authority on this subject, states that Aurangzeb in 1697 "realized" "the clearly defined sum of £38,719,400," this was land tax alone and his total revenue from all sources was £77,438,800 sterling, to which it had increased from Akbar's thirty-two million in 1593.

Let me pause for a moment to consider what amount these sums represent when the value of money now is compared with that under the Moguls.

Mr. Dutt elsewhere states that this comparison is impossible. It is quite possible for any student of the most ordinary capacity. The comparative value of money in different ages has been estimated by numerous historians and economists, simply by calculating the purchasing power of the same coin in exchange for service and articles of daily use.

Thomas,  
Pathan  
Kings, pp.  
429-430.

Thomas gives the important data, the prices of food grains. In Akbar's time the half hundredweight of wheat on the average would cost  $3\frac{3}{4}d$ , reckoning the rupee at two shillings, that would be twelve shillings per ton, but it will be better to retain the calculations within indigenous figures. At 12 dams for a maund of 55 lbs. the price would be 18 dams for the present maund of 82 lbs. that will be 89 seers for the rupee, but the rupee being now worth only sixteen pence instead of twenty-four, we find the then value of wheat at 59 seers per rupee. I do not exactly understand Thomas' calculations, but it is clear that in Feroz Shah's time the price of wheat was 112 seers per rupee, while barley and gram were half that price. The average price of wheat may be taken now at seventeen seers per rupee, so that the rupee had three and a half times the purchasing power as regards food staples in Akbar's time, which it has now: labour however was only in Northern India about thrice as dear as formerly, when a labourer cost 2 dams per day, or one-twentieth of a rupee, in big camps and cities. On the whole we may fairly calculate that the rupee in Alamgir's time was worth three times as much as it is now.



Alamgir's land revenue then of 38 million sterling was equivalent to at any rate one hundred and ten millions now. The British land revenue is only sixteen millions. The area of British India is not co-terminous with Alamgir's empire. The latter in 1697 had shortly before swallowed up Beejapur and Golconda. Scindia and Holkar and the Nizam possess large territories which were more or less completely under the direct control of the Mogul and paid land tax. On the other hand there are large territories Upper and Lower Burma, Assam, Cochin, Tanjore, Madura, which were never under the Mogul. On the whole the area of the present British empire in India may be fairly stated to have exceeded that of Alamgir at its greatest expansion, particularly as the overgrown bulk of the latter had commenced to crumble away under the attack of the Mahrattas. The patriot Sivajee had carved for himself a goodly kingdom before his death in 1680. In fact the full blown greatness of the Mogul empire did not last for more than about twenty years, from 1680 till 1700. The map of the Mogul empire printed in 1670 leaves out the whole of the Peninsula south of Bombay.

The Mogul land tax whether it was one-third or one-half or three-quarters was vastly more severe than the British 4 per cent. in the Central Provinces and about 3 per cent. in Bengal, even if, as the Famine Commission report, the proportion rises to one-fifth in one single small corner of Guzarat.

Making every allowance for sanguine estimates on the part of Settlement Officers, it is pretty clear that the British Government does not take above 8 per cent on the average as land tax, while the Mogul percentage was probably about 40 per cent rising in places to 75 and sinking in others to 20 per cent.

The proportion then was five times as heavy under the Moguls and in even greater proportion did the aggregate Mogul collections, about one hundred and ten millions of our money, surpass the sixteen millions of British India. The statistics support each other. Of course the land tax in India is really only equal to about sixteen millions sterling at present with a twenty-penny rupee and I have allowed for this in the above calculation.

The only admission which I can make is that the seventy-seven millions of Mogul taxation in 1697 was the high water mark, never equalled before or since.

Thomas,  
Pathan  
Kings, p.  
448.  
Bernier.

Constable  
Bernier, pp.  
238-454.

1900 Report,  
p. 89.





I may dwell briefly on other sources of Indian revenue, and modes of taxation. Tythe was taken from humanity itself. The Moslems were always eager to take the young of both sexes from among the infidels and keep them as slaves. In this way there was a chance of rescuing the souls of the young idolaters. I quote from the Mussulman historians who regarded the slavery of the heathen as a sacrifice most pleasing to God.

Elliot, Vol.  
IV, p. 12.

"In 1376 Sham Damaghani offered forty lacs of tankas in excess of the revenue paid for Gujarat, 100 elephants, 200 horses, and four hundred slave children of Hindu chiefs and Abyssinians." He "received a golden girdle and a silver palankin and was appointed to Gujarat as deputy" and this happened during the "prosperous reign of a good and gracious sovereign." What more mournful picture can be presented than the gangs of miserable children Brahmin and Habshis, Ghoses and Dutts, chained together, torn from their parents, and dragged to Delhi from Gujarat to become probably eunuchs, certainly to be lost for ever to their kindred and to the faith of their fathers.

Elliot, VIII,  
p. 38.

We do not know exactly what the amount of the *jizya* or Hindu poll tax was, it was re-established in the beginning of Alamgir's reign.

The object of the emperor as stated by himself was that "by this means idolatry will be suppressed the true faith will be honoured the finances of the State will be increased and the infidels will be disgraced."

Surely never in the history of mankind did a small minority of the population a mere fraction tyrannize so frightfully over an immense empire, of set purpose disgracing ninety-five in the hundred of the millions. "The *jizya* was collected from all great and small, Hindus as well as rebel infidels," "it came up to several krors."

Elliot III,  
345.

The *jizya* was not the resource of periods of distress, it was an old and honoured Moslem institution. In the reign of Feroz Shah, perhaps the best monarch from a Moslem point of view who ever reigned at Delhi, grain was always cheap, no deaths occurred, barley and gram were four jitals per man, that is, eight maunds per rupee.

Elliot III,  
p. 366.

Amid this prosperity the poor Hindus were taxed under three classes at 40, 20 and 10 tankas or rupees per head. The Brahmins collected and threatened to burn themselves rather than pay the tax; the Sultan replied that they might do so at once if they liked, but the tax





they must pay. There were numerous other taxes from which the Moslems were sometimes relieved, but never except under Akbar did the Hindus escape.

We may now consider what were the means used to induce or compel the people to submit to this terrible burthen of taxation. It may be admitted perhaps that Moslem methods showed some slight improvement during the seven hundred years of their sway.

One anecdote may be related about a vigorous Pathan sovereign. When any village was contumacious and did not pay its taxes, he would send out a troop of horses who were to surround the village and bring back with them a specified number of eyes torn out of the rebels' heads.

His Vizir was a humane man, a good Mussalman, and each morning exchanged with his sovereign the usual salutation "God is merciful." The Vizir was with his Lord one morning when a bag was brought in by the household cavalry, containing the eyes which according to order had been plucked out in the morning's foray. The sovereign emptied the bag on the table, took out his dagger and commenced to count the eyes, arranging them with the point of his weapon. The humane Vizier ventured to put in a word in season.

"Perhaps, Oh King! the most merciful one does not regard these things on the table with pleasure."

The King paused in his count and said quietly with dagger raised. "Oh Meer Sahib! I swear by the head of my father if there is one short of the specified number in this bag, I will make it up out of your skull with mine own hand." The count went on before the trembling Prime Minister, fortunately the tale proved complete, and he took his leave with both his eyes.

This however was, we may hope, an exceptionally severe mode of collecting the taxes, but the entire system except for a brief period was as regards the Hindus one of the grossest tyranny. In the year 1565 Akbar abolished the '*jizya*,' and it does not appear that it was formally re-imposed till Alamgir in the beginning of his reign commanded it to be collected afresh. He was intolerant, God himself commands us to despise the Hindus said the Mohamedans supported by the Koran Suras 9 and 29. "From this intolerance issued an enactment such that no other could more afflict a Hindu whose creed keeps him in unremitting dread of conta-

Noer's  
Emperor  
Akbar, Vol.  
II, p. 5.



mination, and consequent loss of caste, his highest good. "When the collector of the Diwani asks them, the Hindus, to pay the tax they should pay it with all humility and submission. And if the collector wishes to spit into their mouth they should open their mouths without the slightest fear of contamination so that the collector may do so. The object of such humiliation and spitting into their mouths is to prove the obedience of infidel subjects under protection and to promote the glory of the Islam, the true religion and to show contempt to false religions."

We have already seen that the intention in imposing the *jizya* on the Hindus was to insult and humiliate them, now it is apparent that the intention was still further carried out in the nauseating machinery applied to its collection.

Vol. VI,  
pp. 493-516.

The punishments under the Mogul, always excepting Akbar, were ferocious and revolting. Elliott devotes many pages to extracts from contemporary eye witnesses including the imperial memoirs of Jahangir himself, showing how temporary were reforms, how fickle and capricious was royal favour, and how terrible was chastisement even for such slight offences as a kiss, or a hasty word. Mr. Dutt thinks that his unfortunate ancestors were able to resist the tax gatherer who was sent first to spit into their mouths and then to fleece them of the poor little stock of grain needed for subsistence.

It is true that the people were sometimes refractory, then they were treated as follows:—

Elliot, V.  
485.

"At this juncture it occurred to the Sultan to raise the taxes of the inhabitants of the Doab ten or twenty per cent. as they had shown themselves refractory. He instituted also a cattle tax and a house tax and several other imposts of an oppressive nature which entirely ruined and desolated the country and brought its wretched inhabitants to destruction."

They had in fact no resource save flight and when caught as the poor fugitives hampered with numerous women, were sure to be caught, then every variety of punishment was devised.

Even Akbar, and Baber were accustomed to raise pyramids of the heads of those who disobeyed.

Baber himself writes:—

Elliot, IV,  
272.

"Some days after my return to Agra Ilya was taken and brought in. I ordered him to be flayed alive, on the hillock I directed a tower of the skulls of the infidels to be constructed." Again Akbar the humane ordered





“that a pyramid should be raised of the heads of the rebels who had fallen in the battle and these were more than 2,000 in number.” Elliot, V, 368.

Elsewhere we are informed that the emperor's tent had to be moved three times, so numerous were the executions which were carried out beside it. The terrible punishments inflicted by the Moslem sovereigns seem to have had no effect save that they undoubtedly in some places acted as a preventive of famine by annihilating the population. Jahangir commenced his reign by crushing the rebellion of his son Khusru; he proceeds “Seated in the pavilion, having directed a number of sharp stakes to be set up in the bed of the Ravi, I caused the 700 traitors who had conspired with Khusru against my authority to be impaled alive upon them.” Elliot, VI, 173.

“Than this there cannot exist a more excruciating punishment since the wretches exposed frequently linger a long time in the most agonising torture before the hand of death relieves them, and the spectacle of such frightful agonies must, if anything can, operate as a due example to deter others from similar acts of perfidy and treason towards their benefactors.”

Another chronicler adds that Khusru the emperor's son whose mother a Rajputni was of the royal house of Jaipur, was compelled to witness the dying tortures of the wretches who had given their lives for his cause.

It is true that monsters of cruelty did exist in the middle ages in Christian Europe too, but there was one great check which did not exist in India. The European subjects were of the same religion generally as their sovereign, the church protected them. With the single exception of King John these regal monsters were also slaves to superstition; the bishops and confessors pleaded the cause of the poor, refused absolution and threatened the monarch on his throne with the torments of eternal fire, if he continued to shed Christian blood. The Moslem priests on the other hand hounded on the Sultans of India to the slaughter of infidels and a chief priest “who in all his life had never slaughtered a sheep put fifteen Hindus to the sword.” Elliot, IV, 95.

Jahangir only followed the example of former rulers of his faith. Of the Bahmani kings it is stated “it was a rule with the princes of this family to slay a hundred thousand Hindus in revenge for the death of a single Mussulman.” Of another it is computed that in his reign Elliot, VI, 233.





nearly five hundred thousand unbelievers fell by the swords of the warriors of Islam by which the population of the Carnatic was so greatly reduced that it did not recover for several ages.

Elliot, V, 39. Baber was the most kindly and humane of the Moguls, yet when he had conquered a gallant foe the Raja of Chanderi, "In the very onset that dark-faced man was overthrown and his army slaughtered. When the chiefs of the Raja had been trampled on by elephants, his majesty encamped near Chanderi with much pomp. His majesty presented two of the daughters of the Raja whose beauty was unrivalled, who had never been exposed to the view of man or to the hot winds, one to Mirza Kamran, the other to Prince Humayun and gave the others to the Sirdars of his army." This was not after the example shown to the East by the West, when Alexander captured the family of Darius nearly two thousand years previously.

Again as a witness may be cited one of the Delhi Emperors, the noble Feroz Shah.

Elliot, III, 375. "In the reigns of former kings many varieties of torture were employed, amputation of hands and feet, ears and noses, tearing out the eyes, pouring molten lead into the throat, crushing the bones of the hands and feet with mallets, burning the body with fire, driving iron nails into the hands, feet and bosom, cutting the sinews, sawing men asunder." He forbade these extreme penalties. Feroz Shah however carefully kept up the *Jizyah* upon Hindus.

The conclusion drawn from a study of all authorities is that the Moslem system of taxation was a grievous and degrading burthen upon the Hindus who generally tamely submitted to it, till Sivajee at first a mere bandit afterwards a patriot king set the example of a successful resistance. At this time according to Akbar the Hindus were to the Moslems as five to one, yet they continued for centuries to send the daughters of their chiefs to the Moslem harems, their sons to become pages, slaves, eunuchs and perverts, till the beginning of the eighteenth century when the Mogul empire dissolved more from its own overgrown bulk than from any foreign enemy or intestine tumult.

This land tax, the forfeiture of the property of deceased officers and chiefs, above all the *Jizyah* or poll tax, together contributed to the splendor of the most magni-



ificent court, the wretchedness of the most miserable people which the world has seen.

We know very little about the taxation under the Hindu kings. The laws of Manu were regarded as mere pious opinions and regulated taxation very little indeed, they had probably not nearly so much effect as the Sermon on the Mount.

One curious system of taxation is chronicled as prevailing in Bijanagar the last refuge of purely Hindu government. About 1442 it was visited by a Moslem ambassador who describes at length the splendor and delights of this great city.

To the office of the Prefect of the city it is said "12,000 policemen are attached and their pay is derived from the proceeds of the brothels. The splendor of those houses, the beauty of the heart ravishers, their blandishments and ogles are beyond all description. It is best to be brief on the matter." Elliot, IV, 111.

"After the time of mid-day prayers they place at the doors of these houses, chairs and settees on which the courtezans seat themselves. Each one has one or two slave girls standing before her who invite and allure to indulgence and pleasure."

It appears that when Hindu rulers governed, the people first each day performed their devotions and then proceeded to the stews which were supervised and taxed by the state and were so numerous and prosperous that the entire police force of 12,000 men was paid from this tax upon fornication, fostered and licensed by the state.

It has been shown from the testimony of many eye witnesses that taxation whether under Hindu or Moslem sovereigns was very heavy in India, so heavy, particularly when combined with constant wars and the maintenance of huge armies, as to reduce the people to the greatest poverty. If the average land tax in British India is 7 per cent. of the produce and many rulers in ancient days were always trying to get 75 per cent. and enforcing their demands with savage cruelty, we can judge how miserable was then the condition of the people and how false the charges brought by the Bengali agitators in this matter at any rate.

NOTE.—We know little of taxation under the Portuguese, Hunter informs us that they used to take one quarter of the grain, but the English in Bombay with the assent of the assembled people commuted this for a fixed tax. Vol. II, p. 218.



## CHAPTER II.

The expenditure of former rulers of India compared with that of the British.—The enormous Mogul army.—Its constant wars.—The elephants, jewels, harems, salaries of officers.—Expenditure of Indian rulers now.—Bloodshed caused by rivalry in pomp.

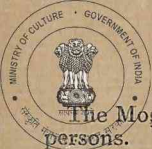
HAVING considered what was the taxation of the former rulers of India as compared with the British, it is now right to inquire how the money was spent of old and how it is spent now. Mr. Dutt in his volume, after asserting contrary to all evidence that Moslems took a moderate share of the produce, goes on to state that the "whole of the Mogul revenue derived from the land was spent on the country fructifying agriculture and the industries, and flowing back to the people in one shape or other. Spent on the army it maintained and fed the people, spent in the construction of great edifices or in articles of luxury it encouraged arts and industries, spent on the construction of roads and irrigation canals it directly benefited agriculture."

Every clause in the above paragraph contains separate misstatements, the whole forms a fabric of megalithic mendacity for which someone is responsible. The professor of Indian history, who knows nothing whatever about mediæval and modern India, has no doubt borrowed these facts from some obscure fellow-labourer. We have only to refer to the Mogul Emperors themselves and their courtly annalist for his refutation. How was agriculture fructified when above four millions of men were withdrawn from agricultural pursuits, and embodied in a badly paid militia, their only hope being the prospect of plundering the wretched ryot?

Famines, p.  
100.

Elphinstone,  
p. 547.





The Moguls kept enormous armies to guard their own persons. The Viceroy of India in Calcutta has his body-guard and the garrison of Fort William, the total about a thousand men. The Great Mogul at Delhi or Agra kept about a hundred thousand men around him. Elliot, IV, "Sher Shah always kept 150,000 horse and 25,000 foot-415. men present with him."

The regular army consisted of 299,000 horse, and twice that number of foot, a total of about 900,000. The British army consists of 74,000 British soldiers and about 140,000 natives, total less than 220,000, and with this army absolute peace has been kept in India for fifty years except during the mutiny. The mighty army of the Mogul was always being employed against some infidel Raja; let Jahangir speak for himself.

Of Bengal he remarks "Its governor always maintained Elliot, VI, 8,000 horses, one lac of foot soldiers, 1,000 elephants and 326. 400 or 500 war boats"; again "And here I am compelled to observe with whatever regret that notwithstanding Jahangir's Memoirs by Price, p. 128. the frequent and sanguinary executions which have been dealt among the people of Hindustan, the number of the turbulent and disaffected never seems to diminish, for what with the examples made during the reign of my father and subsequently of my own, there is scarcely a province of the empire in which, either in battle or by the sword of the executioner, five and six hundred thousand human beings have not at various periods fallen victims to this fatal disposition to discontent and turbulence. Ever and anon in one quarter or another will some accursed miscreant spring up to unfurl the standard of rebellion so that in Hindustan never has there existed a period of complete repose."

Money was spent then on a huge costly and inefficient army, which was always fighting rebels and often being defeated.

The Mogul Emperors possessed enormous numbers of elephants. Jahangir mentions the number he kept as Price, 113,000, and the expenditure on this item alone is stated Memoirs, p. to have been seventeen millions sterling. Even if the 17. number of royal elephants is exaggerated, the numbers of those kept by Rajas and nobles was also enormous. The evil fashion has been kept up to this day. A Raja in Oudh, a mere country gentleman without any troops or ruling power, will keep a hundred elephants or more simply for purposes of pomp or sport, and as 1



noted in Oudh 30 years ago, scarcity was no doubt aggravated by the enormous expenditure of food grain upon elephants and horses, kept only to figure in processions, with the trappings of crimson and gold which delight Indian races. This expenditure far from "fructifying agriculture" sterilised it. For the unfortunate peasants were afraid to grow sugarcane or to venture upon high cultivation generally, as the crop after all their labor might be destroyed by the elephants or taken as forage by way of purveyance at half price or less.

Consider again the enormous expenditure in the gorgeous east upon precious stones. Every Eastern ruler took a childish pleasure in collecting them, and in adorning himself and his harem with the glitter of gems. Shajahan was the best judge of the value of gems in his empire. In the decline of mighty Rome one emperor prided himself on his victories over gladiators, another on his mastery over the fiddle, but the great Mogul was only skilled in judging whether rubies and diamonds were genuine and free from flaws, and in estimating their value.

This evil fashion too has spread among the nobles and Rajas. Not long ago one ruler in India purchased a single diamond for forty lacs of rupees, an amount which would have done much towards relieving his starving subjects.

It is true that jewellers, under the Moguls, were supported in some degree of comfort, except when they were flogged, see Bernier, but far from fructifying agriculture or industries, they were withdrawn from pursuits which might have contributed to the permanent welfare of the people. Hundreds of thousands of naked labourers toiled in the mines of Golkonda, Panna, and other places, slaves of the dark and dirty mine, in order to collect the gems which were to adorn the peacock throne, and to form part of the sixty millions of plunder which attracted Nadir Shah to the sack of Delhi. Among the results of this hard labor too were the great rubies and diamonds which adorned the shapeless blocks of wood, worshipped at Jaggarnath, Travendrum, and other places. There is no trace of art industry here.

Surely also the expenditure upon harems and marriages cannot be regarded as fructifying agriculture. There were five thousand females in the harem of the chaste and temperate Akbar. Another sovereign had fifteen thousand ladies, no men being admitted to reside in the





city of his habitation. It is true that the erection of great buildings mostly tombs and mosques did keep masons and brick-layers from starvation for a time, but it would be hard to discover a more barren mode of expenditure. As for roads and irrigation canals, roads except for military purposes were practically not made, and no Mogul sovereign made a single irrigation canal. The small efforts in this direction which were made, were by Feroz Shah and others of earlier dynasties, and they charged 10 per cent. on the outlay. Elliot, III, p. 301.

The Moguls never made any canals or irrigation works; they allowed Feroz Shah's one canal to become choked up till it was restored by the British, just as they allowed the tanks of the Carnatic to become choked up and thereby caused a famine.

From the letter to the Directors of 1733, we are informed as follows:—

“The Moguls, who have now the government of the country and are continued in those Governments only during pleasure, do not think themselves under the same obligation to be at that expense for their successor. By which means in process of time the tanks are almost choked up and great part of the lands lie uncultivated for want of water. This alone would occasion grain to be scarce and of course dear, to which if we add the rapacious disposition of the Moguls altogether intent upon making the most of their governments while they continue in them, etc., etc.” Wheeler, Madras, III, p. 136.

It appears then that the Moguls far from constructing new irrigation works did not even keep in working order those which their predecessors had handed down to them, and Mr. Dutt's remark that they fructified agriculture by making canals and wells is simply a *suggestio falsi*.

The entire argument that if money is spent in the country it therefore fructified the agriculture and industries, is one of the gigantic fallacies in which Mr. Dutt is so prolific.

The Mogul allowed his subadars, particularly if they belonged to the family of any of his numerous wives, enormous salaries. The Governor of Bengal during Alamgir's time, got twenty lacs per annum; of course he gave valuable presents, gems and elephants, to the emperor, and was in turn allowed to oppress the people at his pleasure. This evil practice too has been maintained up to date and the prime minister of the King





of Oudh, a little province the size of Ireland, used to get fifteen lacs, about double the annual salaries of the Viceroy and all the Governors and Lieutenant-Governors in India combined. The commander of 7,000 under the Moguls received  $2\frac{1}{2}$  lacs as pay.

Ain-i-Akbari, I, p. 240.

Catron, Histoire De Mogul, p. 270.

Catrou, p. 160.

These enormous salaries were spent on pomp and luxury, specially upon valuable gems which would be concealed and even swallowed when the day of reckoning came; the Naib or Subadar had to disgorge when dismissed, when he died his property lapsed to the emperor. Manucci tells us exactly what pay the great officers received, the six of highest rank received three millions of rupees each yearly pay.

But their position, was not without its drawbacks, "les premiers officiers de l'Empire accumulent de grands tresors qui restournent a leur mort dans les coffres du souverain."

But not only were their treasures unstable, we are told their family honor was also sullied.

"Chajahan ne se contenta pas de cette multitude prodigieuse de Reines de concubines d'esclaves il enlevait encore les femmes des principaux Officiers de sa cour."

Long's Record, Vol. I, XLI.

Long's Record, I, 196.

Hindustan, Vol. I, p. 134.

Even as late as 1768 the native Naibs of the British Government in Bengal received enormous salaries, Mohamed Raza Khan nine lacs, two others two lacs and one lac, and this when Members of Council only got Rs. 300 per month and Warren Hastings got Rs. 20 extra for reading prayers.

The English after Plassey maintained the customs of their predecessors. Dow writing in 1767 states that Mohamed Raza then received £112,500 pay, together with £375,000 to be divided among his friends, native and European.

The Peacock throne is reported to have cost three millions; it was not a work of art, it was simply a means of adding to the blaze of gold and jewels which was and is the environment of every rich Indian, and the delight of his heart.

Vulgar and tawdry too often was the imitation of Mogul grandeur which prevailed in the Provincial Courts, but it was alike all costly to the peasant. The palaces, Fattehpur-Sikri, Delhi, the tombs at Agra and Beejapur, the towers at Delhi and Chittore, were great works of art but barren of all utility. Sher Shah left



nothing behind him but a tomb at Sasseram, perfect to this day; if bridge, canal or road or even mosque had been made by him, they would still exist wholly or in part. Sher Shah by the consent of all was the wisest and best of Moslem rulers, who cared least for mere pomp and did most for good administration.

We can gather the tendencies of Eastern rulers from their conduct at present when under the eyes and frequent frown of his Excellency. The Nawab of —, a petty potentate, bought a carriage lately; he paid exactly the same amount as the King of England for his State coach.

The Maharaja of — was severely censured by Government for the neglect of all relief when his people were dying of famine; his population diminished, but he paid one tradesman's bill for perfumes and toilet requisites for Rs. 21,000 for one year.

Step into any fashionable Calcutta shop, one may see a saddle costing Rs. 7,000, silver throne, silver houda, necklaces for concubines, tiaras for their lords, state carriages glittering with velvet and gold. One has seventy race horses, though ryots starve; another 150 varieties of the British dog. Some are Sheeahs who according to their law can marry wives according to *mula* fashion absolutely without limit; one King of Oudh was said to have several thousands.

In what was the public good advanced by a fifty carat diamond, or a charming dancing girl, or an eleven foot elephant? Thousands of wretches have been done to death on their account.

The over-lord would not permit any of his satraps to possess either an elephant of stature, or a girl of beauty, beyond the common. If a refusal was given when they were demanded, war and bloodshed followed. What has happened in Hyderabad, Gwalior, Punna, all men know. Every monarch has his fair Helen and for her sake not only is money squandered, but the lives of subjects too. There are one or two noble exceptions now. Formerly, save perhaps Madho Sing the Mahratta, all were in various ways possessed by selfish animalism.

The picture is a terrible one. Jahangir was almost always under the influence of liquor. Shajahan was a debauchee whose profligacy appears to have had much to do with his dethronement. Aurungzeeb during fifty years of bigotry and intolerance endeavoured to atone



for the murder of his brothers by ceaseless persecution of the miserable Hindus. The enormous hoards wrung from the peasantry by terror or torture were squandered upon personal adornment, on enormous harems, on bloated armies or on favorites. The roads and buildings which one emperor constructed were overturned by his successor or allowed to fall into decay.

Elliot, IV,  
p. 418.

Sher Shah, who was not a Mogul, did, it is stated by his court chronicler, make a road with serais and mosques from Bengal to Rhotas, but it was allowed to fall into decay by his Mogul successors and now says Elliot "not a trace can be found of serais mosques road or tree." It may safely be affirmed that the British Government spends more upon really useful and permanent public works every year than the Mogul dynasty during the two centuries of its rule. Yet Mr. Dutt points to the golden days of the great empire when all the money was spent in the country.





## CHAPTER III.

Famines under the Hindus—Under the Moslem rulers—Akbar's treatment of famine.—Shahjahan's famine relief.—Alamgir's famines.—The famines of 1770-1787.—Comparison of great famines as to extent and severity.—The mortality.—Decrease of population in Native States.

HAVING dealt with the taxation of the Mogul dynasty and with their expenditure, we may now turn to the famines which of old desolated the empire, but which according to Mr. Dutt were neither so numerous nor so severe as under British rule.

"It is a sad but a significant fact that the last famine of this century is also the most wide-spread, and the severest famine that has ever visited India."

Dutt's  
Famines,  
p. 15.

The professor of history does not quote any authority, he does not even hint by what standard or factor the severity of a famine should be judged. All such considerations are neglected in his eagerness to convict the British Government of a great crime.

In estimating the severity of a famine we should consider its duration, extent of area affected, and the loss of human life resulting from it, while as checks upon our calculation, we should study the deficiency of the rainfall, the prices to which food grain rose in public markets, the extremities to which the people were reduced, and lastly the public or private expenditure upon relief; we can then estimate what the mortality would have been if nothing had been done to mitigate the calamity, and can judge its severity.

It is admitted on all sides that famines properly so called have been nearly always caused by drought.



Within small areas excessive rain has ruined the crops, and in besieged cities, or when the country was desolated by armies of marauders, prices have occasionally risen as high as during famines proper. These need not be considered, for the main factor as regards ninety-nine in a hundred starvation deaths during the last hundred years was undoubtedly the want of rain. In ancient times there were no exact observers of physical phenomena. Indeed the first man who gives us a definite statement is Bernier. Speaking of the country round Delhi "where I resided a long time," he says "I have even known two entire years pass without scarcely a drop of rain, and the consequences of that extraordinary drought were wide-spreading sickness and famine."

Bernier was a doctor of medicine, the pupil of the philosopher Gassendi; he was probably a more accurate observer and a more calm and truthful narrator than has ever appeared in Bengal; we may accept as a fact that the famine of 1661, the only one he could have witnessed, for Bernier only remained in India from 1658 to 1667, was caused by two years practically complete want of rainfall.

I have to deal with this matter in some detail because Mr. Dutt leaves his readers under the impression that under the Moslem kings the country was on the whole prosperous. We have no accurate observer before or after Bernier, but I may briefly refer to the more remarkable famines mentioned by Indian historians of which a very imperfect abstract appears in the article "Famine" of Balfour's *Cyclopedia*. The earliest on record was in 650 A.D., when the horrors of famine prevailed throughout India. The history of the empire is after that a blank, there are no historians for centuries, but whenever light is cast on the scene we find famine again. In 941 A.D., in 1022, and again in 1033, there were great famines in which "entire provinces were depopulated," and "man was driven to feed on his own species." From A.D. 1148 to 1159, famine of a severe kind lasted for eleven years. Incidental notices are given of the various famines, but only apparently when some new feature presented itself, otherwise they passed unmentioned. Thus about 1290 A.D. there was dearth in Delhi, the Hindus of that country came into Delhi with their families twenty or thirty of them together, and in the extremity of hunger drowned themselves in the

Constable's  
Bernier, p.  
432.

La Vie de  
Hioun  
Tsang, p.  
215.

Elliot II, p.  
59, 505.  
Balfour  
*Cyclopedia*,  
Vol. I, p.  
1072.

Elliot III,  
p. 146.





Junna. In 1342 and again in 1344-45 there was a terrible famine, though apparently Balfour is not correct in saying that it prevailed through all Hindustan. At this period the miseries of the people rose to a climax. The "emperor himself was unable to obtain the necessities for his household. When the Sultan reached Delhi not a thousandth part of the population remained. He found the country desolate, deadly famine raging and all cultivation abandoned. At length no horses or cattle were left, grain rose to 16 or 17 jitals per seer and the people starved. The famine became general, it continued for some years and thousands upon thousands of people perished of want."

Elliot III,  
p. 244-46.

This famine was much aggravated by the insane projects of the emperor, this was Mohamed Toghlak, a saintly bigot who seems to have wrought more evil to his people within the same space and time than any other tyrant known to history. He raised the taxes, he "invented oppressive *abwabs* or cesses and made stoppages from the land revenues until the backs of the raiyats were broken." He raised an immense army of 370,000 horse in order to conquer Khorassan in Central Asia. Again came heavy taxation. "The Hindus burnt their corn-stacks and turned their cattle out to roam." "Under the orders of the Sultan the Collectors and Magistrates laid waste the country, and they killed some landholders and blinded others." "The country was ruined, man was devouring man, the Sultan then proceeded on a hunting excursion, the game was man. The whole of that country was plundered and laid waste, and the heads of the Hindus were brought in and hung upon the ramparts of the fort."

Elliot III,  
241-244.

Partly on account of the constant droughts which prevailed at Delhi, Mohamed Toghlak determined to remove the entire population to Deogir near Daulatabad, a distance of about nine hundred miles. Delhi was emptied by force. "All was destroyed, so complete was the ruin that not a cat or a dog was left." Rebellion followed after "famine had continued for some years," and "thousands upon thousands perished of want."

Elliot III,  
p. 239.

The remedies applied were loans from the treasury, and well digging; "but the people could do nothing; no word issued from their mouths, and they continued inactive and negligent. This brought many of them to punishment."

Elliot III,  
p. 245.



Such was the condition of the country under this Moslem bigot who was an accomplished and well-meaning man, but ferocious in his vengeance. When the starving people would not exert themselves and dig wells, he killed many as a warning to the others. The story is well known how a cripple who was found at Delhi after its abandonment was ordered to be dragged along fastened to an elephant to Daulatabad, the elephant arrived with one of the man's legs still chained, the rest of the body had been dismembered and fallen off on the rocky road.

In 1398, we are told, after the departure of Timur, the neighbourhood of Delhi, and all those territories over which his armies had passed, were visited with pestilence and famine. In 1412-1413 there was great drought followed by famine. Again in 1424 it is incidentally mentioned that His Majesty was marching to Kanauj "but there was a terrible famine in the cities of Hindustan, and consequently the armies advanced no further." One of the most terrible famines is not mentioned by the Mussulman historians at all, it lasted for twelve years from 1396 to 1407, and was called Durga Devi famine. Balfour gives a great famine in 1491. Under the great Akbar there were several famines in 1557, 1574, 1598. "If men could find money, they could not get sight of corn, men were driven to the extremity of eating each other, and some formed themselves into parties to carry off lone individuals for their food." "There was a scarcity of rain throughout the whole of Hindustan, and a fearful famine raged continuously for three or four years." "In consequence of the dearth of grain men ate their own kind. The army was increased in order to afford maintenance to the poor people."

"The good Emperor distributed food but he was unable to prevent man eating man." An English traveller in 1626 mentions Masulipatam as still suffering from the famine and pestilence which had desolated it fifty years previously. Shajahan was the most splendid of all the Moguls, so in his reign famine was most awful, and a detailed account is given of the measures of relief adopted in 1630.

"During the past year no rain had fallen in the territories of the Balaghat, and the drought had been especially severe about Daulatabad. In the present year also there had been a deficiency in the bordering

Balfour.

Elliot IV,  
p. 61.

Douglas  
Book of  
Bombay, II,  
p. 257.

Elliot V, p.  
384.  
VI p. 21, 193.

Herbert, p.  
347.

Elliot, VII,  
p. 24.



countries, and a total want in the Dakhan and Guzerat. Life was offered for a loaf, but none would buy, rank was to be sold for a cake, but none cared for it, the ever bounteous hand was now stretched out to beg for food. For a long time dog's flesh was sold for goats flesh, and the pounded bones of the dead were mixed with flour and sold, men began to devour each other and the flesh of a son was preferred to his love. The numbers of the dying caused obstructions on the roads. Those lands which had been famous for their fertility and plenty now retained no trace of productiveness. The Emperor in his gracious kindness directed the officials of Burhanpur, Ahmedabad and Surat, to establish soup kitchens or alms houses for the benefit of the poor. It was further ordered that so long as His Majesty remained at Burhanpur Rs. 5,000 should be distributed among the deserving poor every Monday, that day being distinguished above all others as the day of the Emperor's accession to the throne. Thus on twenty Mondays one lac of rupees was given away in charity. His Majesty ordered the officials to distribute Rs. 50,000 among the famine stricken of Ahmedabad."

Hunter now a mature writer, in his history of India, published 1900, writes as follows about this famine.

"In the same year 1630 a calamity fell upon Gujarat Vol. II, p. 59. which enables us to realise the terrible meaning of the word famine in India under native rule. Whole districts and cities were left bare of inhabitants. In 1631 a Dutch merchant reported that only eleven out of the 260 families at Swalli survived.

He found the road thence to Surat covered with bodies decaying on the highway where they died. In Surat that great and crowded city he could hardly see any living persons. Thirty thousand had perished in the town alone. Pestilence followed famine. The President and ten or eleven of the English factors fell victims with divers inferiors, now taken into Abraham's bosom, three-fourths of the whole settlement."

Such were the results of this famine which extended over an extensive area, even although liberal measures of relief were planned by the Emperor, but they must have been nearly useless. A dole once a week on the day His Majesty ascended the throne can have been of little service to the crowds of starving wretches who





would be attracted by the news and would come from afar to partake of Imperial bounty. Thousands would be disappointed and perish, dying of starvation before the auspicious Monday came round. The feebleness of Mogul administration and crudities of Royal ideas are illustrated forcibly by the above. The courtly historian continues to eulogise.

"Want of rain and dearness of grain had caused great distress in many other countries. So under the directions of the wise and generous Emperor taxes amounting to nearly seventy lacs of rupees were remitted, amounting to an eleventh part of the whole revenues."

This eleventh of course only meant one-eleventh of the revenues in the province affected. Under Aurangzeeb there were famines in 1661, 1684, 1686, 1706, 1708. The last moments of the aged monarch were passed amidst the misery of the people, a great famine in the Deckan lasted for three years. Well might the dying Emperor write.

"I brought nothing into this world and, except the infirmities of man, carry nothing out. I have a dread for my salvation, and with what torments I may be punished. I carry with me the fruits of my sins and imperfections. I have committed numerous crimes and know not with what punishments I may be seized."

For fifty years he had oppressed the Hindus, and his soul passed before his judge amidst the groans of famished and dying millions, for whom he had done his best in blind bigotry to make their earth a hell. His intentions were generally good, and the expenses of his burial were defrayed by the sale of the Korans, which he had copied in his own beautiful hand writing. Personally he was not extravagant. Like Herod in Judæa, he thought a massacre of the innocents needful for the security of his throne. Most Oriental kings commence their reign by murdering or blinding their male relatives.

The greatness of the Moguls had now passed away and there were no more attempts to deal with famine. They were still the ruling power and again as already noted in 1733 famine was caused in Madras by their neglect of the tanks, though the North-West Provinces were also affected, and there were again famines in 1739 and 1745.

Elliot, VII,  
p. 321-328.  
VIII, p. 36.

Elliot VII,  
p. 563.

Balfour  
Article  
Famines,





Before describing the great famine of 1770, I should note that numerous famines occurred of which we have no details, and it would be desirable to prepare an abstract of all the historians, of whose works Dowson, Bayley and Elliot in their ten volumes have given merely a series of extracts, often stopping short when the historian was giving details most interesting to those who chronicle the varying conditions of the people's welfare or misery. We read of famines in 1711-1712. We know of many in fact, but it may be asked was this huge empire of Hindustan ever free from famine? One historian the author of the Tarikh-i-Daudi does state that during the twenty-eight years of Sekandar Lodi's reign 1490-1518 grain was always abundant. Though improbable it is possible that there was no famine in the small corner of the empire which he governed, but Balfour gives a great dearth in Hindustan in 1491, so we must doubt; the chronicler in question is fond of relating marvels and miracles, but he states nothing more wonderful than that harvests were abundant for 28 years even in one small province.

Famines.  
Wilson's English Annals, pp. 15, 35.  
Elliot, IV, pp. 448, 476.  
Elliot, IV, pp. 435, 438.

The famines which desolated India between 1770 and 1787 now call for notice; they deserve careful study because there is good evidence that in one of them a third of the population of Bengal perished. In the recent famine of 1900 the population of the affected districts had been in 1891 almost thirty million; the excess mortality, excluding cholera deaths, was one million, so the deaths were a little above three per cent. against thirty-three per cent. in 1770; yet according to Mr. Dutt the severest famine on record prevailed in 1900.

(British 1901 report, p. 71.)

I would draw special attention to the frequency of famines extending over immense areas between 1770 and 1787. From Jummoo to Tippera extreme west to furthest east there was famine somewhere always during this period. Digby and Dutt insist on the famines of the nineteenth century being the worst on record, but famine during these seventeen years devastated countries like Tippera which suffered twice then but never throughout the nineteenth century, while the mortality in Northern India far surpassed anything experienced recently.

Of these famines between 1770 and 1787 fragmentary notices have been given by many authors, of whom the most copious is Sir William Hunter in his Annals of



Rural Bengal. Macaulay gives a brief sketch with brilliant colouring. Burke discussed the Oudh famine in his charges against Warren Hastings, the Government Gazettes edited by Seton Karr and others supply statistical details, but no full account has yet been given of the famine of 1770, which apparently was the greatest catastrophe of the kind which ever befell India.

Famines,  
p. 1.

Yet it is by no means certain that this is true. Mr. Dutt's account of it is characteristic. "Like all famines it had its immediate cause in the failure of rain, but the intensity of the famine, and the great loss of life were partly due to the maladministration of the East Indian Company, and the consequent impoverishment of the people. The Court of Directors deplored the corruption and rapacity of our servants, but were unable to check the evil until the famine disclosed the state to which the country had been reduced. The terrible calamity aroused the attention of the British public, and the regulating Act of 1773 was passed." The meaning of this is that the famine was caused by the British, at last the generous home public was roused by the famine and passed an act to protect the poor people from the rapacity of this government of plunderers and blunderers, just as the noble home public is now asked by Mr. Dutt to protect the poor from heaven-born harpies.

Gleig's  
Warren  
Hastings,  
II, p. 29.

What really happened was very different. Government had taken over the Diwani in 1765, but the Nawab at Murshedabad retained criminal and civil authority, while the revenue matters were in the hands of a native civil service, headed by Shitab Rai and Mohamed Raza Khan who drew between them thirteen lacs per annum.

Now it was this system of a native civil service in full force in 1769 which was largely responsible for the management of the famine; Mohamed Raza Khan was the finance minister, who, while the people were in the very throes of the agony, proposed an enhancement of the land revenue.

The action of Clive, Warren Hastings, and of the Home Government in 1773 was all directed to abolishing the native civil service, and replacing it by a properly paid body of English gentlemen. It is true that these gentlemen, who were allowed to take presents, even by Clive, had shown great rapacity in exacting lacs of rupees from the Nawab of Bengal, four times within eight years the men who had come alive out of





the Black Hole or fought at Plassy and Buxar placed a sovereign on the throne of Bengal, and on each occasion they judged for themselves what should be their reward for perils and victories which few had survived. These rewards were not wrung from the people but taken from the treasury of the conquered Nawabs Seraj-ud-doulah and Kasim Ali, and the Home Government thought that Clive, Holwell and others had taken too much for themselves, too little for the Company.

Mill's India,  
Vol. III, p.  
257.

This was the corruption against which the Home Directors thundered, their officers had deprived the Nawab Nazims of the hoards which they had wrung from the people. Clive in 1757 himself took many lacs from Meer Jaffier, and in 1766 he demanded from every civilian a covenant that every present above four thousand rupees should be credited to the Company. The officers did not "impoverish the people," they simply spoiled the spoilers, and they no more oppressed the peasants than did Anson and Drake, who no doubt brought home millions which had been wrung from the miserable Indians of Mexico and Peru, but they took them in the Spanish Galleons captured on the high seas. "The whole system resolved itself into habitual extortion and injustice," but this was the work of the native collectors, and the remedy applied was in 1772 the removal of the native civilians, and "placing the internal Government in the hands of the European servants."

Mill III, p.  
261.

Settlement  
Report  
Stevenson  
Moore  
Mozufferpur,  
p. 34.

Mr. Dutt as usual distorts the facts, he attributes to the English officers the crimes which were committed by his own countrymen, and he proposes as a remedy for natural calamities a second trial of the corrupt and oppressive native service, under which the country formerly groaned. It is true that the English officers showed great blindness of apprehension in 1769 when famine was approaching, and did very little towards averting the catastrophe. It is doubtful whether they could have done much good. No one has pointed out the resemblance between this famine and that of 1877-78.

Mill III, p.  
261.

In 1769 there was famine in Madras, which in 1770 spread to Northern India; similarly there was famine in Madras in 1877 which spread over north India in 1878. There was not in Bengal absolute drought, nothing like the few slight showers in two years, which Bernier experienced; in March 1770 the humane collectors were re-

Hunter's  
Annals, p.  
399.

Hunter, p.  
418.





Hunter's  
Annals, p.  
415.

Campbell's  
Record of  
Famine, pp.  
25, 6.

porting that "the calamity was almost at an end" though really the worst was to come, the drought was nothing like so intense or long continuing as it was in Northern India in 1877, but it lasted throughout 1768-1769 see the Raja of Bardwan's report of 20th November 1769; the famine apparently commenced in January 1770 and lasted till November, but scarcity had commenced in Behar long previously. On 16th August 1769 the chief Mr. Rumbold after several letters announcing drought reports that plentiful showers had fallen.

A most important matter in estimating the cause and severity of the famine of 1770 has been hitherto misstated. Hunter distinctly states that it was a one-year famine. The drought was almost equally complete in both 1768 and 1769. Rumbold writing from Behar in February 1769 states "the rent for ground cannot be paid when the produce is destroyed; from the middle of August (68) there was no rain in the province till the beginning of January and then it only lasted a few hours and came too late."

Up to the 1st August 1769 there was no rain practically, then some very plentiful showers fell, see Rumbold's letter of 16th August, but this was merely a short respite, again the rain ceased, on August 26th "the want of rain begins to be very severely felt" in all districts north of Nuddia. Again to clinch the matter Mr. Ducarrel writes on 17th August, 1769, of the "extreme want of rain which has prevailed throughout all the upper parts of Bengal both the last and this season, and particularly the latter, to a degree which has not been known in the memory of the oldest man."

Therefore this drought lasted from middle August 1768, all through the next year, except for a few good showers in the middle of August, till the rains of 1770 in June.

Hunter apparently never read the reports of February 1769, which repeatedly mention the distress of the ryot, the "poor and suffering" ryots; this arose from the failure of the crop of December 1768, which of course must have failed if there was no rain after the middle of August. Hunter had conceived the idea that this was a "one-year famine" caused by the "failure of a single December harvest." There were two failures of December harvests, besides apparently two deficient September harvests.



Further the extension of the calamity was most wide. It has not been previously noted that the famine extended to the extreme east. Wilkins, writing in December 1770, refers to the "distress Tippera was involved in by the famine that visited it in common with the other parts of Bengal."

Campbell's  
Extracts,  
p. 72.

Hunter is also wrong in stating, p. 29, that before the end of September 1770 the province reaped an abundant harvest. On 31st December 1770, Mr. Rous reports of Rajashye a striking proof of the deficiency of the August crop. Mr. Ducarrel of Purnea on 13th December writes of four of the pargannas that there was little or no harvest.

Hunter, p.  
412.

Hunter, pp.  
410-411.

Mr. Growse from Behar writes on 26th September, "the greatest part of the land is uncultivated." If a third of the population had perished, and of course a large portion of the survivors had become enfeebled and fled the country, there could not be an abundant harvest. That the entire country having been desolated in August should exhibit smiling plenty in September might suit the transformation scene in a melodrama, but should not find place in serious history. In truth the famine was not quite so extensive as has been represented, there appears to have been a fair harvest in Dacca, and Mr. Higginson of Beerbhoom declares that "the eastern Pargannas suffer much more considerably than any other part on account of there being so little rain there last year in comparison with the rest of the pargannas."

Hunter, p.  
413.

The famine rose to its height in the middle of July 1770 when rice which had been 16 seers in February was 3 seers per rupee, the intermediate prices having been 6 or 7 seers in June. Such prices were never reached in Calcutta itself, which was well supplied with grain at a time when the places it was brought from were almost destitute.

Hunter, pp.  
43 and 419.

Hunter, p.  
410.

Hunter, p.  
381.

Warren Hastings in November 1772 reported that the loss of the inhabitants of the province had been at least one-third, and the entire mortality is estimated at ten

NOTE.—It has been asserted that Eastern Bengal escaped this famine and all others. I have ascertained from the unprinted records of 1785 that there was severe famine in Tippera in the years 1783-84. So great was the distress that the old Queen of Tippera found herself no longer able to manage and abdicated. Evidently then the extreme east of Bengal suffered from famine twice at any rate in the period 1770-1785, though it has escaped entirely during the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Hunter's  
Index to  
Revenue  
Record, Feb.  
1785.



Hunter, p.  
415.

millions, the living having devoured the dead in Murshedabad. The relief measures adopted were altogether insufficient. In Patna 380 rupees were spent per day by the Company, but this was in April when 150 had died in a day, and the famine there had been increasing since the end of January, "when fifty to sixty people were dying every day." Raja Shitab Rai had proposed to allot two lacs for the relief of the poor but the supervisor could not sanction without permission. The officers at Dinapöre, English, French and Dutch, "raised private subscriptions and fed a large number." But the Government only spent ninety thousand rupees on direct relief and not five per cent. of the land tax was remitted.

The unfortunate people seem to have suffered more from the ignorance of the officers than from their want of sympathy. For instance an enormous granary was constructed at Patna for storing grain, so as to avoid future famines, while 8,000 coolies were employed in building Fort William at Calcutta, and the workmen were supplied with grain at cheap rates; there must have been much relief expenditure on public works in addition to the Rs. 90,000 already mentioned. Grain was imported from Backerganj and Chittagong, but it was obtained with much difficulty as there were then no steamers or railroads, nor indeed a decent road.

The native historians also mention facts not to be found in Hunter.

Elliot, VIII,  
229.

"It is said that in Bengal and Azimabad Patna, that is Behar, three million seven hundred thousand men were starved to death, many sold their sons and daughters for grain or for four or eight annas apiece. On account of this dearth the English sent several hundred boats from Calcutta to Faizabad for the purpose of procuring grain; thus the price of grain was also raised in Fyzabad and Lucknow."

It is mentioned in my preface to the Gazetteer of Oudh that the Nawab of Oudh prohibited export of grain from his territories whenever scarcity occurred. It is therefore not clear what could have been done for the thirty millions of Bengal in 1870. Burma was inaccessible, Madras had itself suffered from a scarcity; import from Northern India was tried, but soon prohibited by local Governments; there was no remedy except distribution of what grain could be spared from those parts





of Bengal itself which had been less affected by famine. More possibly might have been done in this direction.

While then it appears probable that the alleged loss of ten millions of the Bengal inhabitants in 1770 is an exaggeration, there was loss of life elsewhere and the total was fully ten millions; it must be admitted that the efforts to afford relief were altogether inadequate, and the apology that the English officers knew nothing about the country, which was really governed by native collectors and judges, while a sufficient explanation of their want of foresight as regards the approach of famine, does not excuse the feebleness of their efforts to relieve the people, after it had commenced to rage.

The famine of 1770 is instructive, for the first time we have not one officer only but a number engaged in making estimates of the mortality; whether it was four millions or ten millions, the loss of life from this one year's famine was prodigious, and we can then guess what occurred in the centuries under Mogul rule, when for years there was no rain, when famine lasted for three, four or twelve years, and entire cities were left without an inhabitant.

Exaggeration has recently magnified this famine of 1770 great as it was. Lord Cornwallis passed through much of the country and in 1789 he reported to the Directors that "one-third of the Company's Bengal territories was a jungle inhabited only by wild beasts."

This is not wonderful, as in the year 1894 there were forty-three millions of acres in Bengal lying waste or covered with forest; this was 41 per cent. of the total area, a good deal more than one-third. This statement by Lord Cornwallis has been accepted even by the fairly accurate Hunter as evidence of the terrible destruction wrought by the famine, though the Governor-General said nothing of the kind. One mode of relief adopted in 1770 was to lay an embargo on the export of grain. This of course had some effect; even in 1896-97, a year of famine, the export of grain from India amounted to one million and a quarter tons.

The 1770 famine also prevailed in Oudh but it was forgotten through the much more terrible visitation of 1784 which ravaged nearly the whole of North India; wheat sold at 5 seers per rupee in Unao, at 4 in Lahore, at 3 in Jummo, and children were cooked and eaten in Unao. This was the famine which the Hindus called *kal*

Statesman's  
Year Book,  
1896, p. 139.  
Famine  
Report 1898,  
p. 357.

Famine  
Report, 1898,  
p. 360.

Seton Karr's  
Selections  
from *Gazette*,  
p. 14.

McMinn's  
Introduction  
to Oudh  
Gazetteer,  
p. 175.

*chalisa* because it occurred in the fortieth year of their era. There seems to have been not one famine but a succession of them between 1779 and 1787.

About those of 1783-84 I have some curious facts to relate; like all others, it has been described, both by Mr. Dutt and Mr. Digby as I shall afterwards note, in such a way as to discredit British administration; both have made gross misstatements, and quoted as usual absolutely worthless authorities, when the best were before them.

I will take the last point first. Mr. Dutt says, page 2, "Upper India was not then under British rule but British officers had been sent to Oudh to command the Nawab's troops, and following the mischievous practice of the time, they had farmed the revenues of the country *for their private gain*"; rebellion followed; "Captain Edwards visited Oudh in 1774 and 1783, in the former year he had found the country flourishing in manufactures, cultivation, and commerce, in the latter year he found it to a great extent *forlorn and desolate*." "Warren Hastings himself mentioned the effect of the famine *in Behar*, and recorded that the distress which was produced by the long continued drought, unavoidably tended to heighten the general discontent; yet I have reason to fear that the cause existed in a defective if not a corrupt and oppressive administration."

Mr. Dutt's misstatements are principally in the passage marked in italics by me. Mr. Dutt quotes no authority either about Edwards or Warren Hastings. I have unearthed the obscure volumes, and will indicate the machinery of distortion employed in these pages, as I have often had to do before. A Captain Edwards did not visit Oudh in 1774 and 1783 as stated, but was employed in Oudh for *seven or eight* years, and in 1783 he states the "country in many places bore the strongest marks of desolation. He had heard from *common fame* that the people ascribed their distress to the oppression of Lieutenant-Colonel Hannay." When cross examined this Edwards stated that the desolation "had not been occasioned by the long drought for during the whole of his residence in that country he had *never heard of a drought*, nor did the people depend so much upon rain as upon water preserved in wells and collected from rivers." He was promptly contradicted by Mr. Purling who had been the official resident, who stated that

Trial of  
Warren  
Hasting's,  
1796, Part I,  
p. 61.





during a whole year of Edwards' residence "there had been so great a drought that he did not remember there had been more than three days' rain" in the entire year.

Of course Edwards may be telling the truth, and Purling lying, but on 16th June 1784, Warren Hastings wrote "that the effects of the extraordinary drought which has prevailed for *two years past* are now felt in a very severe degree." But the famine had been severe long before 1782 even. In 1779 the Nawab himself writes, "that droughts were excessive, deductions of many lacs have been allowed."

Campbell,  
Famine  
Extracts, p.  
118.

Mill's India,  
IV, 298.

It is therefore apparent that there was drought at any rate in 1779, 1782, 1783, and Edwards' statement is simply false. It is quoted, the source being concealed, in order to bring charges against British officers. Colonel Hannay the gentleman impeached was in charge of Bharaich and Gorakpur, in any case his oppression could only have damaged a very small portion of Oudh and Mill declares the charges against him to be based on rumour not facts. Again we find Mr. Dutt proceeding on the evidence of a perfectly worthless witness to charge British officers with aggravating famine, and omitting to quote the authorities before him. But there is worse to come.

Mill, Vol.  
IV, p. 315.  
Forrest's  
Selections,  
III, p. 1082.

Mr. Dutt calls Warren Hastings as a witness as already quoted for the effects of the famine and of defective administration in Behar, but again Mr. Dutt leaves out the context which shows that Warren Hastings referred not to Behar at all, but to the Province of Benares, lately conquered from Cheyt Sing, and in which the entire administration save that of criminal justice was in the hands of the native civil service, which is Mr. Dutt's panacea for all evil.

Mr. Dutt must have had Mill before him, he leaves out the sentence "from the confines of Buxar to Benares I was followed and fatigued by the clamors of the discontented inhabitants;" he must have known that the road from Buxar to Benares lay through the Benares province, about which Hastings and Mill wrote. He also knew that Benares was not then governed by Englishmen, though Behar was, so he omits a sentence, and transfers Warren Hastings' denunciation from Benares to Behar in order to give one more proof of the dogma so dear to him that British Government causes famine. I leave it to the reader to judge after inspecting

Vol IV, p.  
355.

Hunter's  
Gazetteer,  
Benares.





the passages in Mill and Warren Hastings' trial, after noting the gross perversion of history and geography which the writer attempted, at the same time concealing his authorities, whether or not the said writer, probably he was some Bengali student in London, has not brought against British administration a deliberately false charge. I am not defending Warren Hastings, crafty, vindictive, sometimes corrupt and cruel, he was still a patriot in his way, a very Bengali way too, but this famine in Benares in 1784 was not caused by British administration any more than the famine in 1770 in Bengal or in 1782-83 in Oudh, it was due to the want of British administration. Mr. Dutt proceeds to remark, "one-third of the lands in the state of Benares had gone out of cultivation by 1788." He evidently means Bengal, as Lord Cornwallis in 1789 had reported that one-third of Bengal was a "jungle inhabited only by wild beasts."

So Mr. Dutt blunders on, confusing Benares, Behar, Bengal, but always with loud clamour, "murder, murder, the British are killing us."

The famines of 1837, 1877-1878 are extremely interesting and I hope on some future occasion to give an account of the latter, but my special object is to clear up errors concerning former famines which have been committed by disloyal writers in their anxiety to bring home to Englishmen the charge of blood guiltiness. I will only say a few words here about later occurrences. The drought in 1861 was nothing like so severe as in 1877 in the N.W.P.; the rainfall, so far as can be gathered from the reliable portion of Baird Smith's map (Report, page 6), was 8 to 10 inches in Agra and Meerut. In 1837 in portions of the affected area there was no rain except slight showers from March to December. This was precisely what happened in the same tract in 1877, supporting the curious native idea that great famines occur in the same tract every forty years.

Girdlestone,  
p. 46.

The history of the famines of 1897 and 1900 has appeared in official reports. I have a good deal to say but I must confine myself to my proper task, which is not famine, but British culpability as regards famines and their terrible mortality.

In dealing with Mr. Digby's Prosperous India further on I will revert to the subject of eighteenth century famines, there were others not yet referred to, the famine of 1792 in Bombay is styled a "dreadful" one. Mr.



Dutt mentions it. These gentlemen's remarks styled by the Chief Commissioner, Central Provinces, "ignorant and prejudiced criticism," by Sir Edgar Vincent in the House of Commons "malignant," proceed upon the assumption that there have never been such famines in India as in the last thirty years of the nineteenth century. To support this theory it is boldly stated that except in the seventeenth century there were no general famines in India only small "local" misfortunes, till in the last thirty years there was a series of frightful famines. It is difficult to say to whom should be given the palm for unblushing hardihood of assertion. Bad as plague is now, it was ten times worse in the time of Aurangzeeb about 1688, and whatever are the horrors of famine now, they were in every respect more dreadful, in every century and under every dynasty, prior to British conquest.

Selections,  
Government  
Gazette,  
IV, p. 312.

The reckless virulence with which Mr. Dutt attacks British administration has been shown in his attack upon their action in 1770 during the famine, and throughout in his discussion of the land tax; another instance is afforded by his account of the famine of 1900 which he declares to be the most wide-spread and the severest which has ever visited India. The object of this misstatement is plain; he wishes to show that famines are due largely to the exhaustion of the people under the increasing burthen of alien rule and of a foreign bureaucracy. The Professor of History has not read the annals of his own country neither has he perused the famine reports; he had not before him the 1900 Famine Commission report when he in June 1900 published his volume, he would not wait but struck blindly.

But he might have known from the grain prices, from the mortality returns, and early reports, that this famine, though serious, was mild as compared with the famines of 1770 and of 1877-78. The population of the affected tract in 1900 was twenty-five millions, the area 175,000 square miles, or including the less afflicted portions 29 millions on 189,000 square miles; the mortality was one million, including cholera deaths. In 1770 the population of Bengal alone was thirty millions, that of Oudh and the adjacent North-West districts, which suffered also, at least ten millions more, while the area must have exceeded 250,000 square miles, the mortality in Bengal alone was probably eight millions though reported at

Report.  
pp. 4, 71.





Famine  
Report of  
1880, p. 24.  
Famine  
Report 1880,  
Vol. II, p.  
225.

ten. In 1877-78 the area in Southern India was 205,000 square miles and the population thirty-six millions while the total area affected was 257,000 square miles and the population fifty-eight millions, double the population affected in 1900; the mortality of the Madras famine of 1877 is recorded by Mr. Dutt at over five millions, this may be about correct if Madras famine of 1877 is interpreted to mean the famine in Madras, Bombay, N.-W.P. and Mysore in 1877-1878. Every single statement of Mr. Dutt's almost is incorrect either in the gross or in the detail.

Famine  
Report 1890,  
p. 7.

The famine of 1900 was in one sense the greatest ever experienced in India, the Government showed itself most liberal, and the officers by the consent of all spared neither health nor life in the effort to preserve their fellow creatures; the total State expenditure on relief was one hundred millions of rupees or about seven million pounds sterling; adding two and a half millions for money advances made, and for suspension of revenue the total sum spent will be above nine millions sterling.

Report, p.  
196.

Relief was more liberal than in the famine of 96-97, which affected severely 125,000 square miles and slightly 100,000 more; the total expenditure was 727 lacs or nearly five millions sterling in 96. Mr. Dutt declares as usual that this too was a more wide-spread and intense famine than had ever before visited India. That this is utterly untrue will appear from the Famine Commission report of 1880, page 24, and from statistics already given. I will afterwards show what are the motives for this gross misstatement concerning the famines of 1897 and 1900, here I give a rough idea. Mr. Dutt shrieks out hysterically, great famine 1877, greater 1897, greatest 1900; knowing that his book will supply texts to numerous platform speakers, during the next ten years, who will argue that these famines, growing in intensity, are hurrying the empire with accelerating momentum to the precipice from which it can only be rescued by employing natives in every portion of the empire, by dumping down two or three Dutt's per square mile, whether among the Bengalis of Calcutta or the Pathans of the Punjab.

While I am writing there is published the Secretary of State's Memorandum on the Famine Commission report of 1900. In this it is argued or at least surmised that the expenditure of ten millions sterling was not due to excessive relief, but was justifiable because, "if I am





rightly informed, the drought of 1899 is without parallel in the annals of modern India in its intensity and destructive power, and is also unique in the circumstance that over a large part of the affected area it fell on a population already gravely reduced in resources and staying power by the drought of 1897."

It is to be feared that this incorrect statement is based partly on the statements made by the agitators. Bad as the catastrophe of 1900 was, it was nothing compared to those which continued for years together in former times. It is true at that an early period of this latest famine His Excellency the Viceroy did state in a speech that this was the worst famine on record. There is no reason that this error of forecast should be repeated by Professors of History writing with the actual facts before them.

The broad conclusion about former famines is that they were much more destructive of human life under native rulers and in ancient times than recently under British rule. Further on we shall see that the census of 1901 furnishes the strongest proof of this.

The population of the native states in the plains of India has decreased by nearly four millions during the last ten years, while in spite of famine that of British territory has increased by ten millions. This great fact is never mentioned by the seditious orators who in weekly and daily issues from the press are charging British administration with bleeding India to death, with being a principal cause of famine. I refer to it again in detail. In this connexion it is noted merely to show that while the native rulers follow the old habits of idle pomp and prodigality, wasting the industrial revenues of their subjects, exacting heavy taxes, and squandering them on their own selfish and often degrading pursuits, so will follow, as the night the day, poverty and famine more intense than any which British India has witnessed, at any rate since its administration was organized on the present system. I will freely admit that in certain directions the English in India have shown themselves inclined to sinister interests, but every native Government, Moslem and Hindu, has contributed much more to the causation of famines, while all have been helpless as regards their treatment and remedies. I will now discuss the causes of famine.



## CHAPTER IV.

Causes of famine and scarcity.—Pay and pensions of English Officers very high.—Landlord oppression.—Hunter's statistics of 1871 about rent.—Settlement Reports.—Landlord exactions.—About water supply.—The mass of the Indian peasantry not industrious.—The day's work in English agriculture.—Poverty of the masses in England.—The poor law.—The poor compelled to work.—The rich to provide food.—English poor rate.—The growth of population.—Removal of former checks.—*Sati*, human sacrifice, infanticide.—Reluctance of the Bengali to occupy and cultivate the prairie.

I SHALL now say something as to what are the permanent causes of famine or scarcity and the means of prevention.

I shall deal with some matters which, so far as I know, have not been officially discussed in this connexion. I referred to them in the preface to the *Oudh Gazetteer* about thirty years ago. This preface was printed by Government but not published, partly because it was too long, mainly I believe because, according to Sir George Couper the Lieutenant-Governor, publication would have been followed by a Parliamentary inquiry into the condition of the people. This was not wanted and the Famine Commission did the work better. Sir George Couper probably thought my preface very faulty, so it was.

I will admit at once that in my opinion the pay and pensions drawn by the British-born subjects of the empire are now too high as compared with those drawn by the country-born, and they form a heavy item of the State expenditure. I do not see why an officer in the prime of life at the age of 48 or even 45 when his





faculties have just matured should retire upon one thousand a year pension after 21 years' actual service, of which he may spend 21 months on privilege leave. Admitting that he contributes himself towards this pension, it should be clear that no strong man should cease working after labouring for only nineteen years and three months. The State loses the services and counsel of many of its best men far too soon. If three years were added to the term of actual service required for pension, the retired list would not be so heavy; the military dead weight disbursements as they are called East India Year Book, would not be so big a drain at home if a number of young native officers were attached to the army as His P. 233. Excellency proposes. The State officers drawing above Rs. 1,000 annually working in India, European and Eurasian, in 1900 drew ninety-five million of rupees pay or about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  million sterling and their dead weight allowances, pension, furlough and privilege leave pay, Dutt's came to nearly 4 million sterling while the entire amount Famines, paid to natives drawing Rs. 1,000 and over, annual PP. 287-291. salary, seems to be about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million sterling including pensions. Now two things are clear, one is that the predominant partner gets too much for his children's share, and of that share a too large proportion is paid to idle men, many of whom have well deserved their pension, but others have not. These returns as printed by Mr. Dutt are obviously incorrect; at page 287 the statistics in one place are said to be for 1889-1890, in another place for 1900, but I conceive that they are not far from truth.

Above ten millions sterling paid to English officers, pay and pensions, in addition of course to many millions spent on the British soldier, is a burthen even upon a great empire, and it should be gradually reduced.

NOTE.—Since I wrote the above Mr. Caine in the House of Commons calculates that eight thousand Englishmen in India get five millions pay; possibly the figures formerly given have been corrected. I get my  $6\frac{1}{2}$  million Indian pay adding together the European and Eurasian amounts at page 287 Dutt's Famines. I get the 4 million pension and leave pay approximate by adding together the figures at pp. 289, 291 and 292, deducting from the latter the £125,000 India Office salaries.

Mr. Caine has taken the same views as myself about period of Indian service, he might have made his case stronger by deducting privilege leave, which will be mostly spent at home, from the period of service.





Government has made many efforts in this direction, it has opened the Civil Service to all the natives of British India, it has created a statutory Civil Service, it has facilitated the studies of native youths by opening fostering and gradually enlarging schools and colleges all over India.

So far as I know Government and the Civil Service are anxious that there should be a much larger native element in the administrative body, but the main difficulty is one which Mr. Dutt's own book illustrates in a high degree. Government cannot rely upon its Bengali officers as a body, it cannot trust them to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, while too many of them, though abounding in lip service, are passively or actively disloyal.

If they can not either ride or shoot the bow, they ought at any rate to fulfil the third demand which Cyrus makes upon those who would rule their fellow men, they should speak the truth, and the whole truth.

Still it would be a mistake to say that the annual payment of these ten millions to aliens, and the other home charges have had hitherto any appreciable effect upon causing Indian famines, though it is possible they may have such effect in the future, if population continues to increase, and the home charges to multiply. There are other factors of national poverty to which Mr. Dutt has carefully avoided any reference, but which I discussed however imperfectly in my preface to the Oudh Gazetteer\* thirty years ago.

It appeared to me in 1870 that one principal cause of the poverty of the people of India was want of protection for their industry. I think so still. In Oudh the eviction notices used to average above twenty thousand per annum reaching a hundred thousand on one occasion, they

\* I do not refer to this volume from any feeling of egotism, but only to show that I am a veteran student of the subject, that I am not now writing as a controversialist, but merely urging again views which I held long ago, and which gave rise to a strong sympathy with the people of India. To this sympathy I gave expression in utterances which did not find favor with authority. I was punished in various ways, deprived of allowances, refused officiating appointments, placed under my juniors. I suffered more I believe for the people of India than all the Bengali civilians combined have endured up to date, still I have no reason to complain, sooner or later Government approved honest effort to benefit the people, and even condoned intemperate expression.



were nearly all with the object of rackrenting. Laws have been passed in order to check eviction and rack-renting, but they have had only partial success.

Mr. Dutt praises up the Bengal zemindar, declares that their rents are fair and moderate, about one-sixth of the gross produce, and quotes Hunter's Statistics of 1871, as proving the moderation of the rent. As usual he quotes an ancient and obsolete authority, when recent and excellent authorities were available.

Famines  
pp. 60-61,  
Hunter's  
Statistical  
Account of  
Bengal, I,  
155.

I take the two districts which I know, as I have managed the largest estate in them for almost ten years, Tippera and Noakhalli. Hunter gives the rent for good land in these two adjoining districts as 18 shillings and 9 shillings per acre. Mr. Dutt will be surprised to learn that the Settlement Officer writing in 1899, whose report he might have perused, instead of reporting rents to be in Noakhalli only half of those in Tippera, works out the former to be a good deal higher than the latter and his figures are derived from the rent rolls attested and confirmed by the landlord and the tenant both.

Cumming  
Settlement  
Report, p.  
119.

In Bakargunj, for which Hunter and Dutt give rents 5s. 8d. per acre, absurd on the face of them, the latest authority the Settlement Officer gives the rents the same as in Tippera, which Hunter reports as 18s. and 9s. Mr. Dutt goes on to state that the permanent settlement and subsequent rent acts have "secured all the results intended, extended cultivation, fostered enterprise and works of public utility."

In the estate of which I possess ten years' experience, there have been some great works of public utility executed by the Raja of Tippera, but the magnificent tanks which still exist were made long prior to the permanent settlement. I have recently had to report to Government that the landlords of Tippera, far from constructing tanks themselves, charge exorbitant fees to their tenants who wish to make a village pond in order to get good drinking water for themselves and their cattle. The Lieutenant Governor has repeatedly recently addressed the Zemindars pointing out that it was their duty to supply their villages with drinking water, and that the unfortunate people were suffering from fever and cholera caused by the want of good water.

It appears from the admissions of their own agents, that far from providing water, they prohibit the wretched people from digging tanks for themselves till the landlord's exorbitant demands are satisfied.





According to old Hindu belief the digger of a tank is a benefactor to mankind and is blessed by God; in Bengal the rapacious landlord, who pays lip service to Manu, plunders the yeoman who at his own cost brings water to the thirsty land. Yet more, when the extortionate fee has been paid, the myrmidons satisfied, and the tank dug, the poor yeoman has to pay another exorbitant tax whenever his tank requires to be cleared of mud and dirt. Mr. Dutt is well aware of all this; yet he deludes the British public by statements that the landlord of Bengal takes moderate rents from his tenants according to the laws of Manu.

Mr. Dutt also is fully aware that in addition to the rent there are numerous demands of *abwabs* and fees, *uttaraya*, *likhai*, transfer fees, *finer*, marriage taxes, etc. which often add in a year half as much more to the nominal rent. In Behar the rack renting of the tenantry has reached a pitch which called for the interference of Government.

I revert to this subject further on, when I quote Mr. Dutt's earlier publication of 1874, to prove that the Bengali landlord is rapacious and oppressive often in the highest degree. It suits him to represent matters differently to the British public now. The Indian landlord, with many humane exceptions represents now the former government with its cruel exactions. The Indian people are divided into two classes, said John Lawrence long ago, the *Zalim* and the *Mazlum*, the oppressor and the oppressed, the millions of peasants belong to the latter class. Recent legislation has done much for them but much remains to be done. I need not dwell on this subject, as the truth of the above picture has been admitted by all officers and by Dutt, Banerjee and other Congress champions in former days, when they were in their right mind.

Next among the causes of Indian poverty I note that the peasant is not as a rule a hard working man, as compared with the old yeomen and artizans of England, France, Germany. In domestic service ten are required to do work which three might manage. It is a common figure of speech to talk of the toiling millions. Very early in my career I noted that with the exception of one or two specially laborious castes such as the Kachis there are no steadily hard-working cultivators in India, judged by European standards.

The Indian ryot commences late, ceases work early, takes about seventy regular holidays in the year besides many special days, and as a rule except at harvest and crop

Arbuthnot's  
Munro,  
II. 218.





watering works in a languid haphazard fashion, which may become in time the habit of the English working man, but has not been so hitherto. The Bengali patriot denies this, but then he has not any idea of the task which a British ploughman sets himself to perform, and which I can personally testify to from years of actual observation. The day's work of the English peasant is described in detail in sundry works on husbandry, from which I will quote, first giving Mr. Dutt's own description of the Bengal peasant's labours.

"During the sowing and reaping seasons the ryots are busy in the fields all the day long. Early in the morning they take a meal and go to the fields. There they work till about noon. In such seasons women often take rice to their husbands working in the fields at noon. After this meal the ryots lay themselves down under some trees and repose for a while, when they return with weary limbs and weary cattle to take a third meal which their wives have prepared against their coming."

Bengal  
Peasantry,  
p. 67.

The reader will note the usual inaccuracy, habitual with Mr. Dutt, characteristic with exceptions of the Bengali. In one paragraph we are told that the peasant is busy all the day long. In the next that he eats at noon and sleeps for an indefinite time after his mid-day meal.

I now quote a description of the English peasant's labour, if it seems hard we should consider that under the famous Elizabethian Poor Law the hours of work for artizans were fixed at twelve hours during the summer, from dawn to night in winter.

Lecky's  
England  
Vol. VII,  
299.

The following is borrowed from Markham writing in 1653.

Garnier's  
Annals of  
the British  
Peasantry,  
p. 141.

"At the first setting out of the plough after Christmas, which was the time to begin fallowing, the teamsman rose before 4 A.M. and after thanks to God for his night's rest proceeded to the beast house. Then he foddered his cattle, cleaned out their booths, rubbed down the animals, currying the horses with cloths and wisps; then he watered his oxen and horses. He next foddered the latter. While they were eating their meals he got ready his collars, harness, and plough gear. At 6 A.M. he received half an hour's liberty for breakfast. From seven till between two and three in the afternoon he ploughed," that is during "nearly the whole of the short winter day; then he unyoked, brought home his oxen, cleansed and foddered them, and partook of his dinner for which he was granted another half hour's



spell of leisure. By 4 P.M. he was again in the stable, after rubbing down his charges and recleansing their stalls, he went to the barns where he prepared the fodder for the following day's bait. He carried this to the stable and then watered his beasts and replenished their mangers. It was now close on 6 P.M. He therefore went home, got his supper and then sat by the fire-side, either mending his and the family's shoe leather, or knocking hemp and flax, or grinding malt, or picking candle rushes till 8 P.M. He then lighted his lanthorn and revisited the stable where he again cleansed the stalls and planks, and replenished the racks with fodder, then returning to the cottage he gave God thanks, and went to bed."

We see then that this farm labourer worked from 4 to 9, seventeen hours, less about two hours for food, fifteen hours net, out of which one half  $7\frac{1}{2}$  hours were hard ploughing, and the remaining half was devoted mainly to looking after stall-fed cattle and horses, with small domestic manufactures as an occupation for idle moments.

Now the Indian labourer in December strolls out to his field about 8, and leaves it at 2, that is if there is any farm work on hand such as reaping the winter rice. During the six hours he does work he applies nothing approaching the thews and sinews which the English yeoman puts into his task, and after 3 P.M. as a rule he has practically nothing to do. There is little stall feeding in India, poor Hodge is a slave, it is to be feared, not only to his master but also to his beasts, a drudgery from which Rambuxsh is almost wholly free. Further the small Rambuxsh waters the cattle and takes his share in farm work, while small Hodge has to go to the board school. Hodge père toils all day and a good part of the night for his master his master's cattle and his children, while Rambuxsh daudles away a few hours scratching the earth with a shallow share drawn by two bullocks, his only real exertion being devoted to tail-twisting.

It may be argued with much truth that the Indian peasant is just as laborious as any other resident within the tropics, also that the moderate task of the Indian peasant is really a higher ideal than the incessant grind of the English farm laborer. This may be, but the fact remains that for long centuries the Indian peasant has merely worked hard enough to provide himself with food and one coarse garment. He does not save, mainly because he expects a kindly sun and the tropical showers to provide the





grain in due season, partly because if he saved, the Mahratta or Afghan robbers or the local landlord would soon snatch away his little hoard and leave him perhaps a tortured body in addition. The result of the environment of centuries is that the peasant gains a scanty meal in ordinary years, *clems* in scarcities and too often dies in famines. I have been watching the peasant in his village for many years in four Indian provinces. The toiling millions I have never seen.\*

I have now pointed out that causes of former Indian famines are to be looked for in the listless habits and general slackness of the people, due to the still existing oppressions of the landlords and the old rapacity of the Mogul tax-collector. I come now to a topic which so far as I know has not been considered in connexion with famine prevention, that is European pauperism and systems of poor relief. I referred to it in the preface to the Oudh Gazetteer. Pauperism is worst of all in England itself. The Dutts and Nourojees, when driving in the mornings to their London office or lecture rooms, must surely have seen the enormous buildings which in Britain are called work houses or poor houses and a little inquiry would have shown that in Britain too there is to be witnessed, not after every four or five years but every year, famine with all its hideous terrors attacking large classes of the population, of whom many would perish if they were not rescued by the ceaseless vigilance and ever open hand of public charity. These patriots speak with horror of famines in this twentieth century in which the state has to spend eleven million in a year in the relief of the poor among three hundred millions of Indians.

If the historian had opened the most ordinary books of reference, Whittaker, Hazell, the Statesman's year book, such as are found in every workmen's institute in the kingdom, he would have found that the poor rate collected from the British public every year for forty millions of people amounts to twenty-two million sterling. Of this sum about one half is devoted to the actual relief of the

\* In Rio de Janeiro which is near the latitude of Calcutta the merchants seldom employ themselves for more than three hours in the day, see Luccock's Notes on Brazil. I recently counted carefully the men whom I saw working in the fields during an eight mile ride and drive, I saw exactly seven, while nine were fishing, one hundred and seven were sitting, walking, smoking, standing, talking, and I should mention five were brickmaking. This was at 9 A.M. The mass of the people were at home doing nothing.





destitute, and the remaining half through county councils and other local bodies is devoted to education, technical training and the other modes of elevation of the masses which are the best preventives of famine. If in Britain we have no famines fatal to life, if no starving crowds assemble in our market places, no skeletons are found strewn on our highways after each night has passed, it is because for many centuries in every parliament and in every parish, there have been honest and kindly men devoting their time, labour and substance to helping their poorer brethren *labore et constantia*. For hundreds of years it has been one great principle of English legislature that every parish should provide for its own poor. Originally the Church undertook the responsibility, then the civil power was called in to compel those who were reluctant to help according to their means. The people themselves were to be responsible for their poor, and each individual had to bear his share by the law of settlement which limited his duties within a definite area.

Many grievous mistakes were made before the present system, the result of five centuries of discussion and legislation, was finally evolved, but at any rate constant efforts were made not only to relieve the poor, but also to promote industry, to discourage idleness, in fact to prevent the approaches of pauperism. For instance incessant war was waged with the able-bodied beggars. Indiscriminate alms-giving was prohibited. "It had taken a century or more to obtain the mastery over our nomadic hordes of mendicants."

In India on the other hand it was calculated that there were six millions of able-bodied beggars, most of whom were willing to do a little plundering, who often fought pitched battles among themselves at places of pilgrimage, and on more than one occasion met British soldiers on the field.

The poor laws in England were "part of a great legislative system which affected all classes of society, all economic interests. When dealing with pauperism the Government looked for remedies not to the poor law alone but to the enforcement of numerous statutes, regulating trade and industry wages and prices." Idle young people were apprenticed or if obstinate transported to Virginia and there "set to work."

The British legislature made incessant efforts to help the people in ridding themselves of mendicancy, and of all other evils of a kindred nature.

Garnier, p.  
278, Stubb's  
History of  
England,  
III, 601.  
Social.  
England, IV  
144.  
Long's Re-  
cords, Vol.  
I, p. 260.



“At the present day” writes Garnier, “there are about Page 279. 140 separate enactments referring to the poor most of which have been added to the Statute Book since 1834.” The Commission of 1900 refers briefly to education and agricultural banks as preventives of pauperism, but so far as I know no official notice has been taken in India of the broad facts touching poor law relief in Europe and America. They are instructive in numerous ways, they show that deep poverty is a condition of all modern civilization, and is not the outcome of the political condition of India; that in wealthy Britain with its coal and iron and teeming ocean, every year, in spite of six centuries of efforts to rescue, more has to be spent on feeding, housing, clothing the starving, than has ever been devoted to this purpose in India in the worst year of drought and famine. It is by all means right to point out any instances of extravagance on the part of Great Britain, or of unfair treatment of India, but to attribute famine to such causes and to neglect the far more powerful factors of national poverty is not only seditious conduct, but it is cruel to the poor themselves. The work of poor relief has been taken up in Europe by society and local bodies; Government has only legalized their action and superintended their methods. The poor were compelled to work, the rich to provide them with work and food in Britain. Both rich and poor were sent to jail if they neglected their duty.

“Local authorities were compelled to store up corn in time of plenty and this was sold at reduced prices in times of scarcity. The justices and the city companies had great granaries, in 1613 they were ordered to make their provision of wheat. In 1632 the council ordered that those who had neglected to provide a supply of corn “shall be punished in some exemplary manner,” then we find “some of the wardens of the companies were committed to Newgate jail.”

Social England, IV, p. 148.

For hundreds of years Parliament and the Privy Council steadily worked in this direction, blundering often, but slowly progressing toward the light. The same religious creed which denounced the most terrible future for Dives, who neglected the poor, sternly prescribed that he who would not work, neither shall be eat. The Hindus of India have never had any correct idea of the practical art of government, poet and philosophers they had, but statesmen never till Britain sent them, Clive, Warren Hastings





and Monro. The consequence is that they have done nothing in all these centuries towards systematic prevention of pauperism, though the task is an easy one compared to that which presents itself in England, and the grievous result is that a large portion of the population, probably a quarter, do not receive proper food throughout the year while another considerable portion of the population are pampering every appetite.

The misery of the masses can only be remedied by the effort and self-denial of Government and people working together for generations to come. Hitherto the people have done nothing to help the poor, save to throw them a morsel of bread when the cries of the starving are more piercing than usual; by the consent of all this is a method of barbarism, against which the nations of Europe have protested and legislated for centuries, succeeding at last. Such remedies are like the opiates which a nurse in cruel kindness puts into the mouth of a sick child.

The real Indian patriot instead of frothy and ignorant denunciation of the Government to which he owes everything will study what remedies have been applied to pauperism in other countries, and which have succeeded so far that the portion of the population, which is submerged by causes beyond its own control, is supposed to be only one-tenth in England, though Mr. Booth makes it far more. In America with its boundless natural resources, gold, silver, copper, iron, coal, worth fifty times the mines of India, a poor law is still required as in England, and based upon the same principles. There too each local authority and town is responsible for its own poor. Wherever national industry is failing and pauperism advancing, the locality is discovered, the leak is detected by this system, and it is easier to discover a remedy.

In other chapters I have touched on other causes of famine. The growth of population is of course one factor. Dutt and partners deny this, showing that the growth of population is equally rapid in Germany and England. Possibly true, but not in Ireland which resembles India in that its population is mainly agricultural, and its mineral resources though varied are as scanty as those of India. The population of India has increased enormously. We know Bengal was estimated at twenty millions after the famine of 1770; it is now seventy-seven millions, including Sylhet. During the past century Ireland has decreased to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  millions from  $5\frac{1}{2}$  in 1801, and  $8\frac{1}{4}$  in 1841. Ireland like Bengal has suffered,

Chambers'  
Cyclopedia  
Poor Law.

Dutt's  
Famines,  
p. 16.  
Prosperous  
India, p.  
164.





its people were idle, factious, unthrifty and prolific, famines were their portion too. Perhaps the next fair parallel to Bengal is Spain, its population is agricultural and rather indolent, its people inclined rather to glory in a hazy past than to labour in the present. Its population has increased from  $9\frac{1}{4}$  millions in 1768 to  $17\frac{3}{4}$  millions at present, not half the Bengal growth. In the last hundred years France only increased from  $27\frac{1}{2}$  to 40 millions, including Alsace-Lorraine. These are fair parallels and it appears that population in Bengal has increased in a ratio far exceeding those of European countries.

Mr. Dutt with his usual delight in fallacies compares India with England and Wales, their birth rate may be high, but they have two resources, emigration and mining industries, which warrant a rapid increase. A fair comparison, such as for the decennial period 1881-1891, during which India had no serious famine, Germany no wars, shows that the increase in Germany was 0.9 per annum, in India 1.1; again therefore the facts reported by Dutt and partners are fictions.

Statemans' Year Book, 1898, pp. 119, 533.

Population was checked of old by constant wars and intestine commotion, by the withdrawal of immense bodies of men from their homes to act as soldiers or banditti and by other methods which were in a high degree disgraceful to the Hindus. They used to kill their infant daughters in the West of India, and to burn their widows in the East, in Central India they practised both means of reducing population to a smaller extent. Calcutta itself was the principal sphere of *sati*. The fathers of these patriots a hundred years ago used to burn their widows alive old and young from the aged grandmother down to the child-wife of six.

The number annually burnt in the precincts of Calcutta itself was about 400. Throughout India, though there was little of this dreadful inhumanity in Madras and Bombay, the annual holocaust must have reached many thousands, while the infanticide custom must have destroyed millions during the long centuries it was practised; human sacrifices also prevailed in many places. *Sati* was abolished in 1829, but infanticide still exists though it has been checked. In Oudh we had to take a census of the little girls up to a few years ago, in order to hinder the father from the secret slaughter of his own babes, which indeed is still practised to some extent. Lord W. Bentinck was the Viceroy who abolished *sati*, and he too is



the Viceroy who has been singled out by the paid Secretary of the Congress for virulent denunciation. *Sati* and infanticide no doubt took millions from the population in the centuries before the British arrived, but wars and rebellion took scores of millions. I have already quoted Jahangir who stated that in each province of the empire, (there were above twenty), about six lacs of persons or above half a million, in all ten millions, must have been killed in war and rebellion during his reign and his father's, and these were times of piping peace compared to the next century. These checks upon population have ceased; it is now advancing with leaps and bounds; so far then it is true that the British have caused famine, because they have put a stop to the ceaseless slaughter of men, women, and baby children, the endless massacre of the innocents which thinned off those who had to be fed, though the survivors were brutalized by the process. It is not to be supposed for a moment that the people do not still hanker after their ancient freedom in these respects; with some noble exceptions the masses would, it is to be feared, welcome the restoration of both *sati* and infanticide privileges. The murder of aged parents on the banks of the Ganges was not I think a general practice, at any rate it could have had little effect on population. Human sacrifices at one time took off large numbers.

It is impossible to discuss all the causes of famine. The agitators are always referring to the destruction of all indigenous industries. It is true that weaving in the villages has received severe but hardly crushing blows from Manchester goods. I have made many inquiries into this subject. I found in the Central Provinces that large consignments of hand-woven cloths were being regularly sent by rail to Bombay. They were woven from mill thread in country looms. The *Amrita Bazaar Patrika* has been in a series of articles enforcing the same views as Mr. Digby's, the crushing of all indigenous industries is a common topic, but in its issue of 16th March we are told that the Moslem weavers of Benares are prosperous. The object of the editor is to show that these weavers are going to escape the consequences of their crime, defiling a Hindu idol, by influence and corruption. To secure vengeance for such a crime a fiction would be praiseworthy, so possibly he has misstated the resources of the weavers, but in many places the weavers though hardly





prosperous are no doubt comfortably off. I would advocate a formal inquiry into the weaving industry, which must suffer when imports of Manchester goods reach 20 millions.

I now take up another cause of famine, the congestion of population in some districts and the refusal to emigrate or even remove for a few miles. As usual I must indicate Mr. Dutt's errors. He refers to the condition of Benares, he means Bengal; after the series of famines between 1770 and 1788 he states, "by 1788 one-third of the area had gone out of cultivation," His authority is Lord Cornwallis who had been on tour in 1789 but that nobleman merely stated that one-third of the country was "jungle inhabited by wild beasts." We find from the most recent statistics that 41 million of acres in Bengal or above a third of the area is still uncultivated. It is simply a little fiction about the land having *gone out* of cultivation. So it has always been and is now, Hionen Tsang thirteen hundred years ago describes the vast wastes and forests, which the British surveyor still finds.

The reluctance of the Indian specially of the Bengali to move a few miles in order to break up forest or waste land is well known. He has a horror of the Prairie. In Tippera district where I am there is a dense population with hardly any grazing land, and a good deal of rack renting; all along the border is the Tippera independent kingdom, with a couple of million acres mostly primeval jungle. In America the plough and the axe would have turned all this into smiling harvests. The Bengali lingers on where population is 810 to the square mile and he has to pay a competition rent, though a morning's walk would take him into fertile forest uplands; the population of the Tippera state was only about 35 to the square mile in 1891, very few of them colonists from the over-stocked plains. The population of the adjoining Chittagong Hill Tracts is 21 to the square mile. No where in the world except in Bengal does population cluster thick at the rate of 810 per square mile, on lands partially exhausted too by constant cultivation, while on their borders are ten thousand square miles of virgin land, sparsely occupied, mostly uncultivated, as is indicated by a nomad population averaging about 25 per square mile.

In this chapter I have said little touching causes of famine which are known to all, but more touching those





which hitherto I submit have not been adequately discussed. In another chapter I revert to the subject of landlord oppression. I need not give details about the caste system which checks the charities and starves the patriotism of Indians. My little work is not a monogram on famines. It is an attempt to expose famine falsehoods, the system of using garbled extracts, false or obsolete statistics, ignorant or prejudiced witnesses, partial quotations, which is being employed by several Bengali writers and Congress orators to blacken the character of English officers and administration. I revert to the subject of this chapter in one which will be devoted to remedies for famine. I also indicate briefly how many sources of valuable information touching pauperism and poor relief have been neglected by Indian inquirers. I have taken the liberty several times publicly to point out that Anglo-Indian officers are reluctant to refer to outsiders for information, they prefer like the spider to spin from their own interior, authorities outside the service and evidence not collected by the service, the labors of many wise men in the past, have been neglected by the writers of the famine reports, acute and laborious as they are, they have a service bias, though not to the extent of exculpating the guilty; still it has led to the fallacy that the service can by its own sagacity and effort work out the salvation of India.

While these pages are being printed I see the estimate of the Christian Herald Commissioner that the famine deaths in a part of North China are  $2\frac{1}{2}$  millions, or thirty per cent. of the population in 1901. The famine deaths in some native states in 1897 and 1900 nearly equalled this proportion and would have far surpassed it, had it not been for the stern mandates of the British Government. Apparently however faulty they may be British officers alone can deal with famines with measurable success.



## CHAPTER V.

Mr. Dutt contradicted by himself or his statistics.—The fifteen millions paid to Englishmen in India.—Mr. Dutt's Peasantry of Bengal 1874.—It contradicts Dutt's famines of 1900.—Bengal Zemindars grasping and illiberal.—Their exactions from tenants, evictions and enhancements.—Mr. Dutt on irrigation.—On the benefits of the Permanent Settlement.—Mr. Dutt a fire brand.—His fellow conspirators.—Their statements that Englishmen hate and scorn the natives of India.—That Bengalis are perishing off the land.—The statement that in Madras districts revenue is 31 per cent. of gross outturn.

I HAVE shown in the previous chapters that nearly every one of the principal statements made by Mr. Dutt in his last Famine monogram is contradicted by the original and contemporary authorities whom he ought to have consulted. I will devote a few pages to proof that, touching many of his statements, Mr. Dutt is contradicted by himself, or by the very statistics which he quotes. I at the same time try to correct more famine fallacies. I will deal first with the grave exaggerations in which he indulges when detailing the unfairness with which India is treated. At page 306 he declares that "out of 39,000 officials in India, who receive upwards of Rs. 1,000 a year, 28,000 are Englishmen and 11,000 are natives; the 28,000 Englishmen receive fifteen million sterling annually, and the 11,000 natives receive three millions only." I take his own details printed in the same volume :—

Famines,  
page XIX.

Page 287—	No.	Amount.
Europeans ...	13,178	Rs. 87,714,431
Natives ...	11,554	25,554,313
Page 289		
Europeans ...	4,266	4,636,314
Natives ...	3,190	1,218,743





Page 293	No.	Amount.
Europeans ...	2,448 ...	Rs. 8,062,840
Natives ...	895 ...	1,367,359
Total		
Europeans ...	19,892 ...	100,413,585
Natives ...	15,639 ...	28,140,415

Mr. Dutt may attempt to wriggle out of this fiction by stating that he intended to include English pensions but both at page XIX and 306 he refers to "officials in India" and "appointments" in India.

Famines,  
Page 303.

Instead then of there being 28,000 English officials in India who receive upwards of Rs. 1,000 per annum there are less than 20,000 even if we include railway officers among the English officials, and instead of fifteen million sterling they only receive a little above six millions and a half. These fifteen millions of salaries paid in India to Englishmen have figured in many platform speeches, to embitter Indian audiences, as has also the amount "estimated between twenty and thirty million sterling for home charges."

It would be useless to attempt the discovery of the source of Mr. Dutt's errors. When an official writer is generally accurate, it is courteous, and may be useful, to indicate how he went astray, but Mr. Dutt is always wrong; whenever he deals with modern statistics or ancient annals, there always are errors of omission or of commission, of faulty narrative or faulty conclusion, which vitiate everything.

I have gone to the opposite extreme of caution. I have entered among the officials the Railway officers, though there really is no reason for including them which would not apply also to barristers and merchants, and I have omitted to place the Eurasians among natives though generally speaking all of them are natives, being born in the country, and native blood predominates in their veins. Possibly Mr. Dutt included in the officials in India the men who have ceased to be officials, and are no longer in India having taken their pension. Even then he would be altogether incorrect. Possibly he includes the entire pay of the British army; further surmise is of no avail, in any case he is utterly wrong in his statements. Again about the twenty to thirty millions "annually remitted to England for home charges, pensions, interest, and the like."—The amount annually remitted never has been either twenty or thirty millions. The bills drawn on India during the last ten years averaged fifteen millions per

Financial  
Statistics,  
pp. 370, 372.



annum, in addition to some money borrowed in England, but this of course should not be included in remittances to England and of this annual fifteen millions no less than three and three quarter million were devoted either to paying off debt, or to the purchase of most valuable state properties. Gigantic works like the East Indian Railway and the Oudh and Rohilkund Railway, for which has already been paid the sum of above thirty million sterling, replace as state assets the crumbling palaces and tawdry tombs, on which Indian Kings and Rajas used to squander their millions. Even now in many native states while millions have been spent on palaces, temples, and tombs, the amount devoted to the service of the public, to bridges, schools, roads, hospitals, is comparatively a mere drop in the bucket.

India has borrowed mainly for public works a sum now amounting to two hundred million sterling. This bears interest mostly at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. and the interest payable at home was £3,883,000 when last recorded. Hindu or Mus-sulman rulers could not have borrowed such sums, their methods were rapine and torture or death, but the few who were just and humane borrowed, as many Rajas do now, at 9 per cent. even 36 per cent. unless the loan was guaranteed by British Government. In this item alone, low interest of borrowed money, the saving under British rule, about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  million, is about three times the cost of the Patriots, great bugbear, the Indian Civil Service.

Still the interest has to be paid at home, this is really a benefit to the empire, because no where else could the money have been borrowed so cheaply. A hundred years ago the Company was borrowing at 10 and even 12 per cent. while the postage of a letter from Calcutta to Poona, now half an anna, was then one rupee six annas, the carriage of a traveller in a palki from Calcutta to Benares cost Rs. 500, railway first class fare is now Rs. 40. Of all the immense modern economies here indicated the

Financial  
Statistics  
of 1900,  
P. 341.

Statistics,  
337.

Selections,  
Calcutta  
Gazettes.

NOTE.—Since I wrote the above this subject has been dealt with by Mr. Caine in the House of Commons and Mr. Quilter in What's What, p. 751.

These gentlemen seem to have got fairly correct figures, Mr. Dutt's fifteen millions salaries to British officers and the twenty to thirty millions of payment in England have now shrunk to  $5\frac{1}{2}$  millions and 16 millions, and Mr. Caine has doubtless now discovered one reason for the degradation of the Bengalis, as they had not been able to furnish him with accurate statements of simple facts, though they had for years been consulting together about these returns.





critics take no note, neither do they appreciate the public works which have been constructed, not in great cities, but in remote hamlets throughout the empire; they would desire to have all the comforts of high civilization, and yet to pay no more than the savage does for his wigwam and bark canoe.

Famines,  
p. 58.

Mr. Dutt in 1900 condemns the British administration as itself responsible for the poverty of the peasant through its heavy land tax. He lauds the Permanent Settlement in Bengal because "the placing of a limit to the Government demand in the permanently settled tracts of Bengal has enabled the Government by subsequent legislation to limit the demand of the zemindars themselves from the actual cultivators, and the cultivators of Bengal are therefore more prosperous, more resourceful and better able to help themselves in years of bad harvests, than cultivators in any other part of India."

"In the second place the limitation of the State demand has fostered agricultural enterprise, extended cultivation, and led to the accumulation of some capital in the hands of private proprietors. This capital is expended in fostering trades and industries, in supporting schools, dispensaries, and charitable institutions, in excavating tanks and wells, and lastly in supporting the poorer classes in seasons of distress and famine."

"The rent laws of Bengal have given adequate protection to the cultivator and it will be found on inquiry that the rents generally realised by Bengal zemindars are fair and moderate."

He proceeds to quote Rent Statistics published in 1875 in Hunter's Statistical Account of Bengal which shows that the average rent for twenty districts named "is about twenty per cent. of the produce." It will therefore "appear that the Permanent Settlement of Bengal and the subsequent rent acts have secured all the results which they were intended to secure. They have extended cultivation, fostered enterprise and works of public utility, protected cultivators, moderated rents."

Thus wrote Mr. Dutt in 1900, quoting the statistics prepared by Hunter from official reports of 71-72 for his work published in 1875; but in 1874 Mr. Dutt published a work of his own, in which, being then the servant of Government, he described things in colors exactly the reverse of what are employed above, though the same figures were available.



“Without an iota of education or public spirit, or desire to do good to the people, the typical village zemindar considers it the aim and object of his life to extort the last penny from the impoverished ryot. In this calamitous year when the Government of India and the Government of Bengal tried head and heart to save millions from starvation what did our zemindars do”? “A few enlightened zemindars remitted or promised to remit a portion of the rent due, but on all sides of us what do we see? Self seeking and selfishness, a cruel disregard for the sufferings of the ryots, etc.; these characterise the masses of the zemindars.”

Peasantry of Bengal, p. 86.

“An expectation was entertained by the framer of the Permanent Settlement that that measure would induce the zemindars to improve their possessions. The Act however has not only brought about no such improvement, but has actually precluded the possibility of such improvement. The zemindars themselves have been grossly negligent in the performance of such duties. And as for the ryots, ... they will find it difficult to hold their own against masses of evidence which the zemindar can at any moment fabricate and bring forward at a Court of Justice.” The remedy proposed then was, “the only other measure ... is to raise the status of the cultivators. Let the rates of rent now payable be carefully ascertained after an extensive survey and let such rates be declared fixed for ever.”

Peasantry, p. 91.

Peasantry, p. 83.

I might quote numerous other instances of Mr. Dutt's statements in 1874 directly contradictory of what he says in 1900. I first note that the one remedy he proposed has not been adopted, the alterations in the law since 1875 have not been numerous or radical, just as many have been made in the interest of the landlord as of the tenant. It appears then that in 1874 Mr. Dutt broadly denounced the Permanent Settlement and the landlords of Bengal, the former as failing to protect the miserable rack-rented tenant from the rapacity of the latter. He was then the servant of Government. Now he and his friends, some of whom are the paid servants of the Congress, whose largest contingent comes from Calcutta, belaud the Permanent Settlement and eulogise their employers as good landlords. A more unblushing piece of tergiversation could not be quoted. Whatever the tune called for by his employers, Dutt dances to it with equal vigor and smug complacency. Formerly he denounced the landlord as crushing the





tenant whom Government with "head and heart" were trying to save; now Government is the source of all evil and the landlords are the protectors and benefactors of the peasant. He now quotes the statistics of 1871 to prove the good deeds of the landlords, though in 1874 with those figures in the records, he denounced the landlords as oppressors, whose exactions and caprice deprived the tenant of all motives to industry. Formerly it was essential to fix the tenants' rents for ever. Now it is the "wisest course to let the landlords make their own arrangements."

In the *Gazette* of January 18th 1902 the Government of India records a long resolution discussing the views put forth by Mr. Dutt and his party concerning famines and their causation. It there treats this very point, the public spirit and benevolence of the Bengal zemindars, in a tone which is but a mild echo of Mr. Dutt's fulminations in 1874.

I may add my personal experience of two Bengal districts during ten years. I have not known of one instance of liberality or public spirit by any Bengali Hindu zemindar. Several Mussulman landowners have been generous to public objects, so has the Raja of Independent Tippera. At the risk of seeming egotistic I must give details. On two occasions famine relief meetings were held in Comilla, and addressed by various native gentlemen with copious oratory. I know the Collector himself contributed on one occasion Rs. 300, younger European officers Rs. 200 or so each, one European subscribed Rs. 1,000 on each occasion. Possibly it was not enough, but wealthy native gentlemen richer than any of the Europeans, leaders of the bar subscribed Rs. 25 and one officer who had been trained in England, and was drawing about Rs. 500 per month, made an eloquent speech, but modestly veiled his identity in the subscription book under "well wisher one rupee."

On another occasion we held a meeting at which wealthy lawyers were present in order to supply a college with proper buildings and endowment. I offered Rs. 1,000 if Rs. 9,000 more were subscribed; these wealthy gentlemen unanimously declared that they would not subscribe at all but expected the over landlord, the Raja of Tippera, to bear all the expense. This bears out Mr. Dutt's earlier views that the Bengali is grasping and illiberal. At any rate the opinion expressed in 1900 by a witness who said just the reverse in 1874 is worthless.

In one respect the Dutt of 1874 is reproduced in 1900, he



was utterly inaccurate then as now. He refers repeatedly, five times in two pages, to the fearful famine which swept away a third of the population of Bengal; this of course is the calamity of 1770, but he mentions on every occasion the famine of 1760. Pp. 196-197.

On other points we can contradict Mr. Dutt's statements of 1900 categorically by his utterances of 1874. "The peasantry of India are not improvident. They are the most frugal and the most provident of all races of peasantry on earth." We have seen that Mr. Dutt's only remedy as advocated in 1874 was not tried, so his views should be now as then, "so long as the claims of the zemindars are allowed to be unlimited, ryots can never be expected to be prudent, provident, thinking beings. As matters stand now if a ryot dares to save anything the zemindar is certain by hook or by crook to ease him of his savings. The ryot therefore revenges himself on his oppressors by never saving anything." "No wonder therefore that the peasantry of Bengal have always been *remarkable for their improvidence*." Now in 1900 "they are the most frugal and provident of all the races of peasantry on earth."

Dutt of  
1900, p. 17.

Dutt of  
1874, pp. 89,  
181.

In 1874 Mr. Dutt wrote: "Sir Arthur Cotton has proved to demonstration, that *every undertaking* in the way of irrigation in India has been attended with an increase in rent and revenue which entirely covers the expenditure. Irrigation therefore cannot bring about pecuniary loss in the end." In 1900 Mr. Dutt quoting Sir George Campbell relates how Sir Arthur Cotton formed a large private company to establish a great system of irrigation in Orissa. Government paid out the company with a bonus upwards of three millions. "From that day to this the concern has hardly ever paid its working expenses, much less a farthing of interest on the capital." Peasantry,  
P. 199.

Mr. Dutt declares, proceeding upon the famine report, that since that panacea the Permanent Settlement was

NOTE.—I may add for the benefit of the Patriots who now work along with Mr. Dutt, that in 1874 he denounced trial by jury. "Nowhere in Bengal does it serve the purpose of securing the liberties of the people," also he condemned the employment of lawyers as follows: "In the mofussil criminal courts, on the other hand, the procedure is exceedingly simple and except perhaps in a few serious cases the clients need not be represented at all." "We do not know how far even the employment of barrister and vakeels by private parties in the superior courts serves the purposes of justice." He wished also to abolish District Superintendents of Police and divide the work among inspectors and talked nonsense generally.





Famines,  
p. 3.  
Famine  
Report,  
1880, p. 14.

given to Bengal, there has been no famine attended "with serious loss of life." If he had read further in the famine report he would have seen that there was serious loss of life, 135,000 in Behar and Bengal in 1865-66. He omits mention of this famine in his chapter on famines, skipping from 1860 to 1866, and he also omits to state that though there was no famine mortality in 1874 it was only prevented by the expenditure of above six million sterling. This so-called famine supplies a strong illustration of the fallacies in which Mr. Dutt is so prolific. He has often urged that the Permanent Settlement is proved to be a blessing because the peasantry of Bengal which has received this boon are comparatively well off, and able to resist the effects of drought and loss of crops, from their own resources. Nothing can be more untrue; in 1874 there was only a shortage of rain, the usual showers fell from June to the middle of September, about 17 inches in all, then the rain stopped six weeks before the usual time, there was no absolute water famine such as has desolated Northern and Central India in 77 and 97 when for twelve months together as I personally testify there were only three or four inches of rain.

In Bengal with 17 inches of rain, in spite of the Permanent Settlement, the tenants were so resourceless and helpless that Government had to come to the rescue and spend six million sterling on account of a local drought comparatively trifling. In 1878 when the rainfall in the N. W. P. was only about four inches over large areas, Government spent less than a quarter of a million on famine relief, though the famine deaths were a million and a quarter. Mr. Dutt instead of correcting his errors as he grows older becomes more perverse each month. In March this year he has become a member of the British Indian Association, the landlords. He signalises his conversion by still grosser misstatements, by adulation of the landlords, more fulsome than ever. Formerly he stated there was no "serious loss of life" in Bengal famines, now it is "no loss of life."

The Viceroy corrects his errors about the Permanent Settlement of Bengal having been a panacea for rural misery, and in the 16th January Resolution, para. 5 shows convincingly that there have been famines in Bengal in spite of the Permanent Settlement; in this no mention was made of the 65 famine in Behar with its 135,000 deaths; so on March 8th in the *Pioneer* we find Mr. Dutt, think-



ing that the authorities had forgotten this incident, improves upon his first statement, just like the witnesses whom he has often listened to in the box, with sympathy and apparently with advantage; he now finds that there was "no loss of life." "Be aye sticking in a tree Jock," said the Scotch laird. Mr. Dutt would apply the maxim to untruths, judging from the evidence before the public. But I rather think it is not a love of falsehood but the usual racial incapacity for accuracy of statement, fatty degeneration possibly often enhances this, also a racial characteristic and common with unctuous orators.

Similarly Mr. Dutt declares "In the dark days of the Mutiny of 1857 there was no disaffection in Bengal." The famine report which he quotes records that in the Behar province which has a Permanent Settlement the people offered as much opposition as in any part of India, and for years Patna, before and after the Mutiny, has been regarded as the most dangerous centre of disaffection in India.

Mr. Dutt in his letter to the *Englishman* of 26th October 1900 admits his present view to be that "the wisest, safest and most considerate policy is to let landlords make their own arrangements with cultivators." Apparently conscious of former utterances being inconsistent, he states that in 1883-84 he was "one of the strongest advocates for placing such restraints on enhancement as to make the position of cultivators absolutely secure"; he refers to pp. 72 and 78 of "my book on Famines in India," to prove that he is an advocate of moderate rents.

To commence with, page 78 has not one word on the subject; at page 72 he advocates nothing except occupancy rights to all settled tenants in Northern India. On other points, such as moderate rents, eviction, he merely states that "it is necessary to consider whether unstable or excessive rental should be permitted."

Here he is sitting on the fence, he wriggles about, in trying to seem consistent he proves himself uncandid. If

NOTE.—While I write these words I see a telegram of February 4th from Madras with a speech from Mr. Dutt containing a repetition of his calumnies "Never in India's history were people more resourceless and more crippled." "Never were greater misfortunes and deaths crowded together in so brief a space as the last five years."

The "present policy of the British Government is fatal to the good of the people and fatal to the empire."





landlords are to be allowed to make their own arrangements, how can eviction be limited and checked by the State by statutory checks upon enhancement? In his book of 1874 he advocated the greatest interference with landlords; through twenty pages, 73-93, he denounces zemindari oppressions, not rent raising only, the "zemindar possesses a variety of means to harass the ryot," "there is probably not a single zemindari in Bengal in which more is not taken from the ryots than is due by law," and "servants make illegal extortions."

Having got all he could get as an official, he now poses as a leader of the people. He has changed not his coat only but every article of his clothing. Then taking care not to refer to his work on Bengal Peasantry, he quotes his speeches in Council, which are comparatively free from fulsome and flatulent eulogy of English policy, and declares that he has been consistent, that "he will die as he has lived." True, he has been in my opinion consistent in crafty self-seeking throughout. "We as a nation have often been branded for cunning and falsehood," he admits, and the public can judge how far his own conduct lends support to this view. I do not say that in this case patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel, for Mr. Dutt in all domestic relations is a model I believe and privately an upright and popular man. He is only a Mazzini disguised as Uriah Heap. I use much milder language even than the old Geographer Strabo. "Generally speaking the men who have hitherto written on the affairs of India were a set of liars"; of some he writes "they manage to stammer out a few words of truth." Strabo wrote 1900 years ago. Macaulay denounces the mendacity of the Bengali in equally strong language seventy years ago. The Calcutta patriots of the present day are the result of the environment of twenty centuries, and it is much to their credit that sometimes some of them struggle to escape from it, and to stammer out a few words of truth.

All that is wanted, says Dutt the champion of the peasantry in 1874, pages 59, 83, is the bestowal on all tenants of the rights "which have been already secured to the first class," their rents cannot be raised and they cannot be evicted, and he proposes "let the rates of rent now payable be declared fixed for ever." Nothing of the sort has been done, or was ever seriously considered by the Legislature here or anywhere, not even by Parnell or

Peasantry,  
p. 89.

McCrindle's  
Ancient  
India, p. 60.



Healy. Now he says let the landlords make their own arrangements. He pretends now, though his panacea of 74 was never adopted or formally discussed, that the Bengal Permanent Settlement which permits enhancement and eviction, is a blessing to all and should be extended to all India. He was formerly, to please his patrons, the extravagant and unreasoning denouncer of landlords; he is now, to please his present patrons, aglow with equally groundless eulogy of the Bengal zemindar, and he attempts to defend his consistency by bold misstatements, whose refutation will be found in his own pages. A man may change his mind in the course of years, may alter it on any one subject of political discussion, but when those changes coincide with his interests, and are concealed so far as possible by misstatements, the politician's sincerity becomes suspected, among honest men he is no longer taken seriously.

This officer makes an elaborate profession of faith in 1874 about tenant rights and landlord wrongs, he knew he would please Sir George Campbell when supporting the three F's for all the peasants. He denounced lawyers; pooh-poohed high education; trial by jury, landlords, the selfish and jobbing native press, were all condemned.

The native press was "vigorous and eloquent and deserving of praise" when "the rights of our educated countrymen to be employed in the higher grades of the public service" were discussed, and when "the rights of the leaders of our community to a place in the Legislative Council" were championed, that is when they supported his personal claims. In a hundred pages he denounces old Mogul oppression and that of his countrymen; he lauded the English Government. "Poor Bengal ryot? Hope for relief from the hand of alien rulers of the country, but from thine own countrymen, don't." He became by the favor of his superiors, whom even his hysterical extravagances pleased, a Commissioner, a C.S.I., a member of Council for a time. He could get no more then. He now turns to the other side; he denounces all he had lauded, writes volume after volume to prove that the English are bleeding the peasant to death. He becomes President of the Congress, his books are puffed in Congress circles and organs, he now bids boldly for a place for himself in Imperial Council, for high positions for his caste, kith and kin, for men who cannot pass the examinations which are open to all.

P. VI,  
Peasantry  
of Bengal.

Speeches,  
p. 143.



It is desirable to consider how far Mr. Dutt who begs his Madras audience to be calm is to be considered a publicist or a fire brand. There is much craft in the moderate tone of his addresses, he has undoubtedly considerable skill in adopting a tone of gentle pathos and calm philosophy, his pose as that of the historian, who has studied the past and is alarmed for the future of the empire, is effective.

Mr. Thurburn remarks that Mr. Naorojee is "dogmatic and even angry" Mr. Dutt "sober and persuasive." He should have added that each is playing the part with Digby, Banerjee, Ghose, Hume and others of the company, which suits him best and which has been carefully rehearsed beforehand.

Mr. Dutt's is the more dignified, he is the heavy father, he addresses many audiences every year about famines, in lobbies and hotels in England he appears fitfully like Mr. Pecksniff while he describes famine with much pathos as "chronic, chronic."

But all are working together, Dutt, the student of history, the earnest worker among the professors of Sanskrit lore, the interpreter of Manu and the Mahabharat, presents to the world a fictitious account of ancient India, its civilization, power, grandeur, and peaceful happiness, and in dramatic contrast he paints the misery of the famine stricken land being bled to death by the vampire England.

But Dutt takes care to be polite, he states the facts leaving it to his companions or his supporters in the Congress press to apply the proper adjectives. With a show of loyalty he even abstains from uttering the condemnation which must follow from his recital of facts, leaving the livid colors to be rubbed in by his henchmen. For instance in his Civilization in Ancient India he describes the conquest of the aborigines by the Aryan invaders and the cruelty with which the victims were treated.

"It is needless to say that the conquerors viewed the aborigines with the contempt and hatred which have marked the conduct of all conquering nations, whether on the banks of the Indus 1700 years before Christ, or on the banks of the Mississippi seventeen hundred years after Christ. History repeats itself and the Punjab was cleared of its non-Aryan aborigines, just as the United States of America have in modern times been cleared of the many powerful and brave Indian races who lived within its primeval forests."

Historically the statement is utterly false. Livy, Tacitus and Caesar will prove that the Romans did not



either despise or hate Gaul, German, or Greek ; as to the Briton their admiration is recorded in the well known exclamation, "*non Angli sed Angeli.*" Nor did the Americans ever despise or hate the Red Indian of the Prairie. The picture, presented by the historian, novelist, and poet, of the silent and dignified Indian chief is familiar to all students of English and American literature.

No author of repute has ever spoken of the Huron or Mohawk in a spirit of hatred and scorn, while works which have appealed to the public most strongly, such as *Hiawatha* and the *Last of the Mohicans*, mention the Red Indian in terms of respect and admiration. The matter would be of no importance and not relevant here, if it were not for the use which Mr. Dutt and his fellows make of this historical falsehood. He craftily says nothing about the British conquest of India, he mentions the conquest of the Indians in America, and how they were regarded with hatred and contempt by the white man, he leaves it to his readers to apply the obvious moral to Indians on the Ganges, which he has drawn from the Indians on the Mississippi and the Indus.

It is a falsehood that Britons hate and condemn a gallant foe whether he won or lost the field. It is one which on the authority of the Professor of History will be repeated on a hundred platforms, and used to stir up ill feeling against the British. Mr. Dutt states that the victors in the world's battles hate and condemn the vanquished ; he craftily leaves the distinct local application of this seditious slander to bolder spirits. Verily with some justice, to quote again his own words, "We as a nation have often been branded for cunning and falsehood." These are the qualities which Englishmen regard with hatred and contempt, not the misfortunes of a gallant enemy. There is probably no living man whom Britain at present admires so much as their gallant foe DeWitt the Boer.

The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and other papers have in their articles taken up Mr. Dutt's half told tale. They have announced to the millions of India that the feeling of their conquerors for them is hatred and contempt. Thus Dutt forges the false coin, and the *Amrita Bazar* utters it. They divide the task of defaming the British Raj, as the Irish rapparees used to divide the blunderbuss, one assassin carrying the stock, another the lock, another the barrel.





Let me quote an instance of British contempt for the conquered. At the foot of a low hill in the lovely valley of Dehra Dhoon, there rises a white tombstone with the following inscription, I quote from memory, "Sacred to the memory of General Sir Rollo Gillespie," then follows a list of the gallant men who fell at the storm of the fort of Kalunga, and on the obverse appears "and to the memory of our gallant enemy Bikrama Sing, who bravely defended the cause of his sovereign and country and fell at this spot." In New Zealand there are to be seen the costly memorials raised to gallant Maoris who fell in the wars.

But Mr. Dutt in the same paragraph already quoted, covertly as Iago, brings another charge against Britain. America has been cleared we are told of "many powerful and brave Indian races who lived within its primeval forests." Of course he refers to the British in India, at the same time he leaves it to others to say so directly. He lights the torch, then his henchmen take it up. In one work he tells us that the famines of the present time are the work of the British, and that the people are perishing, in another he points out how Indians "in modern times have been cleared off." The cry is taken up by Digby, the *Bengali*, and the *Amrita Bazar*.

Prosperous  
British  
India, p.  
621.

A publicist fans the flame as follows "Our race is simply quietly waiting for the time when its members will like other great nations of the past be swept off the face of the earth." "It is a pity that such an intellectual and so deeply spiritual a people as the Bengalis should perish under the rule of Great Britain." "It is despair all along the line." If this is not sedition what is? Just as in 1857 the chupatti was passed from regiment to regiment with the falsehood that England was conspiring to destroy their faith with bone dust in their flour, and beef fat in their cartridges, so now these preachers of sedition pass on libels from one to the other, each adding to the blackness of England's infamy. "Be calm," says Mr. Dutt, knowing that he is addressing thousands of youthful Indians, who on the authority of the professor of history are told that Englishmen "hate and scorn them" and are destroying them off the earth. He is an incendiary, though he is not brave enough himself to carry the fiery cross. "Be calm." Even so the Spanish inquisitors handed over the heretics to the secular power, charging it to be merciful, but knowing that it would burn them alive.



I need hardly state that these conspirators pervert history while they slander the English. No "great nation" was ever destroyed by its conquerors. The Toltecs in Mexico, who in many respects were a great nation, perished off the land, but it was through famine and pestilence, and it is apparently through famine that many millions in the Native States of India will perish, unless Britain interferes still more sternly than it did in 1900 in two well known states. If a race is really intellectual and spiritual it subdues its conquerors, as Greece subdued Rome.

One last specimen of Mr. Dutt's misstatements, which can be refuted from the very figures he refers to. He has made great capital out of the official admission which he quotes to effect that in one district of Madras the Government took as land revenue in wet lands 31 per cent. of the produce, this has been used along with a 33 per cent. in Bombay to drive home the charge of crushing the people by a land tax. Mr. Dutt states, contradicting the official reporter of 1878, "The rate is much higher now for the proportion in the settled districts of Madras is between 12 and 31 per cent." and he quotes the Famine Commission report. On turning to it we find that the 31 per cent. was only in the Chillambaram Taluq of South Arcot, that it was 31 per cent. of the outturn valued at 30 per cent. below wholesale rates, and that this was one of the earlier settlements now forty-one years old and was cancelled long ago. In other words the rate was 31 per cent. nominally very many years ago, what with the rise of the price of grain and the fall of the value of silver and the original undervaluation, it was 16 per cent. at ordinary average prices in 1877, and is now about 11 per cent. probably. This mistake of Mr. Dutt had been pointed out by the reviewer in the *Englishman*, but on 12th October Mr. Dutt defends himself, in about as disingenuous a sentence as I have ever read.

P. 108.

Vol. III,  
P. 394.

NOTE.—The machinery of agitation at home is simple wire pulling of the most despicable character. A few pot house politicians got together at West Ham, a Mr. Mukerjee last month amongst them carried a resolution that the "system of Government in India is diametrically opposed to the principles laid down in the Act of 1833 and the proclamation of 1858 and that the faithlessness of British Government in the matter is the primary cause of the misery and suffering now prevailing in India, and of great injury to the people of this country." All this clap trap will be read out to thousands of students and schoolboys in India, who will believe that the famine and misery round them are, by the admission of West Ham Parliament, due to the selfish rapacity of British officers in India.



Speeches,  
128.

Prosperous  
India,  
p. 366.

"Under these circumstances I maintain that I am absolutely right in judging of the assessment at the rates at which it was made." But Mr. Dutt's argument at page 108 is not a condemnation of the ancient assessment half a century old. He argues in 1900, that land tax is causing famine *at the present moment*. "The rate is much higher now (than 8 per cent.) for the proportion in the settled districts of Madras is between 12 and 31 per cent." He repeats this similar untruth in his Congress address at Lucknow. We find now what the addition by Mr. Dutt to the surging flood of untruth and slander is based on. I will repeat the facts. In one corner of one Madras district, said the Famine Commission of 1880, in ancient times the revenue was nominally 31 per cent. of the gross outturn on wet lands, which, said the Commissioners in 1880, really was 16 per cent. Mr. Dutt *omits* this latter portion from his quotation according to custom, and then has the hardihood to assert that now in 1900 the proportion of revenue to outturn is still 31 per cent. though with the fall of the rupee and the rise in grain prices the 16 per cent. must have sunk to about 11 per cent. and on this untruth Congress writers have based reams of declamation about 31 per cent. revenue, Mr. Digby and others adopting Dutt's figures as the result of "close investigation." Unfortunately when men exhibit a tropical luxuriance of untruth the task of refutation is difficult; for many lines of argument and quotation are often required in order to rebut one line of bold misstatement.

The Hon. Mr. Nicholson in his crushing answer to Mr. Dutt's remarks on Madras refutes the mistakes of the latter one after another. For instance at page 37 Dutt states that revenues according to Madras rules "shall not exceed one-third of the gross produce of the soil;" such a rule permits or gives an implied sanction to assessment at the old rate used by Akbar. But this rule was disallowed by the Court of Directors so far back as 1856, see page 24, Appendix to Government of India Resolution of January 16th, 1902. Mr. Nicholson also points out that in valuing the gross produce, not only are commutation rates used, far below the real value, but the straw is not valued at all.

Again as in the case of the South Arcot 31 per cent. we find Mr. Dutt using ancient rules formally abolished nearly half a century ago as the basis of his charge of



rackrenting preferred in 1901. The public abandonment of this rule is mentioned in the Famine Report of 1880 which Mr. Dutt quotes so often, using garbled extracts, obsolete rules, any possible means of vilifying Government the oppressor of the poor. Government in fact has always been reducing ancient assessment and humanizing its procedure.

For instance we find the Company when poor and struggling lowering the rents in Calcutta in the beginning of the eighteenth century, and reducing the percentage taken on the sales of houses and gardens from 25 to 5 per cent. This policy has been followed throughout.

Sandeman's  
Calcutta  
Gazette.

I have to add that Mr. Dutt has been consistent in one matter, he has always opposed the abolition of the powers of transfer of tenants' holdings; he and Mr. Thurburn represent two different schools, the latter has often bewailed the woes of the peasant and denounced the wiles of the Shylock, Mr. Dutt champions the latter, fair rent was now and then feebly advocated, but at last he has become a member of the landlord association, and "landlords are to be left to make their own arrangements" with cultivators, while the money lender is to have a free hand.

In Sonthalia and Chota Nagpur the peasant requires to be protected from Shylock just as much as in Peshawar or the Deccan. Mr. Dutt's caste and connexions bias his mind. Any restriction or freedom of transfer would be unpopular among the moneyed classes of Calcutta. A sop must be thrown to every interest.

I have now done with Mr. Dutt for the present. I have shown that his charges about fifteen million spent on the pay of English officers, about twenty to thirty million of annual home tribute, about 28,000 Englishmen drawing high pay in India, about fifty million sterling lost in railways, about five million deaths in Madras famine, about the famine of the last ten years being the worst on record, about there being no famine deaths in Bengal since the Permanent Settlement, about rents in Bengal being moderate and landlords liberal, about land revenue in Madras reaching 31 per cent. of crop outturn, that in Bombay 33 per cent. being above Rs. 5 per acre on the average, are all either utterly false or grossly exaggerated. So much for the present.

As for the past his statements that lands revenue under Hindu kings was taken according to the laws of Manu, that Greek travellers testified to the light taxes, that the Mogul





taxation was moderate, that Akbar and Aurangzeeb took only a sixth, eighth or tenth, that the revenue stated by historians was only the demand not the sum exacted, that conquerors always hated and scorned the conquered, that there were few great famines in former days, and that they were aggravated in Behar and Bengal by the bad British Government.—Mr. Dutt's statements are the reverse of the truth in nearly every case, distorted and partial in one or two.

Lastly, Mr. Dutt in 1874 professed a faith every iota of which he seems to have now abandoned, except that he was then faithful to Shylock, and is so still. I do not charge Mr. Dutt with deliberate falsehood though he has made the statements mentioned above and many others which are utterly false and which are proved to be false by the evidence actually before him or within easy reach. I do say that he is inaccurate, careless, and forgetful to a phenomenal degree, and that when he has found a sentence, or fact, or opinion, which supports his views, he never attempts to examine the context or authority, shuts his eyes perhaps involuntarily to adjoining paragraphs. He is so strong a partizan in fact that his naturally feeble critical faculty is benumbed and dead, no theory in history is too absurd for him to adopt, while his ignorance of Indian history during the last thousand years should shame the youngest writer who arrives at Garden Reach.\*

P. 303.

\* To show how Mr. Dutt garbles evidence by the omission of context, I instance his quotation from the Hon. Mr. D. Smeaton.

"God help the people of India, Great Britain and Ireland owe a debt to the Indian peasant, a debt of millions upon millions." Mr. Dutt tacks to this sentence a fiction of his own. "We know that India annually remits to England a sum estimated between twenty and thirty million for home charges, pensions, interest and the like." He thus implies that Mr. Smeaton too is a witness to this drain and condemns it. He omits Mr. Smeaton's next sentence "India has risen as one man to support by her voice as well as by money her fellow subjects in the South African struggles. Let the United Kingdom stretch out to her now a helping hand." Mr. Smeaton was referring to a debt of honor not of money, and he requests me to notice Mr. Dutt's "scandalous misconstruction of my words."



## CHAPTER VI.

Mr Digby's Prosperous India.—His attack upon Lord William Bentinck's arrogant cynical cruelty.—Comparison of famines 1769-1800 with 1869-1900.—The famine of 1770 not severe.—All famines prior to British conquest merely local except in seventeenth century.—The decline of trade, of Bombay ship-building.—England's industrial supremacy due to the conquest of Bengal.—Import of treasure into India.—Prices of grain in famine of 1784.—The nineteen million of deaths according to *Lancet* correspondent.—The fudging of famine deaths to magnify mortality.—Poverty of India.—Errors about Railway Companies' Capital.—About Indian officers on steamers.—The earnings of native barristers and pleaders.—No foreign capital invested in cultivating jute.—Mr. Digby's blasphemy.—Famine losses concocted.—Further mistakes, former revenue taken in kind.—Income of  $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per day in 1900.—Manipulation of gross produce, outturn of artisans' and mechanics' incomes.

HAVING dealt with Mr. Dutt, I may now refer to one or two of his fellow conspirators. A bulky work by Mr. William Digby, "Prosperous India" has arrived in Calcutta while I am writing this review; the author traverses the same ground with much more full details, while in virulence of invective he far surpasses that gentle craftsman, the Bengali professor.

Mr. Digby has been very industrious in the collection of statistics from the blue books, and although his book abounds in instances of unscrupulous advocacy and gross perversion of facts, yet it contains masses of valuable quotations, including many from the unpublished report of the Economic Inquiry held in 1882.

If Mr. Digby had been content with printing this, apparently it was given to his contributor in confidence, and with showing how inconsistent with each other



Government statistics often are, he would have done useful service. As it is I have no hesitation in saying that for a time at any rate, this publication, full of the grossest errors of passion, prejudice, incorrect narrative, and illogical reasoning, will do more harm than good and actually obstruct reform. To give at once an idea of the spirit in which Mr. Digby writes history, let us see how he speaks of one of the most noble minded men who ever ruled India, Lord William Bentinck. Mr. Thackeray about 1806, mark the date, wrote a minute about the land settlement in Madras. In this he urged that in "India a haughty spirit, independence and deep thought, which the possession of great wealth sometimes gives, ought to be suppressed. They are directly adverse to our power and interest. We do not want generals, statesmen, and legislators; we want industrious husbandmen."

Pp. 597-611  
 Higginbotham's Edition, Vol. II.

Now Mr. Thackeray's memorandum on this subject is to be found with Lord W. Bentinck's note in the appendices to the Fifth Report; much of the purport is the same, but the expressions quoted above are not in the original. Even if they are accurately reprinted from some other memo. they simply amount to this, that in 1806 it would not be wise to create more of the class of officers, whom he calls "ferocious polygars."

There had been in 1806 repeated rebellions in the country only just conquered from Tippoo, another serious sedition was ripening to the outbreak of July 1806 three months after this memorandum was penned. Lord William Bentinck, in forwarding Mr. Thackeray's memorandum, expressly states that he approves the Permanent Settlement recently effected in Bengal, and after anxiously and with diffidence discussing the great question, ryotwari versus zemindari for Madras, declares that the "happiness of millions depends on the decision."

Lord W. Bentinck's memos. of April and November 1806 exhibit no hostility whatever to great zemindars. Mr. Thackeray merely objects to their creation when they have not previously existed, he expressly mentions moderate assessment and rich ryots as contemplated in his scheme; even if he wrote as alleged, he only referred to the present condition of Madras, rebellion still rampant everywhere; and the Governor nowhere endorses his views about not wanting "generals, statesmen, and legislators." Yet we are told that Thackeray was the "mouthpiece" of the Governor, Lord W. Bentinck;



the scurrilous writer proceeds: "Never perhaps has the arrogance and cruelty of alien rulers towards their subjects been more nakedly and cynically announced," and this view so nakedly set forth, by "nearly every Viceroy, every Lieutenant-Governor, every Chief Commissioner, aided by their respective subordinates," "has been consolidated into concrete facts." Let us see how its author "consolidated" it. Arrogant and cynical cruelty is the expression applied to Lord William Bentinck, the man who as Governor-General boldly warred against the unjust gain and sinister interests of the army to which he himself belonged, who deprived the British officer of half *batta*, who effected reduction of expenditure to the amount of one million and a half in the military and civil service, who was the first to raise the native judges to a dignified footing by increasing their power and raising their emoluments.

Prosperous  
India, p. 43.

Under the auspices of this Governor-General native judges became appellate courts as Sadar Ameens, who could hear appeals from lower courts, or try civil cases of any value in Bombay and up to Rs. 10,000 in Bengal: "His Lordship unreservedly admitted the principle, and zealously carried into practice the employment of respectable natives in the administration of public affairs." In every respect this "cruel arrogant cynical" nobleman carried out what professes to be the present policy of Mr. Digby's employers the National Congress, economy, reform, the expansion of the native civil service, the repression of militarism, and the encouragement of English education. In the words of Lord Macaulay, by these efforts he has obtained his only reward, the "veneration with which the latest generation of Hindus will contemplate the statue of Lord William Bentinck."

Mill's India  
by Wilson,  
Vol. IX,  
p. 184.

Mr. Digby has selected the noblest of our great departed for special slander. I am certain no Hindu has suggested this, as ghouls have an acquired passion for ransacking tombs and devouring the dead so Mr. Digby is not happy unless he is defaming the good and great in our Walhalla.

Essay on  
Clive.

Mr. Digby has sensational headings even on his outward cover—1850 *2d.*, 1880 *1½d.*, 1900 *¾d.*, his object being throughout to show that under the administration of Britons the country has become poorer and poorer, till it has reached the present frightful condition when the masses are always on the verge of starvation and never get sufficient food. There is not an iota of evidence for



the two pence in 1850; it is simply assertion; it is absolutely certain that the masses in 1850 were not earning two pence per head per day. Wages were far lower and less constant than now, though grain was much cheaper. In fact the writer uses three sensational figures on the cover of his book, calculated to plunge all Indian readers into the bitterness of despair, and for the first one he does not pretend any authority. Mr. Digby compares the last third of the nineteenth century with the same part of the eighteenth, 1769–1800, with 1869–1900. There were only five famines he says in the former, and he adds: “Stated roughly, famines and scarcities have been four times as numerous during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century as they were one hundred years earlier, and four times more wide-spread.” He quotes the mortality of the last 47 years at nearly twenty-nine millions, and then he states this mortality is “admitted.” Admitted by no one except the slanderer himself.

Pp. 123, 125.

Prosperous  
India,  
p. 130.

He trusts to the reader not examining the statistical tables on the previous pages, in which he doubles or trebles the officially recorded famine mortality, in which he attributes the cholera deaths to famine; in the tables he makes one false statement after another; by the use of all these fictions he piles up an aggregate vastly greater than the truth, and then announces that this terrible loss of life is admitted. Now to show how Mr. Digby distorts the evidence. He wants to prove that in the eighteenth century “all the famines were local, not one approached in extent or severity those of the last quarter of the century.” There was a famine recorded in 1770, it would never do to admit that this was a great famine, so he writes. “Sir George records for Eastern India drought in 1769, and famine in 1770, accompanied with much suffering and great loss of life. But the harm then done could not have been of a very intense character judging from the collection of the land revenue in 1771.”

Prosperous  
India,  
p. 122.

Prosperous  
India,  
p. XXVIII.

In the very meagre record of authorities quoted by Mr. Digby, we find “Famines in India, by Romesh C. Dutt, C.I.E. ;” on the very first page of that work we find in prominent type the story of the “great famine” of 1770, when it “was officially reported that a third of the population of Bengal or over ten millions of people had died.”

I have already given some details of this famine. Mr. Digby also states that he has studied Dr. Hunter’s works, The most celebrated of these, “Annals of Rural Bengal.”



contains full and elaborate accounts of the famine of 1770. Mr. Digby quotes Burke about Indian affairs, Burke mentions the famine of 1770 "which wasted Bengal in a manner dreadful beyond all example."

Mr. Digby actually quotes this, but again and again he belittles this famine, this and all other "famines prior to and during early British rules were local, not one approached in extent or intensity the three great distresses of the last quarter of the nineteenth century."

Page 28.

No statement could be more utterly false, nothing more opposed to all the evidence and authorities. I only mention three authors whom he alleges that he has perused.

All he has to say about the worst famine on record, which extended over the largest area, and destroyed ten millions in Bengal alone is, that "it could not have been very intense, judging from the revenue collections." To him the death of ten millions is nothing, the lessons to be drawn from this famine of which we have copious details are nothing. In this renegade effort to blacken the character of his countrymen, Mr. Digby, the paid Secretary of the Congress, distorts all the evidence. Every paragraph of his several references to this famine contains a separate untruth. We are told of the revenue in 1768 "before any failure of rain was recorded." I have previously shown from contemporary records that the rain ceased in August 1768. Mr. Digby quotes investigations made at different times by "one English student of History and two Indians that all Indian famines were local except in the seventeenth century." Mr. Digby was in Ceylon in 1873 when Balfour's Indian Cyclopaedia was published. He no doubt perused it, probably reviewed it, the article 'famine' by that author alone proves that this above statement is false, even if endorsed by the Prime Minister of a Feudatory State. I have quoted many authorities; again and again, as I have pointed out, from A.D. 650 down, contemporary chronicles tell us of famines extending over all India, or over vast areas, and over long periods of time. All these bogus statistics are put forward in order to blacken the fair fame of the British officers, of whom during these later famines hundreds have sickened and many died in their struggle to save the lives of their fellow creatures. For their deaths and those of the ten millions in 1770 Mr. Digby cares nothing, he never mentions one and he makes light of the other.

P. 123.

Indian officers are familiar with the name of the Patna





renegade and assassin samru, who murdered two hundred Englishmen in 1764. He also was the paid servant of a Bengali, he committed one dastardly crime, but only one. For many years Mr. Digby has been slandering his countrymen, till the Secretary of State has at last addressed him in language never before publicly used in my recollection by any high official to any Englishman.

P. 85. I will give a few more instances of Mr. Digby's untruths. He states "National industries have been ruthlessly destroyed." "A hundred years ago shipbuilding in India was in so excellent a condition that ships could be and were built which sailed to the Thames. No heed was given to wise counsels." Utterly false, the Bombay dockyards were constantly employed in building not only ships but line of battle ships. It became impossible to construct them in time, because wooden ships ceased to be built all over the world, and steam became the motive power. Even then the conclusion is false; in Calcutta and on the Ganges and Megna two companies alone employ about 170 steamers all built in India, which with their flats carry larger cargoes than ever were despatched from all India put together in the great days of old.

The next fiction deals with the mode in which England prospered by bleeding India to death.

Prosperous India, p. 30. "England's industrial supremacy owes its origin to the vast hoards of Bengal and the Karnatic being made available for her use." Every schoolboy knows that England's commercial and manufacturing greatness is due mainly to three factors, her coal, her iron, and the energy of her island race exhibited in inventions and mechanical appliances. No authority ever attributed the great progress in manufactures during the eighteenth century to the spoils of Plassey. All writers, see McCulloch's articles, Cotton and Iron in Commercial Dictionary, attribute the growth of British industry to the discoveries of Arkwright, Hargreaves, Crompton, Cartwright, Dudley, Watt, above all to the coal mines, and steam engine: so does every one of the hundreds who have written on the subject. Admitting that several millions, perhaps five million sterling of so-called plunder, were brought to Britain in the ten years after Plassey, we know how that money was spent: Macaulay mentions how the Nabobs purchased seats in Parliament, built houses, wasted the money in pomp and luxury. It is as certain as anything can be that this influx of badly earned gold rather discouraged honest

Lecky's  
England,  
VII, 277.

Mahon's  
England,  
V, 191.



industry and commercial enterprise, just as a century of the like tribute reduced Spain from the very highest rank among European States to the lowest.

This particular falsehood is intended for Bengali consumption, there is not an English working man's institute in the kingdom which would not scout such preposterous statements intended to gratify Indian readers and promote circulation.

At page 182 Mr. Digby deals with the startling fact that in spite of the growing misery of India, in spite of the tribute which it pays to England, the balance of gold and silver imports into India over its exports has been 378 million sterling in the last sixty-five years.

Still more extraordinary that in the first twenty years of that period, the golden age, when each Indian earned two pence, the net imports of treasure were only  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million per annum, while in spite of famines and the fall in the price of silver the net imports of the last twenty years have been about six millions per annum.

Here is a bottom fact, that poor India each year has been laying by six million per annum during the last sixty-five years. But this is not the only proof of Britain being the bleeding one. The gold production of India from the Mysore mines has during the last ten years taken a place in the world's bullion market and amounts to many millions. Obviously this should be added to the net import of the last ten years. Mr. Digby endeavours to whittle away the weight of this argument by announcing that the late Maharaja Scindia left forty millions of rupees in his hoard; as a matter of fact he left a great deal more. He goes on to quote another gross fiction that another potentate had vaults containing from three to four hundred millions of rupees. Mr. Digby blunders on into another astounding misstatement. "It is certain there are not any large hoards in the British provinces." P. 184. It is true that in British India the rich men not being afraid of a plundering Raja invest a larger portion of their savings in buildings, jewellery, and ostentatious expenditure generally, but they have enormous hoards in addition. The wealthy noblemen who recently died in Bengal—Maharajas of Hathwa and Darbhanga and the Nawab of Dacca—left behind them millions in bullion. Hathwa left  $6\frac{1}{2}$  millions of coined rupees.

Then we are told that the capital of Bombay is mostly India, pp. 185, 575-6. that of foreigners, so say Naurojee and Digby. Prosperous





foreigners are Parsis, Bhoras, Marwaris, who have come to Bombay, partly because under the British flag alone is their wealth safe, partly because under it alone can commerce flourish. They are only foreigners some of them, in that from religious motives they periodically revisit their ancestral homes and temples, they live and die in Bombay territory, where they have become free, wealthy, educated and happy, in spite of the charlatans and sedition-mongers who are always telling them how dismal is their condition. They are no more foreigners than the English pilgrims who are now visiting Rome.

Open at any page in "Prosperous India" and some gross error or untruth appears. I will take only those which have reference to famine, to crops or taxation as its factors. There was a great famine in 1784 in Northern India, but as that was in territory under native rulers and in the eighteenth century Mr. Digby will not admit that it was serious, so the people were according to him only in a distressful condition, "the worst recorded price of grain most generally consumed by the people was about thirty-two pounds for a rupee." He quotes no authority,

P. 124.

Keenes' Fall of Mogul Empire, 146.  
Seton Karr's Selections, I., 14.  
McMinn's Preface, Oudh Gazetteer, 175.

I find that during this great famine, chalisa as it was called, the price of wheat was in 1784 at Lahore 4 seers, at Jummo 3 seers per rupee; wheat flour near Agra was 8 seers, while coarse grain was 7 seers in Faizabad, 5 in Unao, and in Unao they cooked and ate babies.

In other words Digby's statement about the price of grain is utterly false, absurd on the face of it; anything is clutched at in order to prove that there was no misery in the country till the British mastered it.

Prosperous India, p. 19.

I may give a few more instances of the unblushing dishonesty with which Mr. Digby distorts the evidence. He wished to be a member of the Famine Commission in 1880, he had in his newspaper lauded the conduct of Lord Lytton and he was dubbed a C.I.E., but Lord Lytton was hindered by General Strachey from putting Mr. Digby on to this Commission, as he had being a journalist "been committed to decided opinions on many of the points which will come before the Commission for discussion." On this the Digby comment is "apparently admitted knowledge on a very complex and highly important subject concerning India disqualifies a man to enquire concerning that very subject." That is "decided opinions" are the same as "knowledge." Comment is needless, perhaps no one before or since ever supposed



that a Presidency journalist, who had in 1878 one year's Who's who. experience even of Madras town, and none of India proper, was a suitable person to enquire and decide what should be the State action in these great questions of rural economy. Again, in 1901, an anonymous correspondent of the *Lancet* estimates that "nineteen millions of British Indian subjects" had died of starvation during ten years. The Editor never even commented on this, doubtless noting its extravagance, yet we are told that "the leading medical journal in the world through its correspondent" estimates as above.

These nineteen millions of deaths deserve more detailed examination, like the fifteen millions of pounds spent on English officers. The population of the whole of India has increased from 287½ millions in 1891 to 294½ millions, viz., by seven millions in 1901, British India increasing by eleven millions, Native States decreasing by three-and-a-half millions. The *Lancet* correspondent, by some stupid mistake, declared the increase to be only 2,800,000 for the whole of India, and proceeds to argue from that among other facts that nineteen millions have perished of famine. Digby takes this anonymous writer whose figures about total increase of population he from latest information knows to be wrong. He pretends to quote from this correspondent but states his estimate for the "whole of India," as applying to "British Indian subjects" only. Compare pages 64, 138.

It would never do to admit that the Native States had a much higher death-rate than British India, because what then becomes of the argument which Digby seems paid to support, that British administration is the cause of famine? So he quotes the figures which he knows to be wrong, applies them to British India, though he knew they applied to all India, and all this to enlist an anonymous correspondent, whom he makes out to be the *Lancet* itself, in his battalion of false witnesses and defamers of England. The ordinary price of a false witness in India is said to be two paise, one half penny, of course an Englishman costs more.

I must proceed to show the utter dishonesty, open and palpable, of the compiler of figures for Mr. Digby's work. For the famine of 1876-1878 he records page 128 the "mortality was estimated by the Famine Commissioners in Southern India at 5,250,000, it was probably much more than that," "elsewhere it was at least three millions," P. 28.





total 8,250,000. Utterly false as usual. I quote the *ipsissima verba* of the *Famine Commissioners*. "It has been estimated and in our opinion on substantial grounds, Appendix II, that the mortality that occurred in the *provinces under British administration* during the period of famine and drought extending over the years 1877-1878, amounted on a population of 190 millions to 5½ millions in excess of the deaths that would have occurred."

On examining Appendix II it appears that the Commissioners include in their famine area not Southern India only, but Berar, the Punjab, Mysore, and the North-West Provinces, all British India in fact where famine prevailed. For my part with forty years' experience of Indian statistics, of its so-called publicists, of their ignorance, prejudice and negligence, I cannot conceive it possible that the compiler of the figures in "Prosperous India" in this and many other instances erred through mistake. In this case the distortion by some one of a perfectly plain statement must have been due to deliberate purpose. Sir Charles Elliott and Dr. Cornish were the compilers of the famine mortality figures, they trebled in some cases the deaths actually reported, added cholera mortality to famine deaths proper, magnified the calamity as much as they could. Now Mr. Digby comes in and adds some millions of deaths to this roll, in order to blacken still more his countrymen's reputation.

We find on page 109—

£

Total capital of Joint-stock enterprise	
including railways	... 85,506,449
of which railways and tramways	... 1,970,120

1896,  
P. 148.

On turning to an authority like the *Statesman's Year Book*, I find that up to the end of 1894 the capital raised by companies for Indian railways was over seventy million sterling instead of under two million. Mr. Digby means probably to refer only to companies registered in India but he does not say so, here are his words "for all India, banking and insurance and indeed everything else financial as well as industrial, the total capital invested is less than £36,000,000" railway capital being as above. Surely if seventy million have been spent by companies in making Indian railways, if all the property, staff, land, buildings, rolling stock, are in India and for India, it is grossly deceptive to put the railway capital invested at under two million. The companies have borrowed money



in London when it was cheapest, to the great gain of India, there most of the proprietors are, there the Board will sit. That the railways have as a whole been worked better than in England is proved clearly by the broad facts of the working expenses and dividends which are approximately as follows:—

	Dividend paid.	Working expenses to gross receipts.		Hazell's Annual, 1901, p. 539.
England	... 3·60	58 per cent.	1899	
India	... 5·70	47 „	1894	

That mistakes were made is true, but this has been the case everywhere; France has lost more on one scheme, the Panama canal, than India has lost on all its railway and canal failures combined. The broad fact remains that selfish Britain has managed Indian railways much better than British railways.

At any rate Mr. Digby's figures are again a delusion. Mr. Dutt also, compare pages 83 and 305 of his book, adds 11 millions to the loss by railways. Take another gross misstatement p. 114 about India's wrongs. "Indian shipping—no occupation in connection with shipping is found for Indians, save of course as clerks and coolies at the wharves and docks, and as seamen in the few craft still denominated in the returns as Native." I can only state that I have been travelling for many years in Indian steamers, the commanders in every case being natives, and the engineers as a rule also natives.

There are hundreds of such steamers in India. The India Steam Navigation and the River Steam Navigation Companies have more steamers and flats than several of the big American lines combined, while one steamer with its flats will carry about 1,500 tons of merchandise, steamers, flats, etc., being built and owned in India, and generally commanded by pure Indians who receive pay up to Rs. 320 per month, more than hundreds of English ship captains ever attain to. These officers are however Mussulmans, so Dutt, Digby & Co., the mouthpiece of the Congress, take no account of them. The River Steam Navigation Co. has 201 native captains of steamers and launches against 28 Europeans, so the Director informs me.

I pass to another untruth, still more palpable.

"The learned professions"—"Here again though many Prosperous most capable Indian gentlemen, at great cost, and often at India, much sacrifice in many ways, have qualified themselves P. 115.





for professional positions in the law, the educational service and in other directions, they have done this only to discover that nearly all the best positions everywhere are occupied by Europeans." I will confine myself to the law. It is certain that the large majority of good incomes made at the Indian bar belong to natives of the country. I am content to leave this to Messrs. Bonerjee and Tyabjee, barristers and Congress Presidents.

Probably five-sixths of the gross total of bar earnings go into native pockets, the reason being partly at any rate that Indians are more intriguing and less scrupulous than English barristers; there are numerous native lawyers earning £5,000 per annum or more, while there are thousands who receive in the country courts emoluments far above those of a professional man in rural England, their main qualifications too often are brazen lungs, chicanery, and skill in dealing with false witnesses; there are many honorable exceptions. I will pass as rapidly as possible through a few more falsehoods. "Plains radiant at harvest time with the indigo and jute plants are cultivated with foreign capital." I never heard of jute being cultivated with foreign capital. Many thousands of acres of jute are around me, as I write on the estate which I manage, Tippera; the capital is solely that of the cultivators, our tenants, who are making large profits.

P. 161.

Mr. Digby mixes up blasphemy with his cooked statistics, he appeals to Mr. Fowler, "though not for Christ's sake" to "study this question," he adds that "his own study of Indian conditions has taken away from him every vestige of the trust which he once had in the Redeemer." He adds that his conclusions are based "entirely on official statistics and official statements." I have shown that he has added, or subtracted millions, to and from, official statistics. With these concoctions he wishes to tempt his hearers. The study of these statistics has had an unfortunate effect upon Mr. Digby's early piety and patriotism, both. He no longer believes in the truth of the Christian religion, and he has devoted himself for years to the task of making his country and her Indian policy infamous, to stirring up sedition in India. Many persons would consider him as a renegade to his country and an apostate infidel to his faith, I him as a periodical sufferer from fits of hysterical regard lunacy. Why he is malignant I care not to inquire.



His exuberance of anathema when applied to all official men and measures is no doubt partially due to his want of exact knowledge. He was during three years a reporter and editor of local papers in the seaports Bombay and Madras, since then his main connexion with India has been due to the Madras tramway scheme, for which he received a concession; this he sold to a Company, he made money and his friends lost it. He has no right to pose as an authority about India, its people, agriculture and rural life. He knows nothing about them, the Italian youth who plays a hurdy-gurdy in the streets of London would not claim, after three years of such a vagabond life in city slums, to be an authority about English farm labourers, canals, Corn laws. Yet he would know the language of the people, and in other respects could supply sounder information about England than Mr. Digby about India. Mr. Digby calls other witnesses to support his case. Mr. Sunderland is quoted, page 164. He states "Nor is the birth rate high in India. It is less than in England and much less than in Germany." No authority is quoted. Possibly for the last ten years owing to exceptional famine losses this may be true. I have already given the comparison for 1881-1891. I now give it 1800-1880 in millions :—

Mulhall's  
Statistics  
Population.

	1800.	1880.	Increase per cent.
Germany, England ...	38	80	110½
British India ...	70	191	170

This increase is of course in total population.

Birth rates cannot be given correctly, because large classes of the population object to reporting the births particularly of their girls, some from laziness, some because they smother them as babies, others because they regard with jealousy any interference with their females however benevolent. Mulhall's figures for 1800 may not be correct, at any rate there is no better authority and he is not a partizan, but a trained statistician. In any case Mr. Sunderland's statement is refuted by the best authority as regards the period 1800-1891, the last ten years are quite exceptional. While I write Mr. Digby's letter appears in the *Times* of February 25th.

In this we are told still wilder fables about Indian rainfall, a number of statistics are quoted showing the rainfall for entire provinces, for instance Central Provinces





averaged nearly 25 inches in 1899; the conclusion is drawn as follows.

“As a matter of fact to-day even when water conservation is in its infancy there really is no such famine as a drought famine in our Eastern dominions.”

Mr. Digby some years ago made similar statements. It may be there are a few persons at home who will credit these ravings; there is no one so credulous in India, even among his partizans, however ignorant. His own foster father Dutt admits that famines are all begotten of drought.

Even if the average of a provincial rainfall over an area as big as France is fair, large portions may be burnt up with drought. One part of Burma, Tenasserim, shows 160 inches every year, while part of the same province is almost rainless. I have before me the same meteorological returns which Mr. Digby saw. I read as follows, from June to October, the rainy season of 1899, which he too quotes:—

Fall of 1899. Average fall. Digby's figures.

Punjab S.E. ...	10	20 $\frac{3}{4}$	} 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ Punjab.
Punjab S. ...	5 $\frac{1}{4}$	13 $\frac{1}{4}$	
Punjab Central ...	6 $\frac{1}{4}$	14	
Punjab W. ...	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	6 $\frac{1}{4}$	
Bombay Deccan ...	16 $\frac{3}{4}$	33 $\frac{1}{2}$	} 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ Bombay.
Khandeish ...	12	30	
Hyderabad ...	14 $\frac{1}{2}$	33 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Kathiwar ...	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	26 $\frac{1}{4}$	
Rajputana ...	2 $\frac{1}{4}$	11 $\frac{1}{4}$	8
Sind ...	·004	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	
West Central Provinces ...	16 $\frac{1}{2}$	42	

The unfortunate people who lived in all these districts suffered from scarcity, mostly from dreadful famine. Mr. Digby says there was no “drought famine” at all because there was heavy rainfall in other places. When the crops of A are flooded, how does that advantage B whose poor little harvest has been burnt up? Apart from this Mr. Digby deceives the public by omitting to quote the figures for five huge areas in which the rainfall was under 6 inches, varying between 40 per cent. and less than 1 per cent. of the average. The British public would be amazed to learn that in one entire province the rainfall of the year was less than one-



hundredth of an inch, so our author leaves out that figure and many like it; it would refute his argument. There are numerous districts and provinces in India, in which a high mountain range intercepts the rainfall. At Mahabhaleshwar for instance the average rainfall is above 200 inches, then even a few miles off commences a tract with rainfall of 15 inches or less in drought. But water will not flow over mountain ranges. It can neither be stored on one side, nor transported to the other, save at ruinous expense. Would British farmers listen to Mr. Digby's arguing as follows? "It is impossible that crops can be lost in Galway or Northumberland. I see that the weather is warm and dry in the Isle of Wight and the average rainfall and temperature are normal." It is just as impossible to transport water for the crops as it would be to save the harvest at home in a rainy season by holding umbrellas over it.

Mr. Digby in the same letter makes another absurd mistake. He gives "some famine years and the rainfall." This man pretends to be an authority on famine, every Indian schoolboy knows that great famines are caused by the failure of the rain in the preceding year. In 1877 there was drought in N.-W.P., famine followed in 1878, in the C.P. drought in 1899 famine in 1900, in Bengal drought 1768-69, famine followed in 1770, in all these instances the year of famine was a year of sufficient or abundant rainfall. Mr. Digby quotes the rainfall of famine years to prove that the famine was not caused by drought. He might as well argue that the small-pox was not caused by neglect of vaccination because in the year of small-pox outbreak there was more vaccination than ever. That rain or vaccination might come too late is not patent to the writers who, as old Strabo says, are always telling lies about India.

It is very hard that while the lover of truth toils panting after Mr. Digby, correcting his ancient untruths, the *Times* gives him fresh openings for uttering a few novelties. It is weary work following the flights of his imagination.

In the same letter of February 25th when asked why famine was still worse in native states than in British territory, Mr. Digby replies that "all purely Indian customs are being wiped out ... In proportion as the British system of land revenue was practised by a state ... so was the life loss." In plain language native states are said now to lose people by famine because they follow British



Arbuthnot's  
 Munro II,  
 218.

ways. But their ancient ways were far worse; let Sir Thomas Munro be the witness. "The scarcity which arises from the seasons is converted into *famine in the territories of the native powers* by war, by the rapacity of Government in anticipating the revenue ... —above all by the endless exactions and robberies of petty zemindars." "Rice was at 8 seers per rupee in Ceded Districts, at 5 seers twenty or thirty miles off in the Doab through the exactions of the zemindars." Sir Thomas wrote this in 1805 and to any honest man it conveys proof that bad as our system of famine management was of old that of native states was far worse.

Mr. Digby in the same letter, wishing still further to blacken British administration, states that famine was "less severe in Jaipur," a native state "than in the similarly situated British territory of Marwar." Another untruth; Marwar is another native state, also known as Jodhpur. This is a big native state as Mr. Digby might have learned from Whitaker's almanac; it is bigger than Ireland. Mr. Digby is profoundly ignorant, and in all his blunders, about history, geography, rural economy, his malignant indictment of his own country is steadily pursued.

It is profitless work to correct Mr. Digby's errors in detail, let any schoolboy look at his calculations at pages 170-173. He makes out that the losses of the Indian peasant in the famine of 1877-1878 amounted to 83 millions. This is calculated with a great show of financial accuracy as follows :

Government Relief	...	...	8 millions.
Loss of crops, nearly	...	...	38 "
Country silver melted	...	...	10 "
Increased price of food	...	...	13 "
Live stock dead, nearly	...	...	5 "
Loss of wages, nearly	...	...	3 "

Of these six items, three are all wrong, bogus figures.

When one man sells grain dear and the other buys it, how can that be a loss to the country? There may be some redistribution, but no actual loss from dearthness of grain.

Again how can three millions be put down to loss of wages, inasmuch as eight millions have already been recorded as relief, mostly spent on labourers at famine works, while ordinary labourers would have taken their wages out of the 38 millions worth of crops lost and already entered? Again the ten millions country silver was not lost, it was

P. 494,  
 1902  
 Edition.



not exported to other countries, it was transferred from one person to another, it became circulating medium instead of useless ornament. But the big mistake is that no mention is made of the millions which these people must have consumed in food during the twelve months of famine if they had not been maintained by the State. The only real loss to the country was the value of the crop and the cattle which perished, added to the amount of the relief money which was spent on unproductive works.

We might safely strike off between thirty and forty millions from Mr. Digby's figures. Even then the calamity remains a terrible one. Of course Customs revenue lost to Government must have been paid for out of the 38 millions of crops, it should not be reckoned twice.

In his Chapter V Mr. Digby "demurs to the statement that India has unremittingly been importing treasure for centuries past." McCulloch writes as follows. "Pliny computed the annual drain of cash to India in exchange for luxuries and female ornaments at £400,000." "The drain, thus early commenced, though varying in intensity, has continued with but little interruption down to the present time; vast quantities of gold and silver have been poured into India, but they appear of recent years to be in greater request than ever." He proceeds to quote Humboldt, and if the Indian financiers find their figures and statements supported by all authorities from Pliny down to Humboldt and McCulloch, perhaps Mr. Digby may be disregarded; particularly is this the case as he bases reasoning on statements which certainly many Indian school-boys would correct; here is an instance. "The British introduced into India the system of the payment of revenue in cash. Our predecessors were content to take their toll in kind." Our predecessors were the Moguls and they as a rule had taken the revenues in cash, at any rate for two hundred years before Plassey. There are cheap editions of the *Ain-i-Akbari* for sale at about one rupee in Calcutta from which Mr. Digby might learn this and much more.

The "easy conquest of Hindustan by the Mohamedans is accounted for by the moderation of the tribute imposed and the simplicity of their method of collecting it." Not only is this utterly false, but I venture to say that no authority who has ever written Indian History ever ventured to make such an assertion, even if it is quoted in Parliamentary papers it is fertile.

Dictionary  
of Com-  
merce, 578.

P. 213.



Historically and financially Digby is utterly in error. The conquest of India began in 976 A.D. and was completed, so far as the Moslems could go, in 1565, when the Hindu Kingdom of Bijayanagar was overwhelmed, but large parts of India, Tanjore, Travancore, Mysore, Cochin, Madura, Nepal remained unsubdued. In my chapter on Taxation I have shown how cruel and extortionate were the Musulman exactions from the Hindus, how multifarious the different taxes, how degrading the mode of collection. I have proved this from many eye-witnesses of several races and faiths. I think I have shown that the stream of falsehood which meanders through Dutt's pages becomes a perfect Niagara in Digby's. I have to deal still further with the stage machinery employed. The avalanche of untruth must be removed from the path. While I write Mr. Digby's recent utterances at the Statistical Society are reported. He states that "the crop returns are founded upon experiments in cultivation made by Government officials on selected plots of land in circumstances which the average ryot cannot possibly secure and the whole area is estimated by this hot-house cultivation." All a fiction. No officer cultivates for these crop returns, the ordinary peasant's crop is cut, winnowed and weighed in the officer's presence.

I myself have been sending up the annual figures of crop outturn for very many years in several provinces of India. Not one was based on crops specially cultivated by myself or any other officer or person. We did our best to select an average slice from the peasant's field; of course we might be mistaken in choosing a fair average crop. But if anything, the tendency would be to select a field below the average, for the officer is generally responsible in the first instance for good collections of land revenue; if he reported high crop outturn, when the crop was inferior, he would be blamed for the bad collections, the tendency therefore among native officers is to report the crop outturn as less than it really is. Under this delusion about crop testing Mr. Digby has been for years impeaching out-turn statistics, hugging himself on his better knowledge, and attacking Government for inventing good harvests as it invents millions of acres under crop.

Passing without mention innumerable similar errors of detail, I briefly analyse the figures by which Mr. Digby proves to his own satisfaction that the income of the



average Indian has fallen from 2d. to 3d. in the last fifty years. The *Calcutta Statesman*, a paper which has always advocated the cause which Mr. Digby champions, declares that his calculations are not worth the paper on which they are written. He gives in his book absolutely no proof for the two pence income of 1850, which he blazons on the back of his publication as one of the three great truths, the guiding lights for the British public. These statements are really like the lamps with which the wreckers living on a rocky coast used nightly to mislead the poor mariner. For present income of the peasant he proves his three farthings as follows. Taking Bengal first—He finds that the revenue collected in Bengal in 1899 was Rs. 40,447,850. Now he has learnt from his study of famine reports, apparently he never read anything else, that the Commissioners in 1880 and again in 1900 made calculations showing the gross outturn of the crop, and the proportion of that outturn which Government took as revenue. There were several other official reports. In 1880 the Commissioners reported revenue at 3.9 per cent. of outturn. Mr. Digby determined to reverse the process, formerly they had calculated the outturn, and by division taken the percentage of that outturn which was absorbed by the revenue, he by multiplication worked back the crop from the revenue. Of course all depends on the multiple being correct. To get that in 1900, Digby borrowed Dutt's figures for both produce and rent. Dutt's figures, see page 106; are confessedly taken from Hunter, and on reference to Hunter we learn that his figures were a mere guess and for 1871, that is thirty years old.

Vol. II,  
p. 112.  
Famines,  
pp. 106, 108,  
113.  
Statistical  
Account of  
Bengal, I,  
155.

Now for above eighteen years there has been an Agricultural Department in India, collecting figures, measuring crops, weighing, surveying, and they do know something about crop area and crop outturns in 1901.

In Bengal there is a Permanent Settlement generally, revenue is practically the same now as it was in 1871, but produce has increased, and so have prices and rents. Digby will have none of these, he clings to brother Dutt and the ancient obsolete figures prepared by a lot of Bengali office baboos thirty years ago.

All this curious and tortuous process is adopted by Dutt and Digby because the 1871 figures, always incorrect, have become still more so, the wealth of the country has increased, the present crop outturn from 57½ million acres in 1901 at present prices would show the revenue to





be very small in proportion, so they take the incorrect crop areas and ancient prices of thirty years ago, of 1871, from them work out an income for the population of 1901, and then join in chorus to the chaunt, Bengali peasants starving, bled to death by the English.

According to Hunter's figures of 1871 for crops, and Toynbee's still more obsolete figures for rents, the proportion of revenue to gross produce is 5·6 per cent. I will venture to repeat a little, because it is in my experience without parallel or precedent that two men should bring out costly volumes full of utterly false figures, and the public will need full proof of the falsity. They have argued the condition of the people in 1901 on certain guesses made by two young officers about 1871. Digby tries to conceal the source of his ancient figures by referring to page 113 of Dutt instead of pages 106-108 which disclose the date; these figures, as I have already shown with reference to rents of Noakhalli, are quite unreliable, as an exact guide. Even if they were true then, they are utterly incorrect now. Prices have increased with the growth of population, and largely owing to the fall in the value of the rupee, two factors which have completely altered the position of the tenant. Government now receives the same Bengal revenue as it did in 1871, but the proportion it bears to the crops is much smaller, for the crop has enormously increased in rupee value during thirty years, while the area under crop has largely increased. Of course a publicist may prove anything by applying crop figures of 1871 to the population of 1901.

The Famine Commission of 1880, with far better material than Hunter's of 1871, wrote of Bengal "No data exist as to the actual produce;" now Hunter was published in twenty volumes in 1875, therefore the Famine Commission report of 1880, a melancholy confession of ignorance, utterly discredits the figures, which Digby, concealing their obsolete source, now quotes as his sole authority in 1901. Since then a Statistical Department has been established; their figures were available, numerous settlement reports have been brought out by officers whose special business it was to collect agricultural statistics.

The Famine Commission, with Hunter's figures before them, nine years' later information and evidence, came to the conclusion that the Government revenue in Bengal was about 3·9 per cent. of the gross produce. If it was

Vol. I,  
P. 73.

Vol. II,  
p. 112.



so, it is now not more than 3 per cent. and that proportion is confirmed by the latest Settlement report.

Mr. Cumming in Tippera and Noakhalli found for the large area he was concerned with, that the Government revenue was not 28 per cent. of the rent but 15 per cent. If the rent is 20 per cent. of the gross produce as alleged by Dutt, then the proportion of revenue to gross produce is exactly 3 per cent. which is identical with what we derive from a reasonable alteration of the Famine Commission's figures of 1880. As a matter of fact 2½ per cent. would be more correct for Bengal proper, but taking it at 3 per cent. instead of Digby's 5 to 6, we have to multiply Bengal revenue by 33 instead of 19, and the gross assets instead of Digby's seventy-six million of rupees for Bengal becomes one hundred and thirty-two millions. Similarly we have to alter the figures for Bombay and Madras revenue which are as follows, according to official authorities : 7·6 and 6·3 per cent. of the gross produce, but Dutt makes them, page 113, 20 to 33 per cent. and 12 to 31 per cent. respectively, because in one district half a century ago revenue was said to be 33 per cent. in another to be 31 per cent. Not content with this Digby out—Herods Herod, and makes the average proportion of revenue to gross produce 20 and 25 per cent. throughout the Province. Sir Anthony MacDonnell who is perfectly impartial, who has as great a fondness for denouncing the Saxons as Dutt or Digby, has recorded that except in part of Guzerat the proportion of revenue is a full one, and a full one he elsewhere interprets, paragraph 267 Famine Commission's Report, as taking 20 per cent. of the produce. Mr. Nicholson limits this heavy incidence to parts of the Bombay Presidency, but denies positively that the full Bombay assessment means 20 per cent. Mr. Fuller as Secretary to Government of India signs a memorandum January 1902, in which the Commissioners of 1901 are reported to have found the incidence of land revenue to be "probably above 7 per cent." of the gross produce, see page 8. There is some mistake or ambiguity here and it is an unfortunate one. It would be well to err on the safe side even in following a Will-o-the-wisp statistician, so I take

Settlement  
Report,  
P. 116.

Bombay outturn at	...	10 times the revenue
Madras	...	11 "
Central Provinces	...	14 "
Punjab	...	14 "
N.-W.P.	...	12½ "



Mr. Digby's figures differ considerably from the above. He has followed Dutt who has garbled the Bengal statistics and he also quotes Madras and Bombay figures as distorted by Dutt. I have previously pointed out that Dutt bases his Madras figures for 1901 on manuals and settlements cancelled forty years ago and twenty years ago. I take Madras and Bombay outturns from the Famine Commission's report and the Resolution of 16th January, 1902. I lower them slightly. I correct Digby's estimate at page 366 as follows in thousands of rupees :—

Bengal ...	40,448	33	1,334,784
N.-W.P....	66,371	12½	829,637
Punjab ...	25,641	14	358,974
Central Provinces ...	8,739	14	122,346
Madras ...	50,384	11	554,224
Bombay...	47,165	10	471,650
India ...	35,846	20	716,920

4,388,569,000

In doing this I have rejected the official estimate of revenue in the Central Provinces as being only 4 per cent. of outturn, I take 7 per cent. instead. Having served twelve years in the Central Provinces and being an old settlement and statistical officer, I feel justified in saying that crop returns there were pitched sometimes too high. I stated this formerly as an official. The agricultural income then is £292½ million against Digby's £190 million or allowing for rent-free lands of which Digby knows nothing, land recently cultivated and not assessed, 300 million sterling would be correct, if the Digby basis be used.

To mention in passing another instance of Mr. Digby's colossal ignorance. He finds an increase of fourteen millions in the alleged gross assets of India, Burma and Assam, and his comment is "I am sure there is some mistake in the two sets of figures which show increases between 1882 and 1898." Many school girls are aware that since 1882 tea alone has added many millions to the wealth of Assam, also that Upper Burma covering about a lac of square miles was added to the British territory within the period referred to. Mr. Digby knows nothing about the rent-free tenures, nor about recent great conquests, nor about the enormous increase in valuable staples like tea and jute.

He proceeds, having reduced the agricultural income of the peasant as low as possible, to treat the earnings of



non-agriculturists in the same way. These are given at 85 million sterling, according to the author's investigation. I will indicate a few of the graver omissions and errors. Under clothing he calculates the wants of the Indian public alone, but he makes no reference to eight million worth of cotton yarn and fabrics which are exported from India. Possibly he has deducted the export from the import, at any rate he is all wrong. He gives at page 269 official tables of exports, cotton yarns and fabrics come to  $5\frac{1}{2}$  million sterling, but when he wants to cut down the earnings of the artizan at page 541 he puts down cotton mill exports at £1,636,294: observe the pretence at minute accuracy when he is really a few millions in error.

Statesman's  
Year Book,  
1898, p. 143.

Again he omits tea entirely in 543 which at 269 he had entered worth  $5\frac{1}{2}$  million, the garden laborers number nearly a million. He omits railway labor on construction and maintenance which must amount to many millions. He allows only  $3\frac{3}{4}$  millions for the productions of village looms, at £8 per village. A more crude statistical estimate is impossible, ten millions would be more suitable. The village looms in many places have taken recently a great spurt as they are now employed on mill spun yarn. Fisheries are put down at two million, which are the gains of 300,000 fishermen. Remembering that during many months of the year in all low-lying areas the entire population catches fish, from children to the aged, ten millions would be more near the value of fish. Nothing is allowed for milk, ghee, because these matters are to balance deductions which might be made on account of cultivation. Why in the name of common sense? There are millions of people who keep cows who are not agriculturists. The waste and grazing lands of India still in 1900 are nearly twice as extensive as the cropped fields, and yet nothing is allowed for the dairy products of the cows, goats, buffaloes which graze on this vast area, 353 millions of acres.

Iron ore is put down for £12,000 only though iron is made over a large part of India and, as I have pointed out in numerous reports, nearly all the agricultural implements, cooking utensils and much of the cutlery in the Central Provinces, are still made from country iron.

Sugar is put down at	£	290,999
Tanneries	£	420,424
Potteries	£	418,167





Mr. Digby has only been three years in a Presidency town, if he had asked any of the baboos in his office he could have corrected his own gross ignorance of the condition of the masses. Two or three millions should be added to each of these sources of income. Any one who knows India could tell what a part in village life the oil mill, sugar mill, and potter's wheel exercise, and how enormous are the industrial products. Mr. Digby allows under one million for oil mills, probably four millions would be more accurate. I would add about thirty-five millions mostly under the items detailed above, and deduct about five millions from the estimate for Mr. Digby's apparent exaggeration, such as twenty millions for country liquor. The whole of the estimate is worthless in my opinion, and it would be impossible to form a reliable calculation without an amount of inquisitorial work which would be regarded with suspicion and strong dislike in India.

It seems a much simpler matter to deal in turn with every class of artizans in India which appears to want help. Such inquiries have been held about the weavers and many efforts been made to relieve them, some with success. As for inquiring into the incomes of all the different artizans, many of whom are earning infinitely higher wages than of old, the process would be simply hateful to the people and the results unreliable. Mr. Digby gives 72 headings in his details of the earnings of the non-agriculturists for all India, and as we have seen he omits altogether or wrongly estimates the earnings under many heads.

When he comes to the several provinces he altogether omits the most important items, though he had his all India headings before him. For instance for the Punjab he has only twenty headings; he leaves out oil mills entirely, potteries and also tobacco, also iron work, though the Punjab cutlery and Damascene work is famous. Nothing for jewellery and precious stones, apparently he has never heard of Delhi and its marvels; last week one quiet little Delhi jeweller opened a small trunk before me in which he had sixty thousand pounds worth of the most gorgeous gems; these were merely specimens of his stock. He admitted that the jewellery business had recently doubled. Nothing is noted of the embroidery with which, at the instance of Her Excellency Lady Curzon, the royal robes for the coming coronation are to be worked.



There are many ladies and many children who could correct Mr. Digby's account of the industries of the Punjab, who could even detail what is the cost of a Rampur shawl or a bangle. Yet on worthless statistics like these we find Mr. Digby declaring that the Punjab income per head is "Rs. 12-10, only 17s. per head, less than in Madras where the climate is warmer." He adds there is "some serious mistake somewhere but the Government records lead to the above figures and to none other."

P. 594.

This is an audacious misstatement. Again and again it has been declared that the Government revenue is ten per cent. in Delhi alone, 3 per cent. in Hissar, and 7 per cent. elsewhere, that is 7 per cent. for the province. But because individual cultivators in particular years have asserted that their crops were bad (I never knew an Indian yet, however portly and rotund, who did not plead utter poverty), Mr. Digby raises the 7 per cent. to 15 per cent. in a province of which he knows nothing. Then having fudged his agricultural figures and non-agricultural, and proved the sturdy peasantry of the Punjab to be starving, he says there must be a serious mistake somewhere in Government record.

Famine Report, 1900, P. 90.

It is not the first time in history that such things have occurred; daily in England and India we may hear and read medical works or quacks, who endeavour to persuade the public that they are mostly dying of some slow and secret disease. Ignorant and impudent charlatans abound in all professions but their indecencies are controlled by the police.

The subtle (and cryptic) fictions of Mr. Dutt are far more dangerous than the coarse and clumsy untruths of Mr. Digby.

Two ungainly ravens have flopped up from the funeral pyre of that Christmas pantomime, the National Congress, they circle round dying India, watching the futile efforts of the peasants struggling to live and pay taxes. They are ever croaking hoarsely. Will the clouds break for India while British rule lasts? They answer. Never more.

The epithet applied by Sir Lepel Griffin to Mr. Digby's work "Extravagant and Grotesque Caricature," is most thoroughly deserved. Mr. Digby is the paid agent of the Congress in London. This work is brought out to India and sold at the offices of the Congress newspapers, the insults which he showers on Indian statesmen and officers from the noble minded Lord William Bentinck in 1806





down to Lord George Hamilton in 1900, the highest in the land and the youngest official, are prompted by Calcutta Baboos, and paid for directly or indirectly by their money.

Thornton,  
P. 94.

It was a Bengali in 1764 who employed a renegade European Samru to massacre the unfortunate Europeans at Patna and other places, two hundred in number.

Samru was a coward, for he deprived the prisoners of even table knives so that they could only defend themselves by throwing bottles.

The modern renegade resembles Samru for he endeavours to ruin the reputation and good name of hundreds of honest working officers, who cannot defend themselves, and he does it by distortion of evidence, by misstatement of facts, by cooked statistics, by hypocritical profession of sorrow for having to undertake such a painful task; thus he strives to blacken the reputation of the living, the memory of the dead.

It is not for a moment to be supposed that Mr. Digby's employers, the Congress, are not fully aware of what he has written, directly or indirectly they have prompted and paid for it all, Macaulay's verdict on the Bengali is completely justified. Again as of old they seem to revel in untruth, no music so sweet to them as that of this Niagara of falsehood.

It is a well-known custom in Bengal for native gentlemen who have money but no muscles or coinage to employ up-country ruffians to assault their enemies; from shoes to clubs all weapons are employed; this is done generally in the dark if a limb is to be broken, but if the enemy is to be publicly disgraced, then his face is battered with heavy shoes in broad day light, these hired braves are called *gundas*; the Congress members in Calcutta have simply followed the ancient custom of the country in hiring a *Belati gunda* to avenge their wrongs upon the too often unbending and overbearing white man, by blackening the characters of all the mighty dead whose memory we respect. It was possible in Bombay to defile the marble statue of the late gracious Queen Empress if not permanently to disfigure it, but the reputation of Britain in the East will not be lowered when defamed by these paltry traitors and hirelings.

Their cry always is "lessen your army of British soldiers by twenty thousand men," that is reduce it to the same number, considering the increase of population, as it



was in India before 1857, their paucity then tempted the sepoys to mutiny. Remove three-quarters of the British judges, magistrates, and replace them by the native civil service which was fully tried and utterly failed. Gleig's Life, Warren Hastings writes of the head of this civil service in I, p. 247. 1772 : "Mohamed Raza Khan had enjoyed the sovereignty of this province for seven years past, a stipend of nine lacs, the absolute command of every branch of the Nizammat and the chief authority in the Diwani." The result was simply a den of thieves and so it would be again, while Moslem and Hindu would rush at each other's throats.





CSL

## CHAPTER VII.

Some general conclusions.—More facts wanted, rainfall and prices.—Reports deal with palliatives only, not causes or cures.—No reference to experience of other nations. State Pawnbroker.—Sluggish industry.—Crop outturn statistics.—Double cropped area mystifies inquirers.—Fallows.—Mr. Digby applies the heading of one tabular statement to the statistics of another.—Erroneous tabulation in the Punjab.—Capricious evictions and enhancements to be stopped.—Government should make experiments in selected districts.—State Pawnbrokers, Land banks, Prohibition of Transfers.—All Governors should have some years experience of practical district work.—They must study the environment of the past.—Bernier's experience.

I MUST now attempt to draw a few general conclusions. In my opinion the different Famine Commissions or the authority appointing and supervising them have been to blame in not giving more definite information on important points. I find pages about the propriety or otherwise of cooked food. I find hardly any information in the body of any report about the rainfall, whose deficiency must have caused the famine, though very frequently the reader whose mind is alternately swayed by conflicting views yearns for solid facts like rainfall and market price of grain. In some reports rainfall and price statistics are given in the appendix which may or may not have been studied by the members of the Commission.

Repeated Commissions have sat and have discussed famines, one restricted as to its inquiries to British territory, others limited as to scope it is true still with ample room for fruitful suggestion. Yet in the twenty-three folios of reports and appendices there is comparatively little of any value to the student; what there is is over-



loaded with detail, and is buried in masses of figured statement and comment which could only be of use once, as a check in the account department.

Hence largely comes the opportunity of the charlatan agitator. It is too true that the Commissioners throughout these costly and massive records of their labors nowhere hardly discuss the causes of famines, they deal with palliatives only, they do not even attempt to find out the factors of the poverty which prevails among the Indian masses, though they have been importing and hoarding precious metals for two thousand years. What would be said of a commission of medical men about a disease, what of a number of commissions, which year after year met and examined witnesses, and in many bulky volumes merely discussed expectant treatment, admitted the impotence of all drugs, and said nothing whatever about prevention of outbreaks?

The commission of 1900 has one paragraph on the sub- P. 92.  
ject. "The true remedy and preventive of indebtedness will be found in the promotion of education, in the development of proper and popular institutions for organized credit and thrift at the very doors of the cultivator, in the removal of the causes inherent in the agrarian system of the country, which force the cultivator into debt, and in the advancement of agricultural efficiency in all its branches." All this is very good and would do well as a sonorous climax to a long series of detailed instruction, backed by the experience of other nations and of former students.

Cultivators are in debt all over the world, and have been legislated for during two thousand years with some success. East and West of India, at London, New York, Pekin alike we find the State licensed pawnbroker; for instance, curious to relate, the legal interest in China and England is the same, 25 per cent. on small sums. All over Europe as a rule the state is itself, or controls, the pawnbroker. Both in China and in Europe, commencing at Rome, there have been state-regulated pawnbrokers for centuries, and the fixed interest is moderate. In England the protection given to the poor in this way has been tardy and imperfect. The Pope issued a Bull on the subject in 1520, not till 1785 did the British legislature take the first step, and fix the legal interest; the Indian legislators have been equally tardy, though the Book of Exodus and the Koran alike indicate that legal interference with the money lender is necessary in the





East as in the West. No reference is made to the pawn-broker as a legal institution by the several Commissions! I have no doubt that the experiment should be tried.

In the unpublished preface to *Oudh Gazetteer* I gave statistics showing how grievously the weaving class had been affected by the importation of English machine fabrics. I cannot see that this enquiry, which concerned probably ten per cent. of the men and twenty per cent. of the women of India, has been followed out in any famine report to a definite conclusion. I endeavored to trace the principal social and industrial causes which weakened the motives to labor and to save. The evil effects of taking the rent in kind were described as follows, page 202. The tenant becomes when this custom exists "a lazy and slovenly being, he neither weeds nor manures, he irrigates very slightly and ploughs insufficiently, he is idle half his time and the meagre and unwholesome crop which he reaps barely suffices to keep him alive."

Prosperous  
India, p.  
164.

Mr. Hume the father of the Congress is quoted by Mr. Sunderland as declaring that with "proper manuring and proper tillage every acre broadly speaking of the land in the country can be made to yield 30, 50, or 70 per cent. more of every kind of crop than it at present produces.

The two statements support each other, and the conclusion is that the production of India might be half as much again if the peasant were not so slothful. In a former chapter I discussed this subject, very imperfectly it is true, for I can get no information or discussion even of the precise famine factors.

Apparently officers consider that it has nothing to do with practical politics. On inquiring at the Office of the Director of Agriculture, Bengal, I was referred to the last Settlement Cyclopaedia issued, that of Mozaffarpur, this is a huge folio, whose contents include everything which concerns the peasant of the district, so far as thirty-nine officers who were employed could ascertain the facts. There is nothing formally stated on the subject, which I now discuss, in this monumental work which I have perused with profit, but there are three important admissions, one is that the laborers only get work during nine months in the year, the second that "there is labour for one-third of the female laboring population after the male population has been satisfied," a third is that the plough is only worked half the day. In England it is worked nearly the



whole of the winter day. The meaning of this is that although the laborers work only a few hours in the day, and for some months in the year, there is no work for many of them at present, compulsory idleness is their portion, the main reason being that the crops which demand and repay labor are planted on a very small scale. The only crops manured are poppy, tobacco and sugar-cane, exactly 2½ per cent. of the total. P. 250.

Allowing that supplies of manure are limited, it is clear that in this part of the country there is little industry, that food supplies are much less than they might be with higher cultivation, and that a portion of the population cannot get work.

This exactly confirms what Mr. Hume wrote about half a century ago that the crop outturn in every village might be increased even seventy per cent. if the people would work harder. Thousands of pages have been written about protection for industry, and rightly so, but no one, so far as I know, has recently studied how far there is any real industry in the ordinary peasant, and whether or not it has become more steady, pushful and fruitful under the stimulus and encouragement afforded by Government legislation in the last forty years.

We know that the Indian will work with reasonable steadiness in the mills, presses, mines, and tea gardens, under European supervision; if the trend of rustic life is to over population, to teeming not toiling millions, who will not do a decent day's work for native landlords, apparently the conclusion is forced upon us that the landlord must in time be abolished by compulsory State purchase, and the Java system be partially adopted. The Indian peasant unlike those of other tropical countries firmly believes that his happiness in the next world depends on his having male offspring to survive him, he therefore brings a large family into the world, population increases, and the fathers should be industrious in order to provide for their numerous children. I am not aware that this bottom fact in Indian economy has received any notice from Famine Commissions. Again, I guard myself from the argument that all peasants are idle and that all should work like galley slaves.

What is wanted is that all castes should employ themselves with the skill and the steady, if limited, industry, which certain castes, Kurmis and Kachis, already apply





to their little farms; more should not be expected in a tropical climate.

In order to give a proper stimulus to Indian industry we must perfectly understand what impediments, moral or material, have to be removed, and for that purpose the peasant's environment during the last three hundred years should be studied.

Bernier  
Travels, pp.  
226, 228,  
230.

We should thoroughly understand this under the Moguls the people, at least the masses, were practically slaves, the cultivators, and artizans alike. "The ground is seldom tilled otherwise than by compulsion, the whole country is badly cultivated, most towns are made up of earth, mud, and there is no town which, if it be not already ruined, does not bear evident marks of approaching decay. The grandees punish artists or tradesmen with the *korrah*, that long and terrible whip hanging at every *omrah's* gate." The "cudgel and the whip compel the people to incessant labour for the benefit of others."\* These were the remarks of a seventeenth century observer most careful and impartial, who had no grievances against the Moguls, no motive for misstating facts.

There being then no encouragement for industry even in the very palmiest state of the mighty Moguls, such was the general poverty of the country that middle class people often lacked food. Bernier wrote: "My pay is considerable nor am I sparing of money, yet does it often happen that I have not wherewithal to satisfy the cravings of hunger, the bazaars being so ill supplied." So much for food—even in the capital Delhi; as for water Bernier was glad to escape from Delhi, as "the impurities of the water exceed my power of description, as it is accessible to all persons and animals and the receptacle of every kind of filth." Hence the far-famed Delhi boils. I do not quote this with any desire to eulogise British administration, but simply to depict the environment of the Indian peasant in the past centuries. It is not his fault that he is indolent; when the fruits of his meagre industry were not only insecure, but certain to be snatched from him, he was sure to be a sluggish and languid dawdler over his tasks whether at the plough, the loom, or the forge. This indolence is shown in one of their most common proverbs:

\* The Begum Sumroo used to send her troops with musket and bayonet into the fields to compel the peasants to grow sugarcane.



It is better to stand than to walk, to sit than to stand, to lie down than to sit, and to sleep is best of all.

In considering industrial forces and weaknesses, we must remember that the emancipated slave is hardly ever industrious for generations. Even when every inducement is given, the peasant who used to work only at the crack of the whip will refuse to be tempted to labour, his ease is the evidence that he is free, and he hugs himself in the consciousness that he has now no master. In one respect these industrial forces are weaker than under a rule of constant outrage. The long whip no longer hangs at every gentleman's door, the peasant has now hope of gain, but that is not so vivid to the servile mind as the fear of the lash. The wilful dogged idleness of new born freedom disappears in the course of time, but while it lasts it is an industrial flaw.\*

Again I find that Famine Commissions have been curiously timorous in dealing with that very touchy subject, crop outturn. A most difficult study indeed is average outturn of grain. There are circulars on this matter which lay down what should be considered average outturn, and every harvest local officers estimate how far the crops fall short of, or exceed, average outturn. But the original average estimate sometimes was too sanguine. So far as I can see the Famine Commissioners nowhere scrutinise the manufacture of these crop statistics. In the Central Provinces, as Commissioner of Raipur, I had to criticise the crop estimates on which the

\* After writing as above I find two settlement officers whose opinions confirm me. Maddox, Settlement Report, Orissa, writes: "The same love of ease and dislike of hard work permeate all classes, they might easily have earned four annas a day on the railway, but as a rule they would only make two annas or three annas, and then would go home for a rest two days in the week." He attributes this idleness to the last century of unrest and oppression by the Moguls, and especially by the Mahrattas.

Mr. Butler, in his Settlement Report on Kheri, states: "The bulk of the peasantry will not exert themselves beyond the point of mere subsistence at a given standard of comfort."

The above districts, Orissa and Kheri, are nearly a thousand miles apart.

When Sir James Caird on the Famine Commission stated that twenty millions of peasants wanted work for a great part of the year, he expressed the same truth in different words. If the vast majority of labourers and small farmers labour in a slow and sluggish fashion, they are all employed it is true, but on half tasks, and their gross outturn of work might be completed by an active industrial force smaller by twenty millions than the one which does dawdle over it.





Prosperous  
India,  
p. 336.

Settlement Officer was basing his assessment. I pointed out that he made no allowance for fallow, land has to lie fallow frequently in the Chattisgarh plain; in Ratnagiri it is stated by an official that land must lie fallow four years for one of culture.

Prosperous  
India,  
p. 332.

Again the area which is double cropped is large in many districts, small in others. I do not see any systematic references to this, though the proportion of double cropped land is only 3 per cent. in some quarters, 32 per cent. in others. There are three most important factors in out-turn estimates,—fallow, double cropped land, average out-turn of single crop; the first two have, I speak under correction, never been discussed by Famine Commissioners, the third only so far that a blind assent has been given by most officers, an obstinate and unreasoning disbelief by others.

The critics have, with success, pointed to very contradictory returns, both from official sources as to the area under crop.

Preface to  
*Oudh Gazetteer*, pp. 145-  
147.

It is obvious that the area of crops may exceed in certain places, Oudh for instance by one-third, the total area ploughed. No doubt the contradictions often quoted arise from one authority having given the area of the land cultivated, the other the area of the crops reaped, or sown. In my *Oudh Gazetteer* preface I worked out provincial calculations for all these factors. My double crop area, given in 1870 for Oudh, is practically the same as that given by Government in 1895. The average of double cropped land in India is probably about 16 per cent. In the two years 1898-99, the land cultivated was 196½ millions of acres, the crops sown being 223½ millions as recorded, though really 229 millions as we shall afterwards see.

Agricultural  
Statistics.

I must explain at length the mistakes which have been made by critics and by the official statistics of crop areas. At page 36 we find entered the area of the land actually cultivated, this was for all India 196½ millions of acres in 1897-98, and the same in the next years. Besides the area of the land cultivated there are also to be considered the crops sown upon it, as much of it bears two crops in the year, some land three crops. This statistic is given at page 101, *Agricultural Statistics*, the total area of both the harvests is recorded at 223½ millions of acres, and the same figure practically for 1898-99. His Excellency on March 28th, 1901, in his speech, for



the latter year stated the area of cultivation to be 217 millions.

Mr. Digby, with the crop statistics before him, alleged that the area for 1897-98 was 196 millions only, and proceeded to say: "Apparently therefore the Viceroy has had invented for him a full food supply for twenty-six millions of people." The Viceroy's argument required the use of the crop area, not the land area, because from the crop areas added together is worked out the full food supply of the country. We know the average outturn of a crop of wheat, rice, or grain, but we do not know the average outturn of an acre of land, because it may or may not have two crops in the year.

Prosperous  
India,  
P. 375.

Mr. Digby with the statistics before him charged the Government Secretaries with inventing figures but he used himself the heading "area under crops" which is the one found at page 101, which records the gross area of crop at 223½ millions for both years. This figure must have stared him in the face, the mention of double crops is explicit in the notes, yet the ingenuous Mr. Digby quotes his 196 millions of ground area from another page, accuses gentlemen of inventing figures, though the only concealment or rather direct untruth is his own, that of the 223½ millions, the "area under crops"; he took the heading from the top of the page, and must be presumed to have looked at the bottom for the total. The Viceroy was quoting for the last year of statistics 1899, Mr. Digby writing in 1901 quotes for a former year, quotes from the wrong table, though he had looked at the right one and used it, and then charges Mr. Fuller with inventions, on the sole basis of his own fictions. But these informers, Dutt and Digby, who seem to be rivalling each other in false charges like Titus Oates and Dangerfield in former days, have been all along in error about this double crop factor. To any honest enquirer it looms as large in considering food supplies as the potato in Ireland. We have in India two and even three crops in the year just as we have three or more stories on the one ground floor of a house, and it is important to consider this factor of food supplies, just as the other is important in urban sanitation.

Dutt, Digby, and others, so far as appears from these volumes, know nothing of the double crop, though they have been they say studying statistics for long years and boast a profound knowledge of India, an inward light apart from all figures. Yet they have gone on ignoring





this double crop, and now in 1902 Mr. Digby complains that it has not been mentioned before. This is partially true. It was assumed, wrongly apparently, that critics of Indian statistics, specialists, and publicists should have an elementary knowledge of Indian conditions.

Obviously when one is comparing the crop of the peasant with what he needs for healthy life, we must look to all the crops which he produces, not to the ground which he tills. Dutt and Company have been ignoring the second crop, they have been comparing the crop reaped with the food needed, but they have taken one crop only, so they have found that the crops of six months would not supply the needs of twelve months, then the heavens resound with cries of India bleeding to death, noble races being destroyed by England. Dutt and Digby state that the crops are 196 millions when they found in the table 223 millions and the real figure was 229 millions.

Just as they invent extra 9 millions sterling spent on the pay of English officers, about ten millions extra famine deaths, ten million extra annual home tribute money, so they strike out a trifle of thirty-three millions of acres from the cultivation of the peasant, and the resources of the empire, all to prove how India is bleeding to death.

But I must repeat that official figures are not free from error. Official errors understate the official view, they are not employed, as Dutt and Digby have garbled statistics, in order to prove the dogma of the narrator. It is highly probable that the double cropped area has been under-estimated. In Eastern Bengal for instance the latest settlement report Roshanabad gives 76,000 acres double crop to a ground area of 256,000 acres, just 30 per cent.

If this is the case in Eastern Bengal it is probable that the 20 per cent. double cropped which is officially stated for the entire province should also be raised to 30 per cent., making total crop area about 235 millions of acres for India, and this is, I learn from the Hon. Mr. Nicholson a careful observer, the exact area of the crops of India according to his estimate. It is a mournful fact that owing to the famine the area cultivated in India has sunk from 196 millions to 180 millions in 1900 with of course a proportionate shrinkage in the double crop. I do not wish to lessen the terrible significance of this. The misery and mourning in millions of humble homes should silence the wrangle of controversy.



I must beg to repeat the facts about these statistical tables of crop areas and outturns, because they are confused in part and incorrect, while the highest authorities seem to be in consequence under misapprehensions, which have led not to exaggeration of the case put forward but to understatement. The entire area of land tilled was in 1899, whose figures His Excellency quoted, 203 millions of acres, on all this crops were sown, but over a large area crops were sown twice, so the total area of crops sown was recorded nearly 224 millions; table at page 36 shows the area of land, table at page 101 the aggregate area of all the crops grown on that land. This only allows for 21 millions of double cropped land, about 10 per cent., which is suspiciously small. On scrutinising the returns for the last four years I see that for the Punjab, and for the Punjab alone of all the provinces, a few millions of acres had been deducted for land which was sown but not reaped, the crops having been lost by drought, flood, caterpillar, canker worm; this practice has been followed for four years. Further, the gross area including double cropped, and the net area, have exchanged places in the Punjab returns. The total area cropped is put down for 1898-99 at 20½ millions, but the *net area* after deducting double cropped area is 26½ millions. In this way the tabulation of the entire empire is vitiated; to the gross area 223 millions of aggregate crop area should be added about six millions acres, the double cropped area, which has been entered in the wrong column; thus we get total area of crops sown 229 millions of acres.

Agricultural  
Statistics.

The Punjab officer, whose intelligence seems cranky, has also persisted year after year in deducting 3½ to 6 millions for lands sown but not reaped; for my part I refuse to believe that this enormous loss occurs every year, or in any year except in case of regular drought.

In any case I submit either the Punjab officer should have been instructed to abstain from making this deduction, or the other Provinces should have been directed to calculate their losses similarly. In Bombay, Ajmeer, and other places, the annual loss in this way must be larger than in the Punjab. The error in the Imperial total is a big one, in 1900 the Punjab area is thirteen millions, the net area twenty-three millions.

Agricultural  
Statistics.  
Pp. 101,  
189.

The trouble arises partly from the use of the ambiguous word *cropped*, which is sometimes supposed to mean *tilled*: if "net area harvested" had been used for the cropped





area reaped, and "gross tilled area" for the whole of the land cultivated, there would have been less ambiguity, and no excuse for the patriots who charge the Viceroy's advisers with inventing figures. As a matter of fact His Excellency understated his case, he might have claimed an aggregate crop area of 229 millions instead of 217.\*

The first thing I must repeat is to get accurate statistics of areas sown and reaped and of the approximate out-turn. This is still more important in Bombay where the Government revenues may be too high; it is of no urgent importance in Bengal, where Government revenue is a pepper-corn one and the crops are safe from drought. Meanwhile, I may state that including double cropped the tilled crops in 1899 were 229½ millions of acres, but the harvested area no one knows, as only in the Punjab has it been estimated.

To the authors of erroneous statistics I must add Sir Edward Buck. In the *Statistical Atlas of India, 1895*, page 25, I find "188 millions of acres under crop and 32 millions current fallows, but in most provinces of India two crops a year are obtained from fields of recognised superior quality, so that by this means an expansion of the area of production to the extent of say twenty-four million acres is normally secured. It may thus be assumed that the total annual crops of British India are drawn from an area of nearly 250 million acres." Here it is wrongly assumed that the crops, or any portion of them, are obtained from the current fallows, which are not ploughed, sown or reaped. No portion of these 32 million of fallow, recent or temporary fallows, contributes one pound of grain food. They may be tilled next year, so may millions of acres of older fallow or waste lands, but just as likely they will be again left untilled. The statement that an area of 250 million acres is cropped is deceptive and erroneous. Here we see the sanguine optimism of too many officers, which no doubt provokes a reaction. The Settlement Officer shows a profit, generally a large one, on every crop; forty years ago Mr. Hume showed a considerable loss on every crop, the truth lying midway; most years there is gener-

Settlement  
Report,  
Mozuffer-  
pur, p. 280.

\* It would be well if Official Statistics were to include a few important figures correctly stated, instead of vast masses of useless and incorrect figures. We are told for instance after two great famines that bulls and bullocks are more numerous in the Central Provinces in 1899 than in 1895, see page 248. *Agricultural Statistics*.



ally a profit, but some one crop fails more or less nearly every year.

I continue my attempts at practical suggestions. Experiments should be tried with salt particularly as regards the needs of cattle. We know from jail experience what is the monthly cost of the food which is required to keep a peasant in good health when on hard labour, but the cost of food of the common cultivator who never does any hard labour is still only guessed at. In Skrine's life of Hunter we are told that a Santal peasant when questioned after pondering deeply stated that if he was extravagant he could spend one rupee in the month; if so  $\frac{3}{4}$  d. per day, which Mr. Digby impeaches, is enough for a prodigal even. But the incident must have occurred when grain was cheaper than it is now.

It is most important to put a stop to all capricious evictions and exactions by landlords. The rent law is in practice not sufficient. Landlords are leagued with the police in many cases so as to enable them both to plunder the ryots. Magistrates, Collectors, Superintendents of Police, Judges, as a rule do not mix with the people, they spend quite enough time with the landlords and lawyers, Mr. Dutt's Congress friends, not half enough with the ryots who are fleeced by police, pleaders, landowners, agents, bailiffs. Recently I pointed out to Government how the wealthiest of the landowners were secretly exacting heavy imposts from peasants who wished to guard against drought by digging tanks. Government makes general investigations in a superficial manner over a wide area, it should make close inquisition into landlords' wrong-doing in small areas, then make examples of the wrong-doers, and let this warning operate. The proposal of the Famine Union at home to investigate typical villages was good though ancient. I have done it myself often.

Similarly, Government should fearlessly make experiments but also on a small scale. Let it forbid the transfer of tenancies by law for a term of years within two or three selected districts. I, too, during my service repeatedly brought to the notice of Government the grievous extent to which the moneyed class (the Shylocks, nearly every native gentleman is a Shylock and takes his pound of flesh) were becoming the slave drivers of the peasantry, who had mortgaged or sold their lands. Mr. Thurburn gravely exaggerates this evil as a whole, though doubtless there are parts of India where it is quite





as bad as he describes. On one occasion I rode twenty miles through villages every one of which had been sold up since the preceding settlement.

Again, let Government establish licensed pawn-brokers and agricultural banks, both in selected districts, without further delay. Defects in the system adopted will only be discovered by actual working. Government should strengthen the agricultural department, encourage the landlords and peasants to hold exhibitions and improve their staples. Diminish returns and reports by three quarters and give good officers license. Another vital point—In the very highest quarters Sir Anthony MacDonnell has been regarded as perhaps the only far-seeing statesman among Indian Governors. He learnt his work thoroughly in the only suitable school, mixing with the people, studying all problems as a district officer, being for a long period in one district as a Magistrate and Collector; during his pro-consulship there was not a single brother satrap in India who had that advantage. The aggregate period spent in this practical work by Sir Charles Elliott, Sir Alexander Mackenzie, Mr. Fraser, Mr. Cotton, Sir Charles Lyall, Mr. Hewett, and I might add two or three more, would not equal the years spent by Sir Anthony Macdonell at Chupra and Darbhanga. Of course the Madras and Bombay Governors know nothing of practical work. Two Governors in Madras and the Punjab still across the gul of many years stand out clear in history's horizon as great men, they were John Lawrence and Thomas Munro, both had learnt their work in long district careers. If His Excellency will enquire what chiefly discourages the service and makes men idle, he will find that it is the practice of choosing Secretaries with ready pens and facile tongues for all high offices. The stimulus to scorn delight and live laborious days is wanting, the ordinary Indian civilian does not work as hard as most Viceroys. Having criticised let me here diverge to add a few words of just eulogy. I speak after nearly forty years' experience in four provinces of this empire. Who else can say the same? I have no private end or private friend to serve. Can one of the Congress champions say as much? I have no selfish or sinister interest to advance. I was one of the service of aliens whose members are denounced as bleeding the country and sending all their savings home to be spent there. I am a poor man but I venture to say that I have contributed more to public causes in India, (I speak not



of political agitation) than Dutt, Digby, Hyndman, Sunderland, Vaughan, and the entire company, whose vapourings are quoted at length in the seditious volumes under review. Others in the service have been far more liberal than I have been. It is the exception for a retired civilian to arrive at home with any further accumulation than just enough for the furnishing of a house.

As I write this, the papers announce that Mr. Inverarity of the Bombay service has left two thousand pounds specially to improve the condition of the Bombay peasant. The service has faults, and grave faults, but its members have never shut their ears to the call of distress in India. Hundreds of them have died at the post of duty. The slanderers point to the pensions drawn by retired civilians, they are but the survivors of a host. Those who fell have asked for nothing from this country but a grave. I am one of three brothers who came to India, I alone survive, and am entitled to clear the character of the service, and so far as I can, to show that England is not bleeding India to death.

I have still to indicate briefly some causes and remedies of famine and of national pauperism. I have already referred to the religious element, the bold beggar who clanks his bowls against his staff, the sturdy ruffian who as fakir, Gosain, or Bairagi, plundered whatever the Mogul had left, still exists, still roams over the country with tangled locks and naked body. In any other country these men would be laid by the heels as vagrants, they no longer number six millions as once estimated: still they are another flaw, the cankerworm comes after locust, but preys on the crop too. Another matter to be reckoned with in calculating food outturn and supplies is that every man in India who can afford it and who has a good appetite eats far more than he needs. Any one who lives among the natives must have noted the contrast between the fat bunyah, and the spare ryot. If ten per cent. of the population eat half as much again as they should, this is so much lost to the food supplies; to use the words of the Old Pindari, the peasant

“Should starve ere I grew lean.”

Thirty years ago I dwelt on this economical flaw in my Preface to *Oudh Gazetteer*.

The enormous industrial loss caused by the idle pomp of Indian noblemen and princes has been little lessened. Though no longer are there to be found a hundred





thousand armed men waiting near the Mogul, swaggering round in eager expectation of outrage and plunder, yet still each nobleman keeps numerous gangs of swashbucklers.

Recently a Mr. Smedley, who apparently was invited to denounce British wrong-doers, could not help condemning the five thousand servants or hangers-on whom he saw attending the idle pomp of one petty potentate. Both these evils last mentioned, the sturdy beggar and the idle retainer, were recognised by the English laws centuries ago as evils to be crushed with a strong hand. British Government has done something through the police and the Arms Act to discourage these evils, but Queen Elizabeth dealt with them in fiercer fashion, as well known stories testify. It was made a criminal offence centuries ago to give alms to able-bodied beggars in England, and crushing fines were imposed on those who kept numerous retainers.

Stubbs, II,  
485.

Lecture of  
Jan. 10th,  
1902.

The chief impediment to industrial progress is undoubtedly landlord oppression, rapacity, and caprice, and the most extraordinary defect in Mr. Thurburn's recent review of the flaws in India's industrial equipment is that, throughout a long address reported in many columns, he seems to have forgotten that rack-renting is the constant aim of the Indian landlord, all over the Peninsula rack-renting and eviction are the two Furies which ever blast or destroy peasant industry.

Mr. Dutt in 1874, when he was ballasted with official responsibility, wrote with vigour and general correctness on the subject. Mr. Thurburn, whose only experience has been in the Punjab, forgot it entirely.\* Just as landlords obstruct tank-making in Bengal by extortionate demands for their sanction, so they unanimously opposed the construction of the Sarada canal.

I have little more to say at present on this well-worn subject, save that it is impossible to check rack-renting by

\* Mr. Thurburn seems to have forgotten many other things, figures no doubt may be fallacious unless used critically, but a long lecture wholly without figures is only fit for school girls.

He denounced the British administration of the Punjab almost root and branch; he neglected to state cardinal factors such as the annual net import or retention of about six millions of gold in India, eight millions including Mysore, the increase of population in British India and decrease in Native States, the enormous spread of canals in his own province.



legislation alone, and executive interference should be more frequent and energetic. Recently, for instance, we have seen settlement reports which did not contain any definite information about high or extortionate rents. It is known that rents in Madras and Oudh reach Rs. 50 and Rs. 70 per acre. Exorbitant rates are demanded from the most skilful and industrious peasants who raise garden crops and contribute most largely to the food resources of the State. The landlord takes rent and various cesses, his stewards and bailiffs demand fees, fines, and bribes without ceasing, a ceaseless drip from the peasant's poor little store.

There are many factors of Indian poverty which I cannot refer to here. The time and money wasted in litigation are as grievous as the perjury and intrigue involved. The extravagance of expenditure on marriages, on jewels, equipage, and idle pomp, is a great drain.

The maintenance of idle Brahmins and sturdy beggars, the evils resulting from too early marriages and child wives are serious. But the main factors of Indian poverty are two: first, the oppression and rapacity of the landlords, second, the indolent and unthrifty habits of the peasant. A third grave weakness is the want of truthfulness, if not the love of a lie, the general dishonesty which infects large bodies specially of the urban community, and seems indeed to grow with their intelligence. The truth we may get from the peasant in his village, but very rarely from the acuter, more energetic and pushful ones, who have forced their way to the front, and who prosper by preying on the simple Simons of the hamlet.

Lying is the natural refuge of a subject race, but it is a terrible economical stumbling block at the same time.

It is absolutely true as Macaulay pointed out that in lying the Bengali far surpasses all other natives of India and of the world. It is not only the habit of exaggeration which His Excellency has been condemning at the Convocation of the Calcutta University, it is the love of chicanery, of crooked paths, an actual pride in overcoming by wrongful ways, a delight in the pettiest gains of fraud, when honest industry would have secured much more.

The habit is infectious, English men who have lived for a generation or more among the Bengalis, while they denounce this habit, have been infected by it, some of the pride themselves openly upon being Bengali, on the skill with which they use Bengali chicanery in business and





the law courts. Hence partly arises the utter failure of the Bengalis as manufacturers, as captains of industry. One company after another has arisen in Calcutta and failed, glass, stockings, perfumes, and other manufactures have been taken up, but their productions cannot be relied on; of the million of watches used in India not one is made in the country, nothing from a cotton umbrella or a steel nib to a steam engine is made in the country; wherever collective industry is required, they commence to cheat each other and the public. Parsis, Marwaris, Bhoras, Panjabis may start and succeed with jute mills, presses, cotton mills, tea, indigo, but Bengalis never till they change. Therefore, we must import white men on a large scale in Bengal because we cannot rely on the Bengali to make a watch or a box of matches, or to govern a million of the mixed races to one of which he belongs.

The Briton is needed to hold the scale evenly between nearly sixty millions of Moslems and two hundred millions of Hindus. Congress orators are always proclaiming that the ancient enmity between the two faiths is dying away, this is in some places partly true, but the mutual distrust is as strong as ever. Let me quote recent instances. The population of the estates of His Highness of Tippera in British India is about half a million, of whom about three-fifths are Moslems. Ten years ago I took charge of them, previous Managers had been Hindus. Excluding peons I found just one Musulman in the Raj employ, and he was a specially qualified rogue, a dismissed policeman. There were hundreds of respectable and educated men eager for employment, they could work among the tenants of their own faith better and more cheaply than office babus, not one had been appointed. Patriots complain, and I have admitted they have some reason, that only seventeen thousand of their race, the natives, draw pay and pensions exceeding Rs. 1,000 per annum, but when Hindus have the power they treat the Moslems ten times worse, not one respectable Moslem in the Tippera Raj office was drawing over five shillings per week, while some hundreds of Hindus regarded by the people as aliens and often hated aliens were getting good pay. One of my staff, who had been the editor of a Calcutta newspaper, at his first interview commenced his address to me! "You are experienced, you know that all Musulmen are liars and rogues."



Every year the Congress wire-pullers elect at meetings a number of Musulman delegates, this is a mere sham, they know well that these gentlemen distrust the Congress and will take no part in it, however with other bogus facts it is used to delude the home public into a belief that Congress represents all races, so it is reported that so many Moslems have been elected, though the gentlemen were never asked for their consent, and will never take their seats. The last Coomilla election is a case in point.

The lessons of History are plain to any honest student. The Moslem did scorn and hate the Hindu, but it was not because he was conquered, but because he was an idolater. The bitter feeling between the races bred by seven hundred years of violence and mutual outrage survives.

Above all we cannot rely on officers born and bred in Bengal being truthful, loyal, resolute, and discreet in any emergency. The two volumes which I have reviewed, which have been written by a Bengali and by a servant of Bengalis, afford the strongest proof of this fact.

Their aim and object is to secure the increased employment of natives and principally Bengalis in the administration of India; any one who studies these works carefully will rise from the perusal with great distrust for such a proposal, for no reliance can obviously be placed on the word or deed of those who wrote or inspired them.

During the last ten years I have spent many hours of every day among Bengalis of the same class to which Mr. Dutt belongs; many hundreds of officials and several hundreds of thousands of peasants get a living out of the huge estates of the Tippera Maharaja which I am managing. Their good points are not a few, but the prominent characteristics, which mark their character and which have often rendered futile efforts for their welfare, are indolence and untruthfulness.

If I sometimes speak bitterly of the misstatements, concealments, half truths and no truths, which Mr. Dutt and his allies have poured forth, it is because for many years I have been struggling against a torrent of such, which have daily impeded work, soured temper, and obstructed efforts for the good of the people. Daily do I receive written and oral applications, complaints, reports, which mix up truth and untruth just as Mr. Dutt does, here a fine old crusty fiction, there bits of exaggeration, now a little slander, everywhere professions of loyalty and





devotion, and the motive for all, anxiety for promotion. Not once in a thousand times does it turn out that the writer or speaker has given me the truth and the whole truth. The most extraordinary thing is that they will not learn how often it is the wisest policy to tell the truth. Daily it is my task to impress this on my staff.

Too often in my study of these volumes also have I asked myself, what ever was the writer's motive in making statements which were certain to be refuted. During nearly a third of a century passed in various parts of Northern and Central India, spending many months every year in tents among the villagers, I came to regard them with respect, sympathy and affection, and I often noted the general truthfulness of the country people unless when they dreaded any new taxation.

This habit of misrepresentation, which has become ingrained in the urban classes of Lower Bengal, is not universal in India. In what I have said about Oriental chicanery and untruth I refer to this class alone unless mention of others is express, though the purlieus of the Lucknow or Agra courts present equally copious specimens of those in whom "there is a natural and corrupt love of the lie itself," and to whom "a mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure." This untruthful nature is the result of two thousand years environment. The Bengali, unlike the Sikh, Mahratta, Pathan, has been a servile race as long as history exists. Far from feeling triumphant at the discovery that these poor people are utterly untruthful, we should feel ashamed; during a century and a half we might have done more to improve them. The Diwan of Travancore a few days ago in a public speech ascribed the success of the European to "powers of observation, admirable business habits, indomitable perseverance and singular ability to secure the confidence of others" not to command of capital; he adds "when these qualities become ours we will have the money required for any undertaking."

This wise and liberal statesman rightly adds *Fidelitate* to the motto of the La Martinière School at Lucknow, "*Labore et Constantia*." If the Bengalis would only lay to heart the golden words of the Travancore Diwan, and prove by their deeds that the censure is no longer just, then they would be patriots indeed. In the above chapters I have neither extenuated nor maliciously exaggerated so far as I know any defect of my country men or of Hindus. I



have told the truth so far as I know it, pointing out mistakes committed in the highest quarters. Mr. Dutt who in his ingenuous youth and prime of manhood piled up accusations against the Bengali landlords, and praised the humanity, sympathy, and energy of the Briton, now reverses these colours, and atones for his former attacks on his countrymen. The pervert's apology has been accepted as a recantation, it is welcomed also as a proof that fiction as a high art is still a successful culture in Bengal, and Mr. Dutt has just been elected an honorary member of the British Indian Association. May I add one word; the apathy and silent contempt with which British officers have treated the charges made against the administration seem to me ill-judged; the public opinion of America, Britain, France, Germany, is being steadily tampered with, untruths and half truths are being poured forth to blacken British character to the civilised world, they sit silent and scornful as the senate of Rome before an inroad of noisy Goths.

While I am writing I notice proof of this. On the 26th March in Council Mr. Gokhale makes a sustained attack upon British administration, only part of which was of course read aloud: although he nowhere indulges in the masses of fabrication which disfigure the works under review, yet his conclusions are quite sufficient to stimulate sedition. In order to pay the "terrible burthen" of taxation, the people have to crop continuously so that "their material condition is steadily deteriorating, this phenomenon is the saddest in the whole range of the economic history of the world." The money raised in such cruel fashion is spent on railways and wars which do not benefit but rather damage India. "Other interests take precedence of Indian interests . . . English mercantile classes have been conciliated by railways . . . interests of the services have been allowed to prevail." Government and the services are alone to blame, "the peasantry taken all in all is inferior to no other people in industry, frugality, and patient suffering." The whole of the above

NOTE.—The people are poor no doubt but the very day that the orator was painting the sorrows of the frugal, toiling, yet starving peasant, I was watching the common carters in Calcutta quenching their thirst with bottles of sparkling lemonade, sugar, bottle, citric acid all being imported luxuries. Similarly one can see long processions of cultivators coming to market or to railway, five out of six in Eastern Bengal have English umbrellas.





consist of half truths and untruths but no one answered it not even to point out that at the same meeting the Maharaja of Darbhanga was asking for more of the railways which Mr. Gokhale was denouncing.

One word to native gentlemen. Those amongst English officers, who have been most anxious to treat natives of this empire with absolute justice and have sympathized most fully with their claims, have been offended and alienated by the two volumes which I have reviewed. The politics of Mr. Fraser of the Central Provinces are well known, he has always been the earnest advocate of all just Hindoo claims. Of all the governors consulted he alone in January 1902 appears as strongly censuring Mr. Dutt, he had hoped for better things from educated Bengal, the others say nothing because the Bengali author in this instance has shown himself to be just what they expected, and just what old Strabo and Macaulay described long ago. I for one would be anxious to try the separation of judicial and executive functions as an experiment in selected districts. Any former reluctance to take such a step will be increased by the issue of these volumes. My recommendations about famine prevention may be summed up, get correct statistics, increase the number of native officers slowly and steadily, recruiting among the manly races whose word can be trusted, lessen the pension privileges of British officers in reason, prefer sound irrigation schemes to sound railway schemes, give formal and steady encouragement to agriculture and lastly declare open war against unjust and rapacious landlords wherever found, but assist them to secure fair rents from tenants who are too often indolent and wasteful.

There are other native grievances of importance about which Mr. Gokhale has delivered himself in the Imperial Council, and I must add a few words of comment. With what he says about salt I agree generally. In 1887 the tax was increased over all India except Burma from Rs. 2 to Rs. 2-8 per maund; since then population has increased a little less than 6 per cent. and the consumption of salt has increased 6 per cent. too according to statistics. No authority doubts that a number of deaths have been due to insufficient supply of salt for man and beast during the last decade. We should not then argue that population and salt consumption have increased *pari passu*, therefore all things are well, because we have first diminished population by stopping their salt; indigenous



and cheap local supplies have been forcibly closed, and the peasant has to pay cost of carriage from Sambhur or Liverpool. Our salt tax is condemned by every scientific European and American who has studied the question.\* With the remainder of Mr. Gokhale's facts and arguments I altogether differ. He does not quote or endorse the hundreds of fictions which Dutt and Digby have uttered, he is more able and artful than either, possibly he does not intend to be disloyal and seditious, but such will be the character of the young patriots of Poona who accept him as their chosen demagogue.

His speech is made up of half truths, his statistics are correct sometimes. He too tries to prove that India is bleeding to death, quoting a certain number of staples, opium, indigo, wheat, seeds, cotton, he shows that from varying dates selected by himself their exports have decreased during the last few years. Let us take cotton for instance to prove how dishonest is his reasoning. Raw cotton and manufactures were exported in 1900 only to the value of 195 millions of rupees, Mr. Gokhale picks out years during the last ten in which the trade was more flourishing, it reached 243 millions in 1895-96, before the two great Commercial famines commenced. Cotton was specially affected by Statistics, the drought, as Bombay is the main source of supply. P. 413. Would it be fair to quote the years of the Lancashire famine in order to prove that the cotton manufacture was declining in England? I will select no year. I will take the earliest given in the statistics, 1877, cotton manufactures exported have increased from 23 millions of rupees in 1877 to 96½ millions in 1900 in spite of the famine. But why not look at the whole of the trade in the last quarter of a century instead of picking five staples out of fifty and three years out of twenty-five? The total value of exports has increased from 80 millions of rupees in 1834 to 652 millions of rupees in 1877, to 1,091 millions in 1900. This amount has only been surpassed in two years out of the twenty-five and the decrease is due to raw cotton and wheat. As a patriot and domiciled Indian I rejoice that Indian exports of these staples have lessened while exports of manufactured goods have enormously increased. Both

\* Sir Edward Law in his budget speech calculates the incidence of the salt tax at only 1 per cent. of peasants' income, but he omits to consider two points, one is that peasants' cattle want salt too, second that the peasant has to pay carriage from distant source of supply, Sambhur or Liverpool.





imports and exports have increased, the aggregate was 143 millions in 1834, it is 2138 millions in 1900, every quinquennial period showing progress, no country in Europe can boast as much.

Here are the industry products exported valued in rupees :—

	1877.	1900.
Tea ... ..	30½ millions	91¾ millions.
Metals ... ..	1½ do.	3¾ do.
Lac ... ..	3½ do.	11½ do.
Cotton goods ...	23 do.	96¾ do.
Jute manufactures...	7¾ do.	62¾ do.

The only manufactures which have decreased are opium and indigo, both for reasons which are well known. Here is Mr. Gokhale's conclusion. Since 1884-85 "there has been no advance in any of the older provinces but a positive retrogression in all the more important elements of moral well-being."

What the meaning of this utterance is no one can tell. The intention of the sphynx has been throughout to prophesy material decay. How has moral well-being been concerned? Is it because men of light and leading have uttered untruths from a thousand platforms and presses, the torrent of falsehood and slander increasing each year? If so, I quite agree. There is another aspect of Mr. Gokhale's address, its promptings to sedition. Just as Mr. Dutt declaims about Indian races who have been destroyed on the banks of the Indus and the Mississippi by the conquerors who all over the world "hate and scorn" the conquered, so Mr. Gokhale draws special attention among exports, to hides and bones alone, the product of the sacred cow, their increase alone is enormous so far as he reports. The inference is clear, the Bengali the spiritual Bengali is being destroyed, awaits annihilation, despair all along the line, and now the sacred cow is to follow suit. Is it loyal, is it truthful or prudent thus to direct the attention of hundreds of thousands of mere boys who never have seen the histories and statistics which are garbled and partially quoted by the orators, to fix the minds of ignorant and excitable youths upon aspects of famine which are sad enough, to exaggerate them without any semblance of reason, and lastly to charge all the terrible sufferings of human beings and of still more sacred cows upon the British?



The quotations which I have given from Dutt, Digby and Gokhale will have this effect. The British have caused the famines, there never were any great famines till they came, we ourselves and the cattle which we reverence are being destroyed. Look at the exports of our bones and hides, read history and be wise. Every word of the above is utterly false, but two or three millions at least will believe the numerous false witnesses one of whom at any rate seems to me quite equal in unscrupulous and malignant fertility of fabrication to Titus Oates of old. The Indian patriots will say that the proofs of this frightful ruin were put forward in the Viceroy's presence in Council and no one definitely contradicted Mr. Gokhale. This is not wise, these Congress orators will in time acquire strength. The Rajas the Independent Chiefs of India know that the British rescued them long ago from the most cruel bondage to Mahratta or Mogul, they agreed to pay half their revenues to the British, now out of fifteen millions of revenue Government takes from them a little above half a million, and freely abandons seven million sterling, with which they keep up an army of 350,000 men.

Treaties,  
passim.

At present the princes will assume that the slanderers are uttering untruths, they will reason that it has never been the Briton's role to rob the poor, and give it to the rich. In time their minds too will be warped, they have to take in the Calcutta journals partly through dread of blackmail, daily the poison will be instilled into them. In time they too will believe that all Hindus are in danger from the common foe who seems specially to hate and scorn Hindus and cows alike.

Statesman's  
Year Book.

I would implore Government to spread correct knowledge among the people, who according to the false witnesses are being bled to death. What can surpass the eloquence of figures like the following, extracted from a huge blue book as diamonds from heaps of clay?

Commercial  
Statistics,  
p. 433.

1884-85.

1899-1900.

Net imports of gold and

silver ... 17 millions. 130 millions.

These are the first and last years for which we have correct returns. I have not selected the years. Again let us take average net imports of precious metals for terms of years.





## Average annual import.

1835-59 ...	...	40½ millions.
1859-79 ...	...	115 „
1879-99 ...	...	112 „
1900 ...	...	130 „

It is quite true that in particular years like 1861-65, precious metals were poured into the country partly to pay for cotton which America no longer supplied, partly for the big railways then being constructed.

Leaving out both these fat years and the lean years of famine, the progress of the country in the accumulation of precious metals has been as steady and continuous as it has been in jute, cotton, tea, leather manufactures, and in coal production, the source of all modern progress. The patriots and Mr. Gokhale, declaim about the Indian army, it cost fifteen millions sterling in 1901 but the expenditure according to the fine frenzy of the orator had increased by nearly "6½ crores a year during the period" another gigantic fiction. India has no Navy, Britain protects our coasts, and our Mecca pilgrims who in Mogul days were plundered and murdered by corsairs go now in peace. Britain last year spent 118 millions sterling on its army and navy. Of the 120 millions spent in last two years for the defence of South Africa India has not paid one rupee, though the Cape was originally conquered and retained simply in the interest of India. Britain might justly claim from India a contribution towards the cost of her navy but generously refrains.

To conclude, I see nothing but prosperity before India, the lookout is far better than when I came here in 1862; all will be well if the people will only labor and learn, listening to no false prophets, if also Government continues to introduce reforms, steadily progressing towards the satisfaction of just national aspirations.

Surely a good deal has been done in this direction. In 1827 no native officer of Government received above Rs. 250 monthly, in 1850 only one received Rs. 1,300, now about 2,000 receive above Rs. 250 and some up to Rs. 4,000 per month. The white civil service numbered 883 in 1834 and its numbers have been kept down in order that funds might be found for the native civil service, while its ranks are now open to all. In 1812 the net treasure imported into all India was under two millions of rupees, now even after a famine year it is 130 millions; truly



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the world at large is bleeding and India receives the golden guerdon of its industry from the rest of the globe. The army has been reduced from 337,000 in 1850 to 218,000 in 1900, what other nation in this world of embattled millions can say the like?

NOTE.—The Abbe Dubois a hundred years ago wrote an account of the Madras Hindus. He was naturally hostile to English rule, but he writes strongly about the indolence and poverty of the masses as follows (Dubois' "Hindus," p. 83):—

"The lowest class appears to me to comprise nine-twentieths or perhaps even a half of the entire population. . . . When they are in actual want they seek for food in the woods,—they find leaves, shrubs, roots and herbs,—this primitive food forms for the greater part of the year the most substantial part of their meals."

This is fair proof that in Madras a century ago the people were infinitely worse off than they are now, in other words they have become more prosperous under British rule.

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