CHAPTER X.

1865.

The Bhotan embassy—Sir Herbert Edwardes—Indian estimate of public men—Sir Charles Trevelyan—Budget for 1865-66—Speculation mania in Bombay—Value of land in Bombay—Time bargains—Mr. Justice Anstey—General crash—Sanitary condition of Bombay and Calcutta—Port Canning – Madras — Assassination at Peshawur—Fanaticism—Insecurity of European life—The Mhow death march—Roorkee College—Sir Bartle Frere's address to the Mahratta Sirdars.

THE second year of Sir John Lawrence's administration opened with favourable auspices. A series of petty failures and disappointments in Bhotan reiterated the oft-repeated warning against embroiling ourselves with barbarous neighbours, difficult of access and unmanageable either by the arts of peace or war when reached. But the mischief had been done before Sir John came out, and in no way can he be held responsible. Towards the end of the year, when the circumstances more fully detailed in another chapter became publicly known, an unseemly recrimination took place between the officials whose credit were at stake, or their partisans, and some serious accusations of giving to the public garbled despatches and official documents, with the view of misleading them as to the real source of failure and disgrace, were not satisfactorily answered. It is easy to be wise after the event, but there can be little doubt that the envoy, the Hon. Ashley Eden, was most anxious to proceed to the capital, in spite of the repeated hints that he was not wanted there, and in face of

the obstacles put in his way. To have abandoned the enterprise would have perhaps laid him open to the charge of timidity or want of zeal, but real diplomatic genius evinces itself in the avoidance of political dilemmas, as much as courage and presence of mind in escaping from them when caught in their toils.

In the early part of the year India was deprived of the genius and ability of one of the most eminent of that school of soldier-statesmen who in the past official generation had done such good service to the country. Sir Herbert Edwardes' last public act of importance was the trial of the Wahabee conspirators. He had filled successively the post of Commissioner of Peshawur and Umballa, and, if the public voice could have controlled the selection, would have been appointed Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, upon Sir Robert Montgomery's retirement. His brilliant services are too well known to need recapitulation, and India could ill afford to lose the experience, the personal influence, the undaunted courage, the presence of mind combined with the power of action in great emergencies, of the man who held the helm in the Peshawur district during the rebellion.

It is too much the custom in England to ignore the existence in India of anything in the shape of public opinion. Public opinion, indeed, there is not in the same sense as it exists in England, for there is no House of Commons as the ultimate court of appeal, without which the press would be powerless. The press in India is consequently dependent on the extent to which it can influence Government by sound argument or cogent reasoning. But the public opinion of India, such as it is, ought not to be totally ignored. The major part of it emanates from the official classes, and is the experience of the thoughts and views of members of the different branches of the public services, who, through the medium of the press, make known sentiments and opinions for which the regular official channels of communication with

the Government afford no vent. In such matters as the selection of governors and appointments of men to high offices in the State, the expression of opinion in India, especially when unanimous or nearly so, might with advantage be consulted in the selection of candidates, of whose abilities the Indian public (including the official world) is in a much better position to judge, and will judge, more accurately than the English.

The merits of the policy Sir Charles Trevelyan adopted in his last budget for 1865-66 will be discussed under the chapter on Finance. The history and fate of that budget may be related here. Sir Charles Trevelyan's determined opposition to his *bête noir*, the Income-tax, has a melodramatic air about it which may reconcile the general reader to a subject usually so repulsive as a budget. Recalled from Madras because he condemned the Income-tax, and sent out again as Finance minister because Sir Chas. Wood saw he was right in condemning the Income-tax, though wrong in the way he did it; forced during his three years of office to permit the existence of the impost, he was determined not to quit India and leave his foe behind him. But there was a deficit, and how should that be met and the Income-tax nevertheless demolished? He proposed a loan for public works for 1,200,000*l.*, and an increase on the export duties. The proposition was received in Council with disfavour. Sir John Lawrence had the power, but declined the responsibility, of rejecting the budget altogether. Outside the Council chamber the resolution was received with dismay. Export and import duties touched the pockets of the class who were quite powerful enough to be feared by a Secretary of State; the Liverpool and Manchester merchants re-echoed the cry uttered from Calcutta and Bombay, and the budget was returned "disapproved." Sir Charles Wood preferred a deficit to an equilibrium produced by a loan and a tax on raw produce. Meantime, Sir Charles Trevelyan had left the field to his enemies, having had the grim satisfac-

tion before he went of laying up the Income-tax, as he expressed it, "a potent but imperfect fiscal machine upon the shelf, complete in all its gear, ready to be re-imposed in case of any new emergency." Sir Charles Trevelyan was right in his determined opposition to the impost. It has lain where he placed it in all its gear, but no succeeding minister has cared to use it, though it has been several times taken down, turned over, and then put back again.[1]

Another public man, who during his tenure of office had left an ineffaceable mark of his genius upon the department of the administration allotted to him, left India this year. After being feasted and toasted at a public dinner in Calcutta, the place where three short years before he had been at the very height of unpopularity, Sir Hugh Rose made over the command of the army in India to Sir William Mansfield, and sailed for England in March. The same year which saw Sir William Mansfield removed from Bombay to the head of the army, and Sir R. Napier installed in his place, witnessed also the retirement of another distinguished officer, Sir Hope Grant, from the Commander-in-chiefship of Madras, and the advent of Sir Gaspar Le Marchant in his room.

The spirit of wild speculation which had in the last two years infected, more or less, all classes of the community, this year reached a climax, and was followed by the inevitable reaction. The growing traffic of Bombay and the impetus given to the import trade by the opening of the railways had increased enormously the value of land in the island. The population, on such respectable authorities as McCulloch and Martin, was in 1861 at the surprisingly low figure of a little upwards of half a million. But this half-million of souls were confined within the narrow limits of an island of an oblong shape, eight miles

[1] Since this was written, Sir R. Temple has re-introduced this tax in a modified form.

in length from north to south, and between two and three miles wide. In such a position it is obvious that any land reclaimed from the sea would become of the utmost possible value; and during the time of the unexampled prosperity which the Western Presidency enjoyed from 1861 to 1865, reclamation schemes were in high favour. The present year 1865 was a period of wild speculative excitement in Bombay. Enormous fortunes had been realized in the cotton trade, and capitalists were longing for investments. House accommodation, at best of times very dear and most scanty in proportion to the requirements of the European and the heads of the native community, rose to a fabulous rent. A writer in the *Times of India* stated that there were at that time (April and May) twenty or thirty English gentlemen residing in Bombay houseless. A well-known official had given up his house because the owner raised the rent to 300 rupees (30*l.*) a month, refusing to pay so large a sum. The owner immediately afterwards declined an offer of 750 rupees, and would not take less than 1,000 rupees a month. A mercantile house paid 107,500*l.* for offices which in Calcutta would not have fetched 20,000*l.*; and another rented a ground-floor warehouse at 2,400*l.* a year. Shares in the Colaba Land Company rose from 10,000 rupees at par to 1 lac and 20,000, or twelve times the par value. Back Bay shares went up from 2,000 rupees to 54,000 Equally great was the rise in Press property. Shares in the Elphinstone Press Company went up from 40,000 to 1 lac and 35,000 rupees; and the Apollo Press Company from 12,000 to upwards of 20,000. It was in the height of this speculating mania that the Bank of Bombay, one of whose directors was the famous Premchund Roychund, at one time possessed of almost countless wealth, commenced the course of action which eventuated in the crash of 1868. A clause in its charter empowered it to make advances on the security of shares, and it did so, among others, to the Back Bay Company,

reckoning its shares at the then fictitious value of 25,000 rupees.

But if this speculation, wild as it was, had been conducted on anything like sound commercial principles, the consequences would not have been anything like so serious as they were. But the wealth which rested on the caprice of the share-market was imaginary. Shares, it is true, were bought and sold at fabulous prices, but the greater part of these transactions were what is called time bargains; that is to say, the purchaser bought shares and promised to pay at a long future date, trusting in the meantime to realize the amount due by a profit on a further rise in prices. He sold again immediately at a large premium on the same terms, and the person who bought from him sold again to a fourth party under similar conditions. It was during the prevalence of this gambling mania that Mr. Chisholm Anstey, formerly of the Hong Kong and more recently of the Bombay bar, was raised to fill a temporary vacancy in the bench of the High Court. It may well be supposed that these time-bargains were not likely to be very favourably viewed in a court of law; and Mr. Justice Anstey—who combined with great eccentricity of manner much determination of character, and an unusually vehement habit of expression—struck terror into the hearts of insolvents who had dabbled in questionable transactions. An Augæan stable required a Hercules to clean it, and a Hercules was found. In one of the first cases that came before him where the time-bargains formed the subject of the suit, the indignant judge, in dismissing the case with costs, remarked that, "According to the custom of these miserable gamblers, of whom the native community of all races, except the Moslem, appeared to be full, they made a double venture; first of all a venture in the way of purchase, and then again in the way of resale, without any intention to give delivery or to take delivery, but merely to settle the differences in both."

Most English readers are familiar with the name of Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeeboy, the millionaire Parsee baronet, who raised himself from a vendor of old bottles to be one of the wealthiest men in the world. In the crash of falling firms and wide-spread insolvency that swept like a cyclone over Bombay in the latter part of 1865, the nephew of the wealthy baronet had to seek the protection of the Insolvent Court. His assets were 13½ lacs as represented, and his debts 55 lacs, or 550,000*l.* Mr. Justice Anstey sent him to jail for two years for fraud, but somewhat weakened the effect of his remarks in sentencing him, by offensive allusions to his uncle's origin. "A man," he said, "who is originally a dealer in old bottles, gambles till he has contracted debts to the amount of 55 lacs."

The speculating mania in Bombay at this time almost amounted to a moral epidemic, like the dancing and other epidemics of the Middle Ages, with which Hecker's interesting pages have made us familiar. It was succeeded by the inevitable reaction. Failure followed failure, confidence was gone, and amid the general dismay, when no one dared trust his neighbour, the day fixed for the settlement of the time-bargains, the 1st July, approached. It usually happens that the apprehensions of impending calamity are worse than the reality. The state of commercial affairs could hardly have been worse than it was before the 1st July. The climax of the crisis on that day and the succeeding Monday, the 3d, was less disastrous than had been expected, perhaps because, where so many had failed to meet engagements, the means or the will to force the consequence of failures on the defaulters may have been wanting. No more striking and sad illustration of the consequences of a gambling, speculative mania is to be found than the fact of a once thriving and prosperous commercial community urging the Legislature by a memorial to amend the Insolvent Act, so as to simplify and accelerate its process, "with all the haste the constitution of the country will admit."

Much light will probably be thrown upon the commercial history of Bombay at this juncture by the publication of the report of the commission of inquiry into the affairs of the Bombay Bank. While that inquiry is incomplete, it will be dangerous to hazard, and unjust to express, an opinion on the conduct of the Bombay Government. From what is before the public now, there was unquestionably a want of firmness and of caution, and an inability to foresee the extent of the danger that surrounded them. As has been mentioned in another place, Sir William Mansfield, one of the members of that Government, does not hesitate to plead on his own behalf and that of his colleagues the dangerous doctrine that it was too much to have expected the Government to resist the tide of public feeling. And when the condition of the Bank had become known, though not perhaps to its full extent, there was a backwardness on the part of the subordinate in affording the Supreme Government all the information it wanted. Nothing, however, has been urged in extenuation of the reckless imprudence which caused the ruin of the Bank.

Towards the end of September a slight reaction from the state of deep depression in which the market had fallen took place in consequence of a sudden rise in the price of cotton, owing to the discovery that the supposed resources in America had failed to realize what was expected. But the system had been too much shattered and disorganized by the late attack of the epidemic for any healthy reaction to ensue so soon after the crisis of the disease, and the speculation that followed partook of the same wild character that had distinguished the era of time-bargains. It was followed by a crisis in the money-market at the close of the year, when the Supreme Government, acting upon urgent requisition for aid transmitted by telegraph to Calcutta, sent round 60 lacs (600,000*l.*) in silver, while about 30 lacs more were supplied by private firms. Two steamers were engaged to convey this large

amount of specie, and thus poured into Bombay upwards of a million sterling within a fortnight.

The European reader is familiar with the contrast Oriental cities so often afford, between enormous wealth side by side with abject poverty, squalor, and wretchedness. In spite of the scarcity of money in the exhausted treasury of the Government and the Bank of Bombay, it is allowed on all hands that the city contained enormous wealth. Some of the most munificent gifts for charitable institutions that modern times can boast have been made by wealthy merchants of Bombay. Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeeboy, the bottle-seller, and David Sassoon and others, have enriched their native city, and immortalized their names by their princely donations to hospitals, and other endowments, to relieve the wants and mitigate the sufferings of humanity.[1] Yet a city whose merchants might, even in the hour of depression, after a period of unwonted excitement, have paved their streets with silver, could call forth the following remarks of the Municipal Commissioner in 1861 :—"Go into the native town," says Mr. Crauford, "and around you will see on all sides filth immeasurable and indescribable, and at places almost unfathomable; filthy animals, filthy habits, filthy streets, and with filthy court-yards round the houses of the rich, and masses of filth around the dwellings of the poor, foul and loathsome trades, crowded houses, foul markets, foul meat and food, foul wells and tanks and swamps, foul smells at every turn, unventilated drains, and sewers choked with animal and human ordure, and the garbage of an Oriental city. Men, women, and children, the rich and the poor, living with animals of all kinds and vermin; seeing all this, smelling and inhaling the tainted, deadly atmosphere, and dying by the thousand. And this," he adds, "is Bombay, as it will be ere long, the focus of the trade of India, fed by thousands of miles of railway, its population doubled, overflowing the island, daily—nay

[1] Mr. Premchund Roychund, at the height of the epidemic, gave £20,000 to the Bombay University.

hourly—adding to the horrors faintly depicted here." Much has been done since that was written, although much remains to do. But the visitor to the capital of the Western Presidency cannot fail to be struck with the contrast between the external appearance of Bombay and the natural beauties of the place, as he sees them, and the handiwork of its inhabitants, as described by the Municipal Commissioner.

The harbour, one of the finest in the world, is formed by a crescent-shaped group of islands, of which Salsette (connected by a causeway), Elephanta, and Colaba are the most familiar to English readers. The rays of a tropical sun are tempered by a delicious breeze; innumerable boats glide here and there on errands of business or pleasure; stately ships ride securely at anchor in the offing; picturesque islets rise abruptly from the ocean, clad from the summit to the very edge with the richest tropical verdure; and the branches of the trees hang so close over the water that they seem to coquet with the rippling waves as they toss themselves in wanton sport upon the pebbly shore. Such a scene, under the clear blue Indian sky and bright sunshine, as it meets the eye of the exile who enters India by its western gate, is well calculated to impress him favourably with the land of his adoption. Nor would he be undeceived as long as he remained content with a superficial view of the place. A nearer acquaintance might reveal enough to justify the strictures of Mr. Crauford and the denunciations of Mr. Justice Anstey.

Three years of persevering energy in working out sanitary reforms have, however, done wonders. A writer in the *Friend of India*, in April 1868, thus eulogizes the results of Mr. Crauford's efforts:—"In three years, assisted by a good health-officer, he has wrought a marvellous revolution. Except in a few obscure lanes, the city is almost devoid of bad odours. Its area is nearly thrice that of municipal Calcutta, yet every street and house, and

every road is daily swept as well as watered, and the dust is carefully removed. Its natural effect has been seen not merely in the comfort of all classes of the inhabitants, but in the fact that cholera, which used to be endemic in the city, as it is in Calcutta, has not been known for some time."

But Calcutta felt the effect of the speculative mania, though not to the same extent as the sister Presidency. Situated a hundred miles from the sea, with which it is connected by an awkward river, most difficult of navigation, the capital of British India enjoys a trade unsurpassed by that of any commercial city in the Eastern hemisphere. The noble river—for at Calcutta the Hooghly is well worthy of the name—is crowded with a forest of masts, the vessels all lying comparatively close together, so as to present a much more imposing appearance than double the number of vessels at anchor in a spacious harbour like Bombay.

Ill adapted for commerce, the Hooghly affords the best defence a maritime capital could have. It is only by the assistance of trained pilots, who have to spend their lives from early boyhood in mastering the difficulties of Hooghly navigation, learning the intricacies of the channels, and watching the ever-shifting shoals and sand-banks of the capricious river, that any ship of large burden can reach the port. Were the landmarks, and the lights, and the buoys to be removed, no human skill or caution could steer a vessel through the narrow winding channels of which the unpractised eye can perceive no trace. The experiment would be attended with certain destruction to any ship that attempted it. Even with all the precaution that a careful supervision, constant watching, and a large establishment can secure, accidents frequently occur; and a ship that has reached the Bay of Bengal from Calcutta in safety, may sail round the world and return again without encountering any danger in navigation so dangerous and difficult as the voyage down the Hooghly. For a long while it was believed that the channels of the Hooghly, intricate as they are, were annually becoming more diffi-

cult in navigation by the silting of the bed of the river. Whether this be so or no, there can be but one opinion as to the advantage of a seaport within easy distance of the Bay, and connected with Calcutta by rail. The delta of the Ganges, which is almost double the size of that of the Nile, begins to be formed about two hundred miles from the sea. It consists of a vast alluvial level covered with vegetation, and intersected with a network of innumerable streams and channels, each connected with the other, and appearing to the eye a vast maritime labyrinth of natural canals. The delta is about two hundred miles in breadth, and is bounded by two principal arms or bifurcations of the main stream, the easternmost of which preserves the name of the Ganges, or the Bhagirathi; the westernmost branch flowing by Calcutta, is called the Hooghly. At one of the numerous outlets by which the waters of the holy river find their way to the sea, a site has been fixed upon for a harbour, and called Port Canning. The choice of the site, and the scheme altogether, is due to Lord Dalhousie, although the locality now goes by the name of his successor. A railway was sanctioned under the usual system of Indian railways, by guarantee: but for years the scheme hung fire; the Government expecting that the commercial community would carry out a measure in which it was so much interested, the community looking to Government to complete what they had begun. Matters were in this unsatisfactory state when an enterprising merchant of Calcutta, Mr. Schiller, took them in hand, and got up the "Port Canning Reclamation and Dock Company," with the object of securing valuable landed property in the new port and town of Canning and its immediate vicinity, building upon it, constructing docks, wharves, &c. &c. The capital was 1,200,000*l.* in shares at 200*l.* each. The company had not been started long before the 2,000 rupee shares went up to 12,000. But though the railway company runs its trains daily between Calcutta and the port, the trains go and come empty, except when

some traveller is tempted by curiosity to visit the silent city; or some English gentleman from Calcutta, in search of change of air, takes his belongings with him to enjoy the sea-breeze on the Mutlah. There may be seen the strange spectacle of a city without an inhabitant; extensive wharves and docks without a ship, warehouses unoccupied, and not a human being visible upon the quays. It has been said that the Mutlah port does not possess the advantages it was supposed to enjoy when Lord Dalhousie fixed upon the site as the future harbour of one of the richest countries in the world. It is about forty miles from the sea, but the navigation is much less dangerous and difficult than that of the Hooghly, and it is not easy to see any reason stronger than the caprice of fashion, or the objection of sailors to a dull harbour, for the original scheme not being carried out in its entirety. It was thought that the great cyclone of 1864 would prove an illustration of the adage that it is an ill wind that blows no good, and that when the disadvantages of a confined space like the Hooghly for the Calcutta harbour were so fully and so fatally evinced, vessels would eagerly embrace the opportunity afforded by the Mutlah of securing a safer harbour. Unfortunately at the time it was not quite ready, and as these heavy cyclones generally come at an interval of twenty years, the usual mode of reasoning was resorted to; and the merchants argued, the next cyclone would not come in their time, and after that, if a deluge swept over the place, they would be unaffected by it. After passing through the furnace of hot speculation, the Port Canning Company has recently been cooling itself in the law courts, owing to disputes among the directors and shareholders, which are now, however, terminated. Its ultimate fate it is impossible to foretell, but the final abandonment of the magnificent project of its enterprising founder would be almost a national misfortune.[1]

[1] The whole history of the Port Canning scheme has recently been collected and published by Government with the view of encouraging

Two other grand schemes divided the attention of the Calcutta speculators at the same time: one was a Reclamation and Irrigation Company, to reclaim a vast salt

public discussion on the question, and with the forlorn hope that some light may be thrown upon the present dilemma.

It is a strange story, a chapter of mistakes from beginning to end. The panic about the gradual deterioration of the navigation of the Hooghly in 1853, the *fons et origo mali*, was a mistake. But that great statesman, Lord Dalhousie, shared in it, and directed the purchase, at a cost of 11,000 rupees, of the lot of ground on which the existing skeleton of the township was erected, and ordered a survey of the Mutlah estuary, and of the country between it and Calcutta, with a view to the construction of a railway. Major Baker reported favourably of the country for railway works, and Lieut. Ward of the estuary. "There was nothing," he said, "to prevent vessels of the largest tonnage from proceeding up and down the river at all times."

The Government lay the blame of the first movement in the matter on the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, which first raised the alarm of the closing of the river. Within the following two years they had altered their decision, for when the Committee on the Hooghly made their report, it was rather in favour of adopting measures to improve the Hooghly than to carry on the Mutlah scheme. The experience of the thirteen years that have since elapsed has confirmed the impression of the Chamber of Commerce in 1855, and it is the opinion of many competent judges that the navigation of the river, so far from deteriorating year by year, is, if anything, improving.

Meantime, as if nothing could be done right in this business, Government made the discovery that the vendor from whom they had purchased the lot had previously alienated all really beneficiary rights: in short, what he sold he had no right to sell. No explanation is afforded as to how the Government, with their staff of solicitors and Advocate-General, could have made such a blunder; for the expression in the *Gazette*, "that the purchase was a hasty one, and made secretly without the usual forms," only raises a question without answering it.

On the 14th December in the year 1855—a great day in the history of Port Canning—a ship actually made its appearance in Mutlah! This notable event cost the Government, however, 15,000 rupees, which sum was sanctioned for "buoying off the estuary."

On the 12th March a committee of Government officers and "a party of merchants," says the *Gazette*, proceeded to inspect the site of the proposed port and the estuary. "The report of the merchants" and of the committee were alike *couleur de rose*, the committee quoting with something like incredulous scorn a remarkable prophecy of Mr. Piddington, as follows:—

marsh in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, irrigate it, and utilize the sewage of the city upon an area of 130 square miles, capital 600,000*l.*; and the other was a project to

"Supposing the head of the Mutlah were to be fixed upon as a mercantile and naval depôt, everything and everyone must be prepared to see a day when in the midst of the horrors of a hurricane they will find a terrific mass of salt water rolling in or rising upon them with such rapidity that in a few minutes the whole settlement will be inundated to a depth of from five to eighteen feet."

This is precisely what did occur on the occasion of the last cyclone in November 1867.

It will not be necessary to detail the different measures proposed, some to be rejected, others to be carried out up to 1857, during which year the site of the projected town and its vicinity was cleared of jungle, and arrangements made to reclaim 667 acres of land in the immediate neighbourhood. Up to 1858 only thirteen vessels had taken advantage of the port, and the consignees of these ships experienced so much difficulty in disposing of their cargoes that for at least four years not another ship entered the port!

The projectors, however, were not discouraged, and an association called the Mutlah Association was founded in 1858 to further the scheme, which at this stage enjoyed the support of the then Lieut.-Governor of Bengal, Mr. Halliday.

About this time the railway project was started, but Lord Canning and the members of his Government threw cold water on it. The association, however, returned again and again to the charge; and having the support of Mr. Halliday and influential people at work on their behalf in London, the Secretary of State on the 12th November, 1858, authorized a guarantee of five per cent. on £280,000, the *then* estimated cost. When it was found the expenses came to £500,000 instead of £280,000, the Government could not very well help themselves, and having once put their neck into the collar of a guarantee, were obliged to keep it there, and to extend the security to the half-million. The line was opened in 1863, and has never paid its expenses. This year (1867) the company have made it over to the Government.

The next important step was the creation of a municipality under sanction of Mr. Beadon's government, and the transfer to this body, in trust for the town of Canning, of certain lots of land, on which it endeavoured unsuccessfully to raise a debenture loan of 10 lacs at 5½ per cent.

In March 1864, the municipality sent in an estimate to Mr. Beadon of 21 lacs, which were required for various improvements, drainage, roads, &c., and Mr. Beadon so far met their views as to ask for a loan of 4½ lacs to complete improvements of the most urgent kind. Sir C. Trevelyan

reclaim and bring under cultivation the area of the Sunderbuns, the alluvial tract before described between the mouths of the Ganges. Neither of these schemes resulted in anything beyond wild speculation in shares.

The usual placid atmosphere of Madras remained un-

stoutly opposed the measure, but Sir John Lawrence addressed the Secretary of State with a view to obtaining a sanction of a loan of 4½ lacs, on condition that the municipality raised 15½ lacs for themselves.

After a little pressure had been put on Government by the Chamber of Commerce and some Calcutta firms to go on with the scheme without effect, Mr. Schiller came forward with his "Port Canning Land Investment Reclamation and Dock Company (Limited)," in the height of the speculative mania of 1864. Upon the strength of 60 lacs of rupees raised by this company, the municipality claimed the loan of 4½ lacs conditionally promised, and it was granted.

Hitherto, so far as being resorted to by vessels, the Port Canning scheme has proved a failure. There is nothing particularly against the port, the navigation of the Mutlah is good, and although the place is not very healthy, it is clear that as long as the navigation of the Hooghly does not deteriorate, ships will not go to Mutlah. Meantime the municipality has spent much money upon the drainage of the place and upon the construction of metalled roads. The jungle has been cleared, and the land more or less cultivated. The Port Canning Company has erected a spacious hotel, and costly rice mills and one or two other buildings. They have nearly completed the excavation of a boat dock, and have done a good deal for the protection of the foreshore, and have erected some jetties. The Government and the railway company have also erected some buildings.

After giving a history of the whole affair, and describing its present condition, the Commissioner who compiled this report proceeds to call upon Government to determine what to do next, whether to abandon it altogether or to complete it altogether, or to temporize, that is to say, leave it as it is, withdrawing all establishments, and just keeping the place from falling to actual ruin, and let everything remain *in statu quo* till the Hooghly becomes unnavigable, when ships will be only too glad to resort to the new port. On the other hand, if completed, all efforts should be made to carry out the original design. The port should be declared a free port for the next five years, and to set things going, all Government marine establishments should be moved and located there at once. This would cost about 20 lacs.

Another proposition is that made by Mr. Schiller, for the Government to guarantee the interest on £2,000,000 sterling, to be raised by a company to buy up the Sunderbuns, the railway, and the present Port Canning Company.

disturbed by the whirlwind which passed over the share markets of Calcutta and Bombay, and only lent itself to one scheme of utility and importance if it had been but sound—an Irrigation and Canal Company with the magnificent project of carrying water over 400,000 acres, and affording 300 miles of uninterrupted navigation. Unlike the other schemes and projects in Calcutta and Bombay, the Government sanctioned a guarantee of five per cent. upon a capital of 1,000,000*l.* to the Madras Company. Sir William Denison, whose project of supplying agricultural machinery for the use of the natives has been before noticed, had in the meantime become convinced that the introduction of improved agricultural implements would be premature till the people were willing and instructed how to use them, but he adopted and endorsed the views of Sir Charles Trevelyan, who in his rejected budget had advocated the policy of constructing permanent public works by means of loans.

But few political events of importance took place this year. In Upper India, at Peshawur, two valuable lives were sacrificed to the fury of Mussulman fanatics. Major Adam, the Deputy-Commissioner of Peshawur, was suddenly attacked and cut down at the gate of the city, and Lieutenant Ommaney, of the Guide Corps, was shortly after stabbed. Determined to make an example which should crush the growing spirit of assassination, Mr. Macnabb, who had taken Major Adam's place, rode out to the locality where the murderer of Lieutenant Ommaney had been apprehended on the scene of his crime, had him hanged, and his body burnt on the spot, a proceeding which was subsequently fully confirmed by Government.

A wild, fanatical Mussulman, from the regions about Peshawur, has little enough to all appearance to make life dear to him. With neither kith nor kin that he cares about, neither wife nor child, no property, no habitation, no friends, very little clothing, and scanty food, an ex-

change from this world to the next must be a clear gain. A firm belief in the promises of the Koran and the dogmas of his bigoted moollas, or religious instructors, a fertile imagination, a strong will, and physical daring, are elements of savage enthusiasm well calculated to arouse the excitable temperament of the Affghan, and the state of mind thus produced may very often be intensified by a tendency to hereditary insanity. When a mind thus constituted and prepared for crime becomes impressed with the idea that to compass the death of one of the hated English unbelievers is to secure instant admission into the Mahommedan paradise; when a condition of abject poverty will be changed at once to inconceivable bliss—a bliss in which the possession of many wives and plenty of camels, with abundance of good food, are principal ingredients;—when a man of the nature above described, takes home the idea to his heart, dwells upon it, and cherishes it, there is nothing to be wondered at that it develops into action. English officials are to a fault careless about their personal safety. Any man who intends treachery can easily gain access to almost any officer of any rank in India. Their doors are open all day, and generally all night. Some few sleep with loaded revolvers by their side, or under their pillows, but they are exceptions. In the morning and evening rides they are unaccompanied by any escort, and without any weapon of defence. Almost at any hour of the day or night, the hand of the assassin might be directed, with unerring aim, against the life of almost any officer in India. The marvel is, not that assassinations occur, but that they are not much more frequent; especially in and about a country like Peshawur, where there are hundreds of fanatics for whom death has really no terror.

But as in the early part of the century it was found that the capital punishment of criminals had no effect in suppressing Italian brigandage, until the practice was adopted of executing them without allowing the access

of a priest, so the only hope of checking the practice of assassination among the wild fanatics of the Peshawur valley was to adopt some penalty which should affect the state of the criminal in the other world besides dismissing him from this. Accordingly the plan of burning the bodies of assassins was tried, first in the case of the murderer of that distinguished officer Colonel Mackeson, the Commissioner of Peshawur, in 1853. Colonel Mackeson had been stabbed through the lungs and chest while sitting in his verandah reading some official papers. The long, sharp, Affghan knife, a murderous-looking weapon, is pretty sure to deal a mortal blow when struck home with a vigorous hand. The assassin was seized; but utterly regardless of his fate he awaited death with the utmost composure, while his victim lingered for a week enduring the most frightful agonies, from which death at last released him. The murderer was condemned to be hanged; but hanging was to him a comparatively pleasant death—an almost painless entrance into Paradise, the reward in store for the martyr who had compassed the death of the representative of the British Government. That loss was deeply felt, for he was an intrepid officer, much dreaded by the wild Affghan tribes, and with a more extended experience of the frontier than any man then living. But what if, after all, Paradise was not to be attained by this deed of treachery? What if the unbelievers, fertile in resources, could devise a scheme to shut the gates of Heaven against the assassin? The authorities were advised to strike terror and dismay into the hearts of the thousands of Mahommedans who, it was known, sympathised deeply with the murderer. It was to be effected by burning the body after execution, which, according to Mussulman superstition, would shut the gate of Paradise on the criminal. It was done, and with the most salutary results. Simple death by hanging had no terrors for these men, but followed by cremation it had, and ever since the practice has been retained.

A more terrible tragedy occurred in the Western Presidency, owing to the indifference of the senior military authorities, and their habit of sacrificing everything to red tape. It had been resolved to break up a European battery at Mhow, and transfer the men; but the necessary orders could not be issued till the hot weather had set in. There was no pressing necessity at all for the battery to march. It had been in existence for a hundred and four years; and as the season was advanced, and the route would necessarily lie along a road flanked by impenetrable jungle, a hotbed of disease, as it was known that cholera was raging in the villages by which the detachment would have to pass, the departure might have been delayed for nine months or so, till the weather was more favourable for marching. But no! under the burning sun, exposed to the fiery heat of the hot winds, and through this death-bearing country, the hapless band of men, women, and children were ordered to proceed! It was a cruel and wanton sacrifice of human life. Paralysed by the severity of the attack, nineteen corpses of men, women, and children having accumulated in that little camp in a few hours, the officer commanding halted, hesitated, and then returned whence he had started, carrying with his camp the seeds of the disease, in the shape of sick and dying, and leaving the dead behind him in the jungle. The "Mhow death march" would have escaped notice had it not been brought to light by the press; as it was, the authorities were forced to inquire into it, and the officer commanding the division, General Green, was reprimanded and removed. It may be difficult, as in the case of the tragedy at Meean Meer, to fix with certainty on the department or the officer to blame; but here, as there, no doubt can be entertained that, if the Quartermaster-General's department had done its duty, a second tragedy might have been averted.

During the year the examples of the Lahore and Calcutta Exhibitions were pretty generally followed; efforts

being mostly confined to the display suited to an agricultural community. But the Nagpore Exhibition of arts, manufactures, and produce, in the Central Provinces, under the auspices of Sir Richard Temple, at the close of the year, was conspicuous for the success which attended it. The cause of progress was further advanced by the institution of a college of engineering for the instruction of officers and men in that science. Roorkee, near the foot of the Himalayas, and close to the spot where the waters of the Ganges flow into the great canal, was the site selected for the college. Under the presidentship of Major Medley and his staff of professors, Roorkee College, on the plan designed by Sir Hugh Rose, has turned out one of those institutions that are destined to confer a lasting benefit upon the country. It must be further developed to become the West-Point of India; but it is a germ capable of such development, and well worthy of the hearty support and encouragement of Government. The object of this college is to qualify officers and other students for the engineering profession. The former must be under the rank of field officers before they enter. Leave of absence is granted from regimental duty, and the time spent at the college is reckoned as active service. Non-commissioned officers and soldiers of good character can also get leave to be admitted to the college, and a certificate of proficiency is pretty sure to obtain them staff employ in the Public Works department. Civil students, or those who do not belong to the army, must be not under the age of eighteen, and must furnish a certificate of having passed the first examination in arts at the Calcutta University, or an examination equivalent thereto at any recognised college or university; the usual certificate of good character, soundness of constitution, &c. are also required before matriculation. To officers of the army who study and pass the necessary examinations no appointment is guaranteed, but as a general rule all who qualify obtain employ, only they are required to join the

staff corps. To the non-military student there are eight appointments in the Public Works department, guaranteed annually to men properly qualified; and to those who enter into an engagement, on joining the college, to take employment in the service of Government, if found qualified at the end of the course, the instruction is gratuitous. The educational course embraces all the subjects of instruction imparted at schools and universities in England; and the opening in India for the engineering profession is so great that for many years to come Roorkee College will afford to industrious men a sure stepping-stone to a noble profession and a handsome independence. Indeed, in the opening it gives to young men of promise there is no institution in the United Kingdom to be compared to it, saving always, of course, the disadvantage of a residence in India. The scientific engineer in every country must be prepared to meet with difficulties peculiar to its conformation, the character of its rivers, plains, and mountains, the nature of its soil, and of the means, appliances, and resources it affords. To grapple effectually with these, local knowledge is indispensably necessary. Experience is sometimes too dearly paid for by failure, and the instruction imparted at the Roorkee College cannot fail to be highly valuable to the engineer, whether civil or military, whose field of operations is to be confined to India.

A brief *résumé* of the principal events in Indian administrative progress during 1865 would be incomplete without allusion to an admirable address delivered by Sir Bartle Frere to the Sirdars of the Deccan in durbar. Twice he met the Mahratta chiefs, once on the northern, and on the second occasion on the southern limits of their territory. Alluding to traditions of the past, the great deeds and the renown won by the famous heroes of antiquity, Sir Bartle Frere must have won a way into the hearts of those still uncultured descendants of warrior chiefs, who almost within the memory of the present generation were

the chivalry of Southern India. Crediting the sons with the warlike energy of the fathers, the speaker endeavoured to bring before them the contrast between the present and the past—between an age of peace and an age of war—showing them that the same energy and vigour which could win victory in battle could, if rightly directed, win no less valuable victories in peace. "Though it is no longer necessary," he said, "to build forts, you may rival the Pandoo heroes of your early history by cutting roads over mountain gorges and building bridges over unfordable streams. You may emulate Asoka by works of irrigation, or of shelter to travellers, or by building hospitals for the sick and needy, and your name may be remembered with gratitude by future ages when all traditions of the mere fighting chieftains of former days shall have passed away."

CHAPTER XI.

1866.

Famine and irrigation works—Orissa—Official blunders—Sir William Denison—Irrigation and private enterprise—Horrors of famine—The currency—Gold as a standard—The Currency Commission—Lord Napier visits Wynaad—Sir Bartle Frere resigns—The Bishop of Calcutta—The Indian chaplains—Dr. Cotton's untimely fate—His influence, usefulness, and character—The High Courts.

IF it be true that the horrors of famine may be averted in India by artificial irrigation, the fact that during a review of the history of that country for ten years it has been my lot to record two visitations of that terrible scourge becomes one of much significance. The first visitation within the period embraced in these pages was in 1860-61; the second was in 1866; and the record of 1868 closed with the gloomy prospect of a severe famine over at least one-third of the continent of India. Happily the fall of rain, long withheld in the early part of 1869, has in a great measure belied these forebodings, but in spite of this the distress has been very great, and India has had a very narrow escape of a third famine within the decade. These famines are the most awful visitations. An earthquake, which is destructive enough to form an epoch or a landmark in history, such as the great convulsion at Antioch or at Lisbon, and the recent catastrophe in Peru, occurs once or twice in a century, and carries off its twenty thousand, as in South America, and its sixty thousand, as at Lisbon, and its two hundred and sixty thousand, as at Antioch. There is always a tendency to exaggerate estimates of

great numbers in connexion with striking historical events; and the longer the interval since the occurrence, the greater is the opportunity for the imagination of successive writers to add to the previous statement. It will be quite sufficient for the purpose of illustration to suppose that the earthquake at Antioch destroyed no more than double the number that fell at Lisbon. Suppose these visitations occurred three times within ten years in the same country, and suppose further, that the researches of science had disclosed a means for averting the calamity, what would be said of a government or a people that in spite of this discovery, and in face of this ever-recurring calamity, persisted in doing nothing to avert it? When the earth opens and swallows up a dense crowd of men, women, and children, and the sea rushes in with overpowering force, and sweeps away its thousands, or when buildings fall and crush the trembling wretches who have sought shelter under their walls, there is little of physical suffering for those who perish, and the after consequences on the survivors are not to be dreaded; but when famine comes, the victims who fall under it die by the most horrible of deaths, and the amount of human suffering is perfectly appalling. Added to which, it is invariably followed by an outbreak of epidemic disease—either cholera or fever. The sufferers by earthquake or by war are reckoned by the thousand, but the victims of these Indian famines by the million! Yet there can be no question that, unlike the earthquake, unlike epidemics, even unlike war, this terrible scourge might be certainly to a great extent, if not entirely, averted.

To the south-west of Calcutta, connecting the Bengal and Madras Presidency, there is a large tract of country on the western coast, washed by the Bay of Bengal, called Orissa. It is intersected by the great Mahanuddy river, which flows by the city of Cuttack into the Bay. In former years this country was inhabited by an industrious and wealthy population. In the time of Akbar it was perhaps at the

height of its prosperity, and the large and populous cities, the temples, the bathing places, the gardens, and buildings on the banks of the Great River,[1] rivalled those which adorned the holy Ganges. Many traces of its former magnificence are found in the shape of ruins now overgrown with jungle. It is not likely that the Mahommedan conqueror would depopulate and destroy a country incorporated by conquest with the empire; but that race of plunderers, the Mahrattas, who followed, were less scrupulous, and partly under the oppressions exercised by them, partly by misrule, and mainly from natural causes, Orissa has sunk during the last century or two from a populous and thriving country to the condition in which we now behold it, inhabited by an indolent and superstitious pauper population, said to number five millions, scattered over an area the size of England and Wales.[2]

Owing to a failure of the usual rains in 1865, great scarcity, developing as time went on into actual want, began to be felt in Orissa in the latter part of the year. In the early part of 1866, the distress was so great that the East India Irrigation Company began importing rice to feed their people. As usual, the alarm, being given by the non-official Europeans residing in the district, and by the press, was disregarded by the Government; and after the scourge had fallen, after about a million of human beings had perished miserably from want, a commission was appointed to investigate the extraordinary apathy evinced by the local government, and their report, with the minutes and official comments together, makes up a blue book of two thick volumes, which was published in 1867. The cries of the suffering people, and the indignant remonstrances of the press, reached England, and the Secretary of State called on the Viceroy for explanation. The old question was asked who was to blame, and the public was amused and scandalized by a triangular duel

[1] Mahanuddy, or "The Great River." [2] *Friend of India.*

between the Viceroy, the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir Cecil Beadon, and the Calcutta Board of Revenue; the local authorities in Orissa itself coming in for occasional stray shots from all three.

The Viceroy, in a minute dated 20th April, 1866, concurs with the commission in their opinion, the record of which reads almost like a grim satire, "that timely measures were not taken," and that "valid reasons were not adduced for this neglect." "It seems to me," the Viceroy adds, "beyond all doubt that there was a want of foresight, perception, and precaution, regarding the impending calamity, which was quite unaccountable even when allowance has been made for the fact alluded to by the commission that the officers under the Government of Bengal had with scarcely an exception no previous personal experience of the character of famines."

This must be regarded, however, at best as but a poor attempt to shuffle off the responsibility. The Supreme Government were neither deaf, nor blind, nor dumb; they could read the papers, they could not help hearing what was being talked about everywhere. If a "terrible calamity" was impending, and the Local Government were taking no effective measures to meet it, were the Supreme Government tied hand and foot that they could not remonstrate? Or was it that, according to tradition and custom, the regulations of the service, and red tape, an impending calamity must be allowed to fall, and tens of thousands of human beings be allowed to perish, because the "impending calamity" had not been represented to be "impending" through the "usual channels?"

We have seen that in January the East Indian Irrigation Company found it necessary to import food for their establishments. Mr. Beadon visited Orissa himself in February, and after his return saw the Viceroy and related the result of his visit, and the Viceroy remarks, "that it was after hearing all which he (Mr. Beadon) had to tell me of the state of things in Orissa that I came to the con-

clusion that all which appeared to be necessary had been done for the country." To which Mr. Beadon somewhat testily replies in the Appendix to the Blue Book, at p. 4: "If His Excellency means to say that he does not believe what I have said, and what every witness examined on this point by the Commission has said, there can be no further room for discussion. But the fact is, as shown abundantly by the Commissioners' inquiry, that at that time no one feared that there was not food enough in the province to last till next harvest." It is clear, however, that the Irrigation Company did know there was fear of an absolute failure of food. Sir John Lawrence remarked that Mr. Beadon should have attached more weight to the views of those who held an opinion contrary to the officials, such as Colonel Rundall, the Company's engineer, and others, and have helped them to combat the opinion of the Board of Revenue, to convince them of the real state of the Province.

The inaction of the Board is thus excused by Mr. Grote, the senior member. At par. 20 of the Appendix, he says: "We have been charged with inaction in having failed to import food despite the warnings of the non-official community of the Province conveyed to us through the press. On such statements, *all unsupported as they were by those of our own local officers*, we have been held to blame for not doing in February and March what we had at last to do in May." The reasoning by which the Board was led to their conclusion is curious. They refused to import food into Orissa because Sir Charles Trevelyan's account of the second Irish famine in 1846, published in the *Edinburgh Review*, No. 175, of 1848, shows that "the Government of that day throughout stated interference inexpedient in a crisis assumed to be similar to this." Mr. Grote then quotes the whole passage upon which he relies, and adds:

"I have made this quotation in the belief that it will explain and justify our hesitation to recommend a depar-

ture from rules and principles which paragraph 8 of the Secretary of State's despatch admits should not be lightly interfered with," (the interference by Government with the ordinary operations of trade;) "the question which so anxiously occupied the Home Government in 1846, and which was finally dealt with by adopting measures confining their interference in Ireland to a minimum, did not till the end of May come before us in the same form. It was then only that the actual crisis presented itself to the Commissioner of Cuttack, and that with him we saw the necessity for sacrificing every consideration" (even the *Edinburgh Review* of 1848) "to that of humanity."

In April the Supreme Government betook itself to Simla, and shortly after Mr. Beadon retired to Darjeeling, and the people in Orissa perished in thousands for lack of food.

The episode is worthy of this detail because it illustrates most forcibly the prominent defect in the constitution of the Indian Government, the excess of its bureaucratic element, its bondage to red tape, its exaggerated jealousy of external influence or non-official interference, and the contracting effect upon the mind which long years spent in the official groove of departmental routine inevitably imparts.

While Mr. Beadon, the old Bengal civilian promoted to Lieutenant-Governor, kept himself cool at Darjeeling, and only repaired to Calcutta, and that for a short time after the setting-in of the rains, in obedience to the order of the Viceroy, Lord Napier, the Governor of Madras, himself went, in the scorching month of May, to that portion of the district affected with famine which lay within the limits of his charge, and deputed the best officers he could find to other parts; and doubtless Sir William Denison would have done the same, had he been then in office, but he had recently retired on the expiration of his time, and had been succeeded by Lord Napier. It is another proof added to those we see daily in India, that an official career

is not the best school for governors of provinces. The famine raged the whole year, and many orphans were thrown upon public charity, most of whom were transferred to Calcutta to be brought up in the various charitable institutions in that city.

After getting several prizes for fine celery and onions, and being equally fortunate in the more refined department of flowers and plants at the Horticultural Exhibition, in the beginning of the year, Sir W. Denison took leave of Madras. It would be unreasonable at any time to charge with indolence a man of well-known scientific acquirements, who had already been successful in his career as Governor in Australia; but the press of Madras found fault with Sir W. Denison for indifference to public duties, although, when suddenly called upon to act for once during his Indian career in the face of a formidable crisis, he had exhibited all the genius of a great administrator. It is impossible to say what may not have been the consequence had Sir William Denison not been guided by his own sense of what was right, and had he not depended on his own judgment rather than on the experience and advice of others; if he had shirked responsibility, and confirmed the timid counsels of those who ought to have known India a good deal better than he. His firmness, at any rate, saved the country from a long and dangerous campaign, from political excitement which might have thrown it back a quarter of a century in as many months, and awakened afresh the spirit of disaffection which we fancied had been lulled into a feverish and passing slumber, but which was even then, though we knew it not, awake and active. In his own Presidency, there was little to do that might not be done quietly and without any display of statesmanship, and it is probable that Sir William and Lady Denison's influence was none the less beneficially felt in their respective circles because unattended with much *éclat*. The Governor was not wont to sound a trumpet before him when he went about his public duties; and the story

which is told of him, that during the few weeks he held office as Viceroy, after Lord Elgin's death, he took the opportunity of calling up all the cases which had been referred from Madras to the Supreme Government (some of them, no doubt, appeals from his own decisions) and settled them all, shows at any rate that he was alive to the interests of his own government, and could work with a will when there was necessity, as well as accept responsibility. He was indefatigable in his efforts to advance the cause of education, and if he kept the wheels of the state machine in very tolerable working order, revolving at exactly the same speed as his predecessor had left them, perhaps he thought he had accomplished all that was required of him. For once, during a three weeks' term of office as Viceroy, a tremendous responsibility was thrown upon him, which he cheerfully accepted, and by his firmness and judgment saved India from a very heavy political disaster. That he should have received no recognition for such an act will not be wondered at by those who know and can appreciate the influence of the Indian Civil Service. Lord Canning sacrificed India to his civilian counsellors; Sir William Denison saved at any rate the upper half of it in spite of them.

The Governorship of Madras was not the only office which changed hands this year. During the period three men successively filled the post of Secretary of State, or the Wuzeer i Hind, as the natives somewhat euphoniously style that official. Sir Charles Wood was promoted to the Upper House as Lord Halifax, and was succeeded by Earl de Grey and Ripon, who was a short time after, in consequence of a change of ministry, succeeded by Lord Cranborne.

Two questions of vast importance and great interest came under discussion during this year. One of these, whether extensive irrigation works should be undertaken by the Government, or made over to private enterprise, came prominently into notice in connexion with the Orissa

famine; the other, the currency question, had been under discussion by the local and the home governments and the press in India ever since Mr. Wilson had initiated reform in the finances, and it was this year submitted to a committee consisting of Sir W. Mansfield and the Hon. H. S. Maine, Mr. W. Grey (afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal), Messrs. Cowie, Ross, Lushington, Halford, and Mr. George Dickens, manager of the Bank of Bengal. A vast amount of evidence was taken by the committee, but for some reason or other they refused to publish it as it was taken daily; and their report, which came out towards the close of the year, was the most meagre and disappointing production of the kind ever seen.

There appears to have been a great deal of difference of opinion as to whether irrigation works were legitimately the exclusive department of Government, or whether they formed a fair field for private enterprise. Lord Canning clearly was of opinion that private enterprise should be encouraged in the construction of irrigation works, for it was he who sanctioned the East India Irrigation Company's operations in Orissa, where they undertook a grand scheme for the irrigation of the delta of the Mahanuddy and the adjoining country. They only commenced, however, in November 1863, and by the time the famine began they had progressed almost, but unfortunately not quite, up to the point where their canal might have been brought into partial use.[1] Under the pressure of the famine, however, they made fresh exertions, and by January could undertake to fertilize 10,000 acres, and within the following six months the canal was capable of watering 30,000 more.[2] Unhappily, owing to the apprehension caused by the approach just at that time of a new land revenue settlement, and an intimation from Mr. Beadon that the indirect result of irrigation would be an increased land-tax, the inhabitants would not take advantage of the oppor-

[1] The Blue Book on the Orissa Famine, vol. i. p. 19.

[2] *The Friend of India.*

tunities offered them. The Commissioner of Orissa, Mr. Ravenshaw, subsequently in a proclamation told the people that irrigated land would be treated as unirrigated in any future settlement; and then, as if to awaken as much anxiety and distrust as possible on a question so important to the people, the Commissioner was told that he had exceeded his authority in making such a declaration, and that the pledge should have been confined to the next approaching settlement.

Lord Stanley had also encouraged private enterprise in irrigation works by giving the Madras Irrigation Company a guarantee of five per cent. on a million sterling for twenty-five years. This company, it will be recollected, was started at Madras during the time of the great speculation mania at Bombay, in 1864. It was an unfortunate essay of Lord Stanley's, for after spending their million the Company found they had nothing to go on with; a further advance of 600,000*l.* was sanctioned by the Home Government; a condition, however, attached to the concession being, that should the canal not be open by 1871 the works are to be made over to the Government.

Sir Charles Wood, however, and his council appear to have been in doubt all this time whether it was a sound and prudent policy to entrust irrigation works to private enterprise, and in 1863 the opinions of the heads of the local governments were called for. Some were strongly against private enterprise being entrusted with works of this nature, and maintained that they were the exclusive province of the Government; others held that, under certain conditions and restrictions, private companies might fairly be called on to assist. Mr. Maine argued very strongly against private enterprise, saying that in Europe the question could never even have come under discussion, because it was a principle universally acknowledged in all countries where public affairs are conducted in accordance with the generally accepted principles of jurisprudence, that water, like air and light, can never become private property. Sir

John Lawrence objected to private enterprise mainly on the ground that it would be putting the population of the country in the power of a joint stock company; for when the agricultural population had come to depend upon canals for irrigating their fields, they would in fact be dependent for the means of existence upon the proprietors of canals.

It is much to be regretted that the prosecution of irrigation works was delayed, owing to this discussion. Until Government had made up its mind who should construct the canals they were left unmade, and the people exposed to the risk of ever-recurring famines. Mr. Massey went into the question in his financial statement for 1866-7, and stated the case very fairly, he himself being of opinion that Government and private enterprise might co-operate, which is a commonsense practical view of the case. To the Viceroy's argument, that it would be dangerous to abandon the natives to the mercy of a private company, Mr. Massey replied, that the country had for a century been governed by a trading corporation, and he was not aware that the East India Company's administration had contrasted unfavourably, either in generosity or humanity, with that of the Queen; that it is not a question as to who shall realize the profits, but one of much greater magnitude, involving the actual life of the people. And for irrigation works to be postponed while Government is haggling about the profits is as inhuman as it is impolitic.

Even so long ago as 1861, Mr. Laing in council remarked: "That Colonel Cotton had said that water was gold in India, but that it was more than gold—it was life." Yet for years the construction of works of irrigation had been suspended, while Secretaries of State, and Governors, and Members of Council wrote volumes of despatches to ventilate the question whether such works should be undertaken by Government or made over to private enterprise. In the two cases in which the experiment has been tried,

the conclusion has undoubtedly been unfavourable to the construction of extensive irrigation works by private enterprise. The Madras Irrigation Company started with a million capital guaranteed, and by the end of the first year was forced to apply for a guarantee for a further sum of 600,000*l.*, with the prospect after all of having to hand over their unfinished works, in accordance with the agreement to that effect, to Government. And the East India Irrigation Company, which commenced work in Orissa, was obliged to come to Government for assistance to prevent the sudden stoppage of their operations—a calamity which the Commission represented would cause great loss to the Province —and eventually to make over to Government their unfinished work, stock, and plant.

In addition to the subject of agency is one of construction. Unfortunately, there is a great difference of opinion between two schools of engineers in India, the Madras and the Bengal school. As long as the engineers of each province confined themselves to their own field, with whose peculiarities and requirements they were familiar, all went well; but, in an evil hour, in consequence of a reported failure of the Ganges canal, which in reality was not a failure, a Madras engineer of great repute was sent to examine and report on it. The general principles of engineering are applicable everywhere, and under all circumstances, but it is easily conceivable that there should be features in the character of rivers in Madras which are not met with in those of Upper India—a theory put forward by Mr. Login, C.E., and long scouted by his official superiors, but eventually proved by him to be sound; and this simple fact will account for much of the difference of opinion that has prevailed among eminent men. In the budget debate of 1867, Mr. Massey speaks of this unhappy dispute in the following terms:—

"We have had differences of opinion, differences very likely to arise between eminent engineers, as to the mode in which these works should be carried on. I should rather say there has been a conflict

of opinion between the two schools of engineers on the subject. While that conflict was raging, it was difficult for an unskilled Government to take upon itself to pronounce an opinion. But steps have been taken to reconcile the conflicting opinions, and I am sure that the ability and zeal which actuate the professional men who have given their time and talents to projects of this magnitude may be relied on to remove minor causes of difference, and to reach some practical conclusion advantageous to the country, conducive to their own fame, and satisfactory to the Government."

No pen, no language, can do justice to the overwhelming importance of this subject. Three famines in ten years will carry off four millions of people at least; yet in the time canals might be constructed which would keep those four millions alive. And it has been shown, on incontestable evidence, that irrigation works may be constructed at no loss; on the contrary, at a certain profit. But nothing was done, because Government was uncertain whether the interloping spirit of private enterprise should be allowed to interfere,—whether abstract principles of jurisprudence justified them in getting others to do absolutely necessary works which they could not do, at least had not done, for themselves, while their officers were squabbling about gradients and cubic feet of silt. It was as if two surgeons allowed a patient to die of hæmorrhage while they disputed about the kind of bandage that should be used to stop the bleeding.

The Government have, however, at last awakened to a sense of their responsibility on this head; and by the appointment of Colonel Strachey as Superintendent of Irrigation, and by other measures, indicated a determination to put their shoulder to the wheel. A brief statement of the projects now in course of being carried out was made by Sir John Lawrence to the Council on the 31st March, 1868, and I cannot do better than quote His Excellency's own words on the occasion. He prefaced his statement with remarking that, in the first place, irrigation works were by no means so profitable as had been represented, at any rate in many parts of India; and secondly,

that however anxious the Government might be to construct them, and although the principle had been fully established that they could borrow for the purpose of carrying out reproductive works like canals, yet the utmost care was necessary that more designs should not be taken in hand than could be carried out with due regard to economy and to their resources, which consisted of borrowed money; and thirdly, that they had been a good deal hampered by the want of properly instructed and experienced officers to superintend the operations.

His Excellency said:

"To show generally what had been done in the way of pushing on projects during the last year, the operations of each province would be briefly mentioned.

"Beginning with the Punjab, they had the new project for a canal from the Sutlej, roughly estimated to cost about two millions, which would immediately receive sanction to admit of the exact line being marked out on the ground, and the detailed designs and estimates of the works prepared. It might be hoped that work would actually be begun next season.

"Next, the remodelling of the Bari Doab Canal, with a view to increase the supply of water from the Beas River, was under consideration. Also a large project for improving the Western Jumna Canal, and for extending it into the arid districts near Sirsa.

"Surveys had also been put in hand for projects for canals to be derived from the Sutlej during the monsoon months, for the country between Firozpur and Multan; and like surveys were also going on for extending the canals on the right bank of the Indus.

"There had been some difficulty in finding qualified officers for all these surveys, but they were believed to be going on satisfactorily.

"In the North-West Provinces, a new project for a canal from the Jumna, to leave it below Delhi, and to irrigate the Agra and Muttura districts, at a cost of about half-a-million, had been sanctioned in the rough, and was already in great part marked out. The remodelling of the Ganges Canal, and the arrangements needed for making it a complete line of navigation throughout its length, were in progress, and some part of the designs had already been received. When these and other contemplated navigation lines were carried out, there would be continuous water communication from Lahore to Delhi, Agra, the Doab, and on into Oudh.

"Plans were under consideration for carrying out extensive works in Rohilkhand, on the north of the Ganges, which would combine irrigation and drainage.

"Engineers were also at work in Bundalkhand, preparing projects for utilizing the water of the three chief rivers which flowed through that province. In connexion with these operations, it would be seen whether a further supply of water could be secured from the lower part of the Jumna to be led to Allahabad.

"In the province of Oude surveys were also in progress for a canal to be taken from the Sarda. This would be a first-class work, not smaller than the Ganges Canal, and might probably cost two millions or more.

"In Bengal, on the north, the engineers were at work in Tirhoot, with a view of utilizing the waters of the Gandak River. Also surveys had been begun in Nuddea, which might lead to the formation of a canal, often talked of, to be led from the Ganges near Rajmahal, perhaps as far as Calcutta. A project was well advanced for a canal from the Damoodah, to serve as a navigation and irrigation work, and communicating between the coal district at Rániganj and the Hooghly. Other designs on some of the other neighbouring rivers of this part of Bengal were also in hand.

"The canal from the Soane, which was to have been carried out by the East India Irrigation Company, would probably be handed over to the Government for execution, and arrangements would be made for beginning it as soon as the negotiations with the company would permit. The works of the same company in Orissa continued to progress.

"In the Central Provinces, an officer had been obtained from Madras for the special prosecution of irrigation works, and two promising projects were well forward, and might probably be in a fit state for submission to the Government of India for sanction in a month or two.

"In Madras, the attention of the engineers had been specially directed to the preparation of projects for the completion of the great works connected with the anicuts on the Godaveri and Kistna. Portions of these had already received sanction, and the rest were expected soon to be sent up. Two very large tank works were in course of execution near Madras itself. A large project had lately been sanctioned for the extension of the irrigation from the Pennair River in the Nellore district.

"A survey had also been carried out for a canal to turn the water of a river rising in the higher ranges of the Travancore mountains into the plain of Madura. There were considerable difficulties to be encountered in the realization of this scheme, but it was hoped that they might be satisfactorily met.

"Other projects of value were under preparation in the Madras Presidency, and important improvements in the Cauveri works were also contemplated.

"In the Bombay Presidency, beginning with Sind, a very large

scheme for a canal from the Indus at Roree, to irrigate the Hyderabad collectorate, was under consideration. Other projects were in hand for improvements of other existing canals in that province.

"In Guzarát, a project for a canal from the Tapté had just been sent up for sanction by the Government of India, and another project was believed to be in preparation for another valuable work.

"In Khandeish, one work of importance was already in operation, and the engineers were employed in preparing for its extension.

"In the Deccan there were numerous projects in various stages of progress, and several new schemes of magnitude almost ready for final submission to Government.

"Lastly, in Mysore, additional vigour had been given to the progress of irrigation works, and it had been proposed to apply a large sum from the accumulated surplus revenues, in excess of the annual grants from current income, to the prosecution of these works.

"To strengthen the hands of the Government in respect to engineers for employment on the new works, which would soon begin to be ready for execution, the Secretary of State had, at the urgent request of the Government of India, sent out to this country thirty civil engineers of experience, the greater part of whom had already arrived, and would be immediately distributed among the local governments, where their services were likely to be most needed. Increased numbers of young officers would also be appointed by the Secretary of State in the course of the coming year, so that it was hoped that no further difficulty of importance would be met with from this quarter.

"Generally, it might be affirmed that the Government of India had taken all necessary steps to inaugurate the policy of extending irrigation to the utmost. It had already established in every province a separate head to the Irrigation Branch of the Public Works Department, and would be ready to consider favourably every proposal having in view the improved administration of this class of works. It was the peculiar duty of the Government of India to see that all proper precautions were taken to prevent the hasty or wasteful application of borrowed money to new works; and at the same time to provide all needful funds for the prosecution of works of ascertained utility and satisfactory design; and till the present time, it was believed that no question had arisen as to the manner in which these duties had been performed by it."

If, as Sir Erskine Parry says in the minute already quoted, so many disasters have arisen in India from the error of clothing vague theories in the rigid garb of law, it may be safely asserted that many failures have occurred from an indiscriminate application of general principles of political economy, which are held to be indisputable

axioms in Europe, to a country like India, where the conditions under which those principles are to come into play are wholly different. Sir Charles Wood was entitled to speak with authority on the Currency, from the fact of his having been chairman of the parliamentary committee of the Bank Act of 1841, and from the part he took in the discussions on the Bank of England Charter Act in 1844, as well as from the experience he acquired while Chancellor of the Exchequer in the monetary crisis of 1847.[1] Of Mr. Wilson's, and his successor Mr. Laing's, capacity to deal with a subject of this nature there is no need to speak; yet it is not too much to say that the measures which were inaugurated by the experience of all these eminent men have been failures; and if the reason be asked, the answer is plain, because their experience was gained exclusively in England and applied to India. Once or twice the Indian Government has had to ship back to England gold bullion—sovereigns sent out from England to be forced upon the country; it was found that outside Calcutta every sovereign was worth a little more than the ten rupees it was intended to represent, the value increasing with the distance from the Presidency, and therefore, as a standard currency, it was useless. When Mr. Wilson first came out, there were in circulation, besides the rupee, a copper coin of standard value and gold mohurs, which can scarcely be said to have been in circulation, as they have not been received at Government treasuries in payment of revenue since 1852, and the native coins fetch a variable price in the market. There was, besides, a limited circulation of bank notes issued by the three banks at Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, in which banks Government were shareholders, and were represented in the board of directors by their own officers.

Sir Charles Wood's views were fully explained to Mr.

[1] "Sir Charles Wood's Administration of Indian Affairs." By Algernon West, late Private Secretary.

Wilson before he left England, and after his arrival in India he drew up a minute on the subject of the Currency, in which he recommended three principal measures: to withdraw the paper then in circulation; to issue in lieu of it Government notes at the three cities—Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, and in circles in the interior, the note of each circle being a legal tender within its limits, and payable on demand at the central treasury and in the presidency cities; and that coin or bullion, to the extent of one-third of the notes issued, should be retained, and Government securities held for the remainder.

Mr. Wilson did not live to complete the scheme; and during Mr. Laing's tenure of office the Government of India passed the Currency Bill, deviating from Mr. Wilson's suggestion, which had Sir Charles Wood's cordial support, in making the banks in the presidency cities and their agencies, the centres of issue and exchange of notes. To compensate the banks for the loss of privilege of issuing their own notes, they were made treasurers to the Government, and entrusted with the management of the Government debt. This change in the constitution of the banks necessitated a new charter, in which the Government of India inserted a provision that was not in accordance with Sir Charles Wood's instructions, viz. a clause authorizing them to draw bills payable out of India, and to purchase bills for the purpose of providing funds to meet their drafts. Sir Charles Trevelyan, who was a more staunch supporter of Sir Charles Wood's views than either of his predecessors, succeeded in inducing the Government of India to agree to cancel that part of the agreement.

As regards a gold currency the main difficulty of introducing it is, that the State loans, and indeed all other public engagements of a commercial character in India, have been contracted in silver, and it would be impossible to have two standard currencies in circulation—a gold and silver one; and as the introduction of a gold standard would necessarily affect the value of silver, it would be

impracticable to introduce it without causing the utmost possible confusion in the account between debtor and creditor. Mr. Wilson underrated the advantage of a gold currency, and held firmly to the opinion that a widely circulated paper currency was what India principally required. Experience very soon showed that a paper currency in India was an exotic which it would require many years to acclimatize; it would not at once take root, though supported by the soundest principles of political economists. In 1864 the Chamber of Commerce of the three presidency cities addressed the Government, urging on them to introduce a gold currency. After much discussion the Government of India supported Sir Charles Trevelyan in suggesting that British and Australian sovereigns and half-sovereigns should be made a legal tender. Sir Charles Wood took a more correct view of the case than even the local government, borne away a little perhaps by the urgent representations of the Chamber of Commerce, whose unanimous opinion carried necessarily great weight with it. He pointed out that, at the existing price of silver, a sovereign was worth more than ten rupees; and that to make it a legal tender for less by law would be useless. Yet he allowed the experiment to be tried. It was tried with the result already seen, the sovereigns had to be shipped back again to England.

At the same time the Government, by a notification dated 13th November, 1864, intimated that English and Australian sovereigns and half-sovereigns would be received at all treasuries in payment of Government demands at par value. This order has recently (October 1868) been cancelled, and in substitution for it another notification issued, dated 31st of October, to the effect that the sovereign and half-sovereign will be received at ten rupees four annas, and five rupees two annas respectively, and that they will be issued, when available, at the same rate. When, however, sovereigns are selling in the market, as they were then, at ten annas, or one shilling

and threepence each, it is not likely that they will be paid into the treasury at four annas, or sixpence over the par value of ten rupees.

No further steps were taken till the Currency Commission was appointed in 1866, and much disappointment was occasioned by their report, in that they had been expected to compass impossibilities, and had not done so.

They recommended certain alterations in minor details, such as separating the offices of Currency Commissioner and Mastership of the Mint, advising Accountants-General not to exhibit too great a jealousy of remittances in notes, &c. The nature of their recommendations excited as much ridicule as indignation, for it was expected that the great authorities composing the commissions would solve the difficult problem which had been puzzling successive Secretaries of State and Finance Ministers for the last seven years. As regards the gold currency they remark that the following points seem to be generally and firmly established :—1. That gold coins are generally at par, and above par, both in the presidency cities and the Mofussil; a fact which was patent to every one. 2. That they are sought for in the provinces by merchants and bankers, and as a medium of reserve wealth by the people at large. 3. That when gold is below par, it is either because it is practically unknown, or because people are too poor to create a demand for it. 4. That the demand for a gold currency is unanimous throughout the country. 5. That gold coins of the value of 15, 10, and 5 rupees would find more favour than notes of that value; and that the introduction of gold would facilitate the establishment of the currency notes, outlying treasuries being assisted by such a measure towards the convertibility of the notes. 6. That the opinion seemed unanimous that the currency should consist of gold, silver, and paper.

The Commission proceed to say that, with the general wish of the country before them, they cannot hesitate to express a hope that the Government of India will persevere

in the policy which was recommended for the approval of the Secretary of State two years ago, to cause a legal tender of gold to be a part of the currency arrangements of India, that which is believed to have been erroneous in the original proposal being modified.

The Commission conclude with the suggestion, that as the institution of the paper currency in 1861 was eminently of a tentative character, and introduced with excessive caution, its partial failure should not be taken as a criterion of the success which may ultimately be anticipated. It is unreasonable to expect large or perfect results from what has hitherto been but an experiment.

It is not easy to see how the difficulty which Mr. Wilson observed on the very threshold is to be evaded. All commercial transactions, including state loans, have been in rupees, and debts so contracted must be liquidated in like manner. The forcible introduction, therefore, of either a gold or a paper currency seems to be an impossibility. No Englishman can the least realize the intensely conservative nature of the Indian character. There is no section of the human race, not excepting the Chinese, who are so resolutely opposed to anything in the shape of innovation. However plainly you may demonstrate to them the advantage of a gold and paper currency over silver, they will not avail themselves of that advantage; and if you force it on them, they will resent it with that spirit of sullen obstinacy and passive resistance which forms so marked a feature in the Oriental character. Legislation will not change men's natures, education may. And here, as in everything else, we revert to the same point to which every consideration connected with the fiscal, political, and commercial condition of India ultimately leads us, and we must look to the schoolmaster to sweep away all obstacles in the path of progress. By degrees, natives will become accustomed to gold and paper currency, and by degrees they will begin to use them. No better arrangement than that of circles for the paper currency can possibly be

introduced. A universal note for all India, or for one presidency, is an impossibility, because the Government would have to maintain a thousand banks,—every treasury at every little station or town in the Mofussil would become a small bank, and must be prepared at any time to cash the notes. This would involve an unmanageable establishment, over which supervision would be impracticable. If the note is not cashable at every place where there is a treasury, it will have to be discounted, and will not pass at par except in presidency cities, and cannot therefore be made a legal tender. But if British sovereigns and half-sovereigns are introduced and set afloat without any attempt to assign an artificial value to them, they will by degrees get into circulation, not as a standard currency of course, but as a subsidiary currency. We must not expect much progress in the present generation; but in the next generation, and when the results of the educational efforts now in operation come to be felt, our successors will find the paper currency in free circulation, and the gold also will by that time have come, gradually, so far into use that it may be possible then to assign to it a standard value by law.

Above all things, crude and rash experiments by amateur financiers with the circulating medium of the country should be avoided.

Lord Napier, towards the close of the year, proceeded on a tour of inspection into the district of Wynaad, which is the great seat in the Madras presidency, next to the Neilgherries, or perhaps even before them, for European enterprise. It is for the greater part table-land, the most elevated section of the whole district not being more than 3,000 feet above the sea-level. It was first selected as a suitable spot for coffee cultivation as long ago as 1840. When Lord Napier visited it, the Europeans engaged in this and other kindred pursuits numbered upwards of 200. It was visited by Sir W. Denison once at least during his tenure of office, but the constant cry which the settlers

incessantly uttered for roads had never been heard. In 1864, the planters having formed themselves into an association, held a meeting to discuss their grievances, and consider how they should bring them to the notice of Government with the best chance of redress. Their efforts, however, were attended with no satisfactory results. Roads there were none. The coffee had to be transported to the coast for exportation on bullocks, or by coolies; and grain for the use of the latter, who to the number of 35,000 were employed on the plantations, had to be imported in a similar manner. Lord Napier had an interview with the planters' association, and assured them that the spectacle of English enterprise which he then witnessed was one which no governor could behold uninterested and unmoved. He promised them roads, and redress of many other grievances, of which they had, as he could not but acknowledge, not without justice complained.

In the latter part of the year, Sir Bartle Frere prepared to make over his charge to his successor, the Right Hon. Seymour Fitzgerald, and return to England, where he was shortly afterwards appointed to counsel. The popularity which attended the first period of Sir Bartle Frere's administration of Bombay did not accompany it to the end, yet he left India with a reputation scarcely perhaps surpassed by any of his contemporaries. He first came prominently into notice in Sind, where he held the office of Chief Commissioner during the anxieties of 1857, and subsequent years. As Governor of Bombay he fully sustained the reputation he had earned in the small non-regulation province. With energy and aptitude for business, with liberal views, and a great experience of the country, he put himself at the head of every movement which had for its object the welfare of the native community, or which was inspired by the spirit of progress. For a while he seemed to have solved the impossible problem of an Indian governor being popular with all classes, natives and Europeans, official and non-official.

With military officers and subordinates in civil employ, he was an especial favourite, for he had fought their battle vigorously in the height of the monetary crisis, and set forth their claims to some increase of salary to enable them to meet the unusual pressure upon their resources. With the native community he fell into disgrace on account of the appointment to the bench of Mr. Justice Anstey, who made himself so unpopular that the natives held a public meeting, at which a memorial was drawn up to the Secretary of State praying for his removal. As the chief ground of their dissatisfaction, however, was the severity of his sentences on fraudulent speculators in the height of the share gambling mania, their memorial met with but little favour, and the petitioners for the time turned the tide of their disappointed wrath upon the Governor.

India, which has been very prolific in great statesmen and warriors, has made but few additions to the roll of names illustrious in literature or science. The result is no other than we should expect. Anglo-Indians are too busy as a rule to engage in literary or scientific pursuits, and the English clergy are so small a body, and the prizes open to them so little tempting, that it is not to be wondered at that few men of note have come forward from among them. Outside the limits of the Established Church there are names, household words in India, which will be venerated wherever the story of missionary enterprise is listened to with any interest. Within the Church, Bishop Heber acquired a reputation for his zeal, and he was perhaps the first writer who in any sense brought India home to the English mind. He was the first to effect an introduction between the two countries, and give rise to an acquaintanceship which has, however, hardly yet ripened into intimacy. Dr. Daniel Wilson, who was Dr. Cotton's immediate predecessor, was a good and zealous man, simple-minded, straightforward, and plain-spoken, with many eccentricities and oddities of manner, which, though excused in one whose character for religion and

piety stood high, were scarcely calculated to excite respect. To him we are indebted for the erection of the Calcutta cathedral, a handsome ecclesiastical edifice in comparison with the hideous and unsightly piles of buildings which, as churches, disfigure the metropolis and all the old settlements in Upper India; for the ugly, oblong, brick and mortar barn, with bottle-shaped spire, which was the prevailing style of Indian church architecture in former days, seems designed to give expression to what it is to be feared was the predominant feeling towards religion and its ordinances. It looks as if a beer-chest and a black bottle had been the ideas uppermost in the minds of the men who designed these buildings. The Calcutta cathedral, though by no means what a cathedral ought to be in the capital city of our Eastern Empire, was nevertheless a great improvement upon the barbarous barrack and beer-chest style of a former generation. But Daniel Wilson, as he was generally called, cannot be said to have left any trace of his personal influence upon the society among whom he laboured. A zealous Christian and a pious man he was, but not gifted by nature with the qualities that go to make up a great one. To Dr. Middleton, another bishop of Calcutta, we are indebted for the foundation of Bishop's College, designed for the education of a native pastorate. The college, a plain, unadorned, and ugly, though rather massive-looking building, is the first object of art that attracts the visitors' attention on the left bank of the Hooghly as he nears Calcutta. But whether from its position, being separated from Calcutta by the river, or whether from the insalubrity of the site—a low meadow on the banks of the Hooghly—or whether because it was supposed to be the centre or head-quarters of what were regarded in India as High Church views, and therefore unpopular in a society immersed in the mere worldly pursuits and pleasures of a wealthy and luxurious commercial capital, or from other causes, the institution has never, even under the supervision of the most zealous and

learned Churchman that ever went to India, Dr. Kaye, answered to the desired extent the noble design of its founder.

In many respects, Dr. Cotton, who succeeded Dr. Wilson, was admirably suited for the post of Metropolitan of British India. In the first place, he enjoyed, to all appearance at least, good health and physical strength—no unnecessary requirement for the supervision of a diocese that extends about 2,500 miles in one direction, and nearly 2,000 in another. A good scholar, and a sound Churchman, of no extreme views, he could sympathise with the Nonconformist missionary struggling to plant an oasis in the desert, and with the High Church chaplain, eager to introduce the outward symbols and representations of Divine truth in an ornate and decent celebration of Divine worship. With a fine voice, and clear, impressive delivery, his sermons betokening deep thought and more feeling than they who knew the Bishop only officially could suppose he possessed, were listened to in crowded churches in Calcutta with deep and reverent attention. Transferred late in life to a sphere of action totally different from that in which all his previous career had been passed, Dr. Cotton exhibited a marvellous facility for adapting his genius and energies to the circumstances around him, and the duties before him. And perhaps the habit of command, acquired during his tenure of office at Rugby and Marlborough in the atmosphere of the schoolroom as it is in the region of the master's desk, was not altogether thrown away upon a bishop of a diocese like that of Bengal.

The chaplains, who stood towards him something in the position of sixth-form boys at Marlborough, felt that they had at their head one whom they dared not disobey, and out of whose control they would not be allowed to wriggle by any subtlety of military law or civil regulations; for Dr. Cotton had the full confidence of the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief. He had, indeed, every one's confidence, for every one respected, and not a few feared him.

And sore indeed was the need which the Church had for such a man as Dr. Cotton. Readers of romance and of history too, who are familiar with the character the English clergy held a generation or a generation or two ago, can hardly believe that they belonged to the same class of society, or professed to discharge the same duties, as the clergy of our own day. That tide of wholesome reform which swept away so many defects in the character of the English clergy was slow in reaching India. Indeed, it was only in Dr. Cotton's time, and partly, no doubt, owing to his influence and strength of will, that the tide swept up into the Anglo-Indian Church. The indolence and laxity, if nothing more, that unhappily not very many years ago were so prominent a feature among the chaplains in the ecclesiastical establishment of the East India Company, as it was called, has almost wholly disappeared, and a layman may enter a church in India now without fearing that his feelings will be shocked by indecent and irreverent celebration of the Church's ordinances.[1]

[1] It was not so formerly. The English reader will scarcely believe in the existence of such irreverence and want of decency as was common even in recent times. For years one of the chaplains was known to be almost always in a state of intoxication, and the matter was only taken notice of at last in consequence of his falling with his head upon the book in a state of drunken insensibility while reading the service in a church where the Commander-in-Chief's wife happened to be present. Among a large body of clergy it was to be expected there would be some black sheep, but I fear the instance alluded to was far from being exceptional. The consequence was a very low standard both among the laity and clergy; an indecent and irreverent mode of conducting divine service; churches as a matter of course shut up all the week and opened on Sundays for a couple of hours, during which the morning and evening services, clipped according to the fancy of the chaplain, were read, and a sermon, in which the preacher acted the part of the traditional signpost, delivered to a sleepy and listless congregation. The indolent habits which the climate is calculated to engender, and which every English resident is sure to contract, unless he is always on his guard against them, are very apt to result in a careless, slovenly performance of Divine service. One effect of this is the objectionable practice of employing native (heathen)

The pastoral tours, which the late Bishop's predecessor for many years was too feeble to make, were regularly undertaken by Dr. Cotton, who visited in turn every church and parish in his immense diocese. The effect was marked. The careless and indifferent chaplain felt that there was a superior over him who could and would call him to account for gross and scandalous conduct, or neglect of duty; and the laity saw that there was a desire and an intention on the part of the Bishop, if he could not awaken zeal where there was none, at any rate to enforce a decent discharge of duty. Thus it was that the Church of England in India seemed to awake from a lethargic sleep under the episcopate of Dr. Cotton, and to feel that she had a mission to fulfil. The educational institutions which owe their origin or growth to Dr. Cotton's zeal or fostering care have already been mentioned, and it was when he was in the midst of all these good works that a fatal accident in the autumn of 1866 carried him suddenly away from the sphere of his usefulness. He was engaged in the distant province of Assam, in one of his pastoral tours, during which, with true apostolic zeal, he was wont to visit the churches, encouraging, consoling, edifying. After having seen all the principal places in the province, travelling chiefly in the Lieutenant-Governor's barge,—which, however, the difficult navigation of the rivers and streams often obliged him to leave behind, and to make his way in a native boat,—he had nearly completed his tour, when one night (it was on the 6th of October), as he was getting on board the steamer, at a place called

servants in subordinate offices, which the clergy are too lazy to perform themselves. Thus it is not pleasing to see a native servant with a crumpled cloth under his arm stroll up the aisle during Divine service, and proceed to lay the cloth, by no means a clean one, on the altar, or to see him bring to the officiating priest, or even place on the altar itself, the vessels and the elements for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. There has been an undoubted improvement in these matters within the last five or six years, but there is still too much of the old style remaining, more especially in mission churches.

Kooshtea, he accidentally lost his footing, and fell into the water. He had that evening consecrated the cemetery at Kooshtea, and had despatched his chaplain to the telegraph office to send a message announcing his speedy return to Calcutta. It was dark when he reached the water's edge, and he ascended, or attempted to ascend, a platform which was faultily constructed, having no handrail. So sudden and complete was his disappearance, that although attempts were at once made to rescue him, no trace of the body, nor even his hat, could be found.

Some idea of the estimation in which Dr. Cotton was held may be derived from the following proclamation, which was issued in the official *Gazette* upon the receipt of the intelligence, while all the ships in the harbour hoisted their flags half-mast high, and between the hours of ten and twelve in the morning the minute-bell was tolled from every church in Calcutta on the day appointed for the mourning: "There is scarcely a member of the entire Christian community throughout India who will not feel the premature loss of this prelate as a personal affliction. It has rarely been given to any body of Christians in any country to witness such depth of learning and variety of accomplishment, combined with piety so earnest, and energy so untiring. His Excellency in Council does not hesitate to add the expression of his belief that large numbers, even among those of Her Majesty's subjects in India who did not share in the faith of the Bishop of Calcutta, had learned to appreciate his great knowledge, his sincerity, and his charity, and will join in lamenting his death."

The last suggestion of the Viceroy illustrates in a very curious and interesting manner the force of Dr. Cotton's character. It is quite true the natives had learned to appreciate and like him. At first sight it would seem as if the circle of a bishop's duties revolved around a centre so far removed from the interests and associations of a heathen community that his mind could never by any possibility come in contact with native thought; but

without going out of his way, or abandoning his legitimate sphere of duty, he yet caused the light of his example to fall somehow so far within the shade of heathendom, that men who had no reverence or affection for Christianity could revere and admire the singularly manly character and the unaffected piety, the earnestness and the charity, of Dr. Cotton.

One of the greatest of all the mysteries that encompass human existence, and one of the greatest trials to the Christian's faith, and one of the strongest inducements to humility, is the phenomenon we so frequently see when men whose lives and labours are above those of all others valuable, and over whom we might expect a watchful Providence would ever extend its special protection, are carried away by some sudden and strange accident in the very midst of their career, and their work of usefulness cut short. So far as the human understanding can foresee what might have been, Dr. Cotton's life was perhaps the most valuable of any in the whole of India. His influence for good, which he had begun to exercise, would have increased as time went on. Unrestricted, like governors and generals, to a five years' tenure of office, he would probably have ended his days in his episcopate, not before he had seen the completion of those schemes and works of usefulness whose foundation he had laid. And even in the incomplete state in which he left them, they were a bequest perhaps the most valuable that could have been bestowed upon the Church in India.

Early in the present year, the Chief Court was established at Lahore, a Court possessing most of the powers of a High Court, and differing from it in little but in name and organization. Later in the year the High Court of the North-West Provinces was established by royal charter at Agra, under the presidentship of Sir Walter Morgan, Chief Justice. These tribunals have proved in every way most beneficial to the country, for they have earned in the fullest sense the confidence and respect of the people.

CHAPTER XII.

1867.

The Orissa disaster—Public meeting in Calcutta—New Governor of Bengal—The Bishop of Calcutta—Madras—The Madras Native Church — The Bishop of Bombay — The Licence Tax — Protest against the tax—The census in Upper India—The great Hurdwar fair—Cholera—The cyclone—The railway schemes—The Bank of Bombay.

EARLY in the year 1867, Colonel Strachey, who had been appointed Superintendent of Irrigation in India, came out from England invested with full powers to push on, as fast as his own judgment and discretion should warrant, the construction of canals. It seemed as if the Home Government had been awakened out of a deep sleep, or suddenly become conscious of their responsibilities in this particular. No effort was to be spared, and a very wide margin allowed to the sums that were to be sanctioned for the necessary works.

If the conditions under which the existence of the human race is maintained in temperate climes and with all the advantages which civilization confers, as in European countries, are an inexplicable problem to the philosopher, what must it not be in the East and West? Here the reflective mind constantly finds itself repeating the question—a question vainly asked by man's finite intellect—Why, for what end, to what purpose, have these millions of human beings been brought into existence? Out of the population of India, whatever it may be, say a hundred and forty millions, there must certainly be many millions whose

existence from the cradle to the grave, with very few exceptional periods, is one course of physical suffering. But setting them aside, and allowing that the wretched people, to all appearance but one degree removed from their fellow-labourers the oxen, derive at any rate as much enjoyment from the mere physical functions of life as the brute creation, we are staggered when we find Nature, who at the best of times seems to deal so harshly with these hapless creatures, suddenly, as it were, lashing itself into fury against them, and setting in motion one after another the most terrible engines of destruction. The mind utterly fails to comprehend the magnitude, or to conceive the intensity of the misery, caused by such a calamity as befell the inhabitants of Orissa in 1866-67. A similar instance, under very analogous conditions, has recently occurred in the West, where many thousands have been swallowed up by earthquakes. While the sceptic turns aside from the contemplation of some millions of human beings swept away by the ravages of famine or earthquake or the waters of a flood, with his doubts as to the existence of a Divine government of the world confirmed, Faith, with full assurance that in spite of these seeming contradictions "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof," is content to wait for an explanation of the riddle.

We know very little more about the conditions of existence in the orders of life inferior to us, than we do of those which occupy a superior position in the grade of creation. In the former case, we can indeed watch the habits of ants and bees, and other insects which possess a marvellous instinct such as to compensate them in a great measure for the want of reason. There is no longer any question that ants have artificial conditions of life analogous to those with which we are familiar among ourselves.[1] They have separate communities, divisions of society, labouring classes, slaves, armies, and rulers who direct operations in war

[1] "The Insect World, with a Description of the Habits and Economy of some of the most interesting Species." By Louis Figuier. 1868.

and exercise the government during peace; they have laws by which measures that are necessary for the good of the commonwealth are carried out with regularity and exactitude; they build cities, granaries, treasuries, palaces, and fortify them, and the construction of their public works shows they have an instinctive acquaintance with the principles of mechanics. All this we know from observation of their habits. Of their inner life we know nothing, but we see that they plainly have the power of communicating ideas to one another. One hour of our time is to them perhaps a long period, during which great political changes may take place, revolutions be effected, campaigns conducted, settlements destroyed and founded. Yet these little creatures, intent on their own concerns, wrapt up in affairs that appear to them as momentous as a change of ministry or a new reform bill does to us, must, if they are capable of observation, get occasional glimpses of another world out of and beyond their own circle of existence, and immensely superior to it in all its conditions and in respect of the forces it employs. The morning of a summer's day, to them perhaps half a generation, has been spent in the construction of a large city: the site, selected by the most intelligent of the community, has been an unlucky one, but the engineers and surveyors had not the gift of prescience, and could not divine that a party of young ladies and their attendant cavaliers would after luncheon go out to play at croquet upon the very site where a community of hundreds of thousands of living creatures have been for half a century constructing their city. At last the engine of destruction approaches, and a revolution of the roller sweeps away the hopes of thousands, the glory of a commonwealth; all its public institutions, its palaces, its dwellings, its fortifications, and the terrified survivors are scattered houseless over the face of the earth. If they possess *Quarterlies* and *Saturday Reviews*, they doubtless discuss the prodigy in all its bearings. Whence did the roller come, and what force propelled so huge a mass of rock? Why where so many thousands

of living creatures cut off in the midst of life and health, and the career of so many public characters, rising into fame and power, stopped short by death? Would the calamity recur? If so, when, at what interval, under what conditions?

The contemplation of such calamities as befel Orissa in 1865, '66, and '67,—as have recently befallen the cities of South America,—is calculated to awaken in the mind uncomfortable doubts and misgivings, which are apt to spring up, because we are always prone to forget that the finite cannot compass the Infinite. We no more see and understand the whole system of the government of the universe than the ants do the motives and operations preceding the catastrophe that overwhelmed them on the garden plot. They get a glimpse of a mighty power external to and infinitely beyond them in resources, exercising forces which they can neither comprehend nor measure, and which nevertheless every now and then seem to be applied to their destruction with most deadly effect. No doubt they believe, if they have the faculty of reason, that the roller was sent by some law of Nature specially set in motion to compass their destruction. And when it is recollected that the laws and conditions of the universe are infinite in number, in variation, and in their operation, and that our reason and science in reality bear a smaller proportion to the vastness of infinity than the instinct of the ant does to the nature, the motions, and the actions of the croquet players, and their antecedent phenomenon the roller, though we get no explanation indeed, we may cease to perplex ourselves with a vain inquiry into the system of a Divine government which permits such catastrophes as the Orissa famine and inundation, or the Peruvian earthquakes, to overwhelm huge masses of human beings.

Early in the year it was deemed desirable to call a public meeting at Calcutta, and the very unusual spectacle was presented of the Viceroy seeking the co-operation of the residents and the non-official public. It would be better

for India if the spectacle was less rare. The enthusiasm with which Sir John Lawrence was received, and the hearty response which his request for aid called forth from all classes, shows how greatly the people of India are misrepresented by writers who make out that the want of sympathy between the governing races and the governed is on the part of the latter only.

Sir John Lawrence, in addressing the meeting, thus summed up the disasters under which Orissa had suffered:

"I will here remind you that in 1865 there was a general failure of the crops in the three districts of Orissa, followed by very indifferent harvests in 1866, while in the autumn of that year a large part of the province was also inundated. The floods of the Mahanuddy and other rivers broke through their embankments and submerged extensive tracts of land in their vicinity. All the crops in these localities were spoiled, and property which had escaped the famine was carried away or destroyed. What the drought had spared was engulphed in the wide vortex of water. In this way one-half the district of Cuttack alone, extending over an area of 1,500 miles, has been devastated. From the most reliable accounts it is estimated that from one-fifth to one-fourth of the population of the province has already perished. What famine and starvation began, diarrhœa and pestilence have completed. It is estimated that we may have to import into the province not less than 1,200,000 maunds of rice, equal to about 27,000 tons. We have already arranged for the introduction of half that quantity by the 1st of April, and the rest will follow as rapidly as may be found necessary. There were already," he added, "1,500 orphan children to be provided for, which might increase to 2,000 more, and ten lacs of rupees, or £100,000, would be required for their maintenance."

The Viceroy had previously telegraphed to the Secretary of State, then Lord Cranborne, begging that a subscription might be got up in England; to which the following curt refusal was transmitted in reply:—"January 21st. Your

telegram received, and sent to the Lord Mayor. He thinks no subscription could be raised here. I have made inquiries, and think he is right. Distress here from panic, frost, and strikes is terrible, and engrosses public attention." Sir John Lawrence, alluding to this refusal of assistance at the meeting, remarked, it was only the more necessary for those present to exert themselves. Eight persons on the spot subscribed 2,500 rupees each, and the Viceroy himself gave 10,000 more towards the relief fund.

It is impossible to make any very accurate estimate of the total number of lives lost by this calamity, but the *Friend of India*, on sound data, reckons that it could not have been under two millions! and there is no reason to suppose that it was an over-estimate.

In this year Sir Cecil Beadon retired from the government of Bengal, and was succeeded by Mr. William Grey; while Sir Gaspar Le Marchant—after three years' tenure of the Commander-in-chiefship of Madras, during which time, if we are to be guided by the journals of that Presidency, he had done less for the army than any of his predecessors, and succeeded in making himself universally unpopular—retired, and made way for General McClaverty.

The bishopric of Calcutta, vacant by the lamented death of Dr. Cotton, was, after being refused by several divines in England, eventually accepted by Dr. Milman, who was installed in the Calcutta Cathedral on the 2d April.

The new Bishop was regarded by the Evangelical party in Calcutta with some suspicion, as a report had preceded him that his views on Church matters were tinged with a tendency to Ritualism. But he soon gave indication that, whether holding High or Low Church opinions, he had come to India fully impressed with the importance of the duties he had accepted. On his way to Calcutta, he had landed at Madras, where, in answer to an address presented to him by the Bishop and clergy of that Presidency, he said, that "he looked upon his work as essentially missionary. At the present time, the gradual development of the Native

Church was a matter full of interest, and he should rejoice to watch over, and as far as possible assist its progress. He was to carry on to the utmost of his ability the labours which the sudden and awful summons of Bishop Cotton had so unexpectedly arrested." Like the Ephesians of old in the presence of their great apostle, who paid them a passing visit on his voyage, those present at the meeting then knelt down and, the Bishop of Calcutta leading, joined in repeating the Litany. They then bade him "God speed" on his journey, and he passed on to the head-quarters of his diocese, where his unceasing labours and untiring energy in the cause of religion and the Church have fully borne out the high estimate that was passed of his character by his friends and associates.

In Dr. Gell, the Bishop of Madras, Dr. Milman must have found a sympathising friend and a warm coadjutor. Differing as regards his views of Church matters from his metropolitan, the Bishop of Madras has won all hearts by his fervent piety, and awakened the respect of all who have watched the primitive zeal with which he has devoted himself to his apostolic duties.

Early in the year he delivered a charge which is especially interesting in an historical point of view, as it supplies much statistical information regarding the condition of the Church in the South of India, otherwise difficult to get. He had, when he delivered the charge, visited the whole of his extensive diocese; he had confirmed 6,600, of whom over 5,000 were natives; several ordinations had been held, at which 11 native deacons were ordained and 18 admitted to priests' orders, of whom 9 were natives. The numbers of licensed clergymen were 162, a number totally inadequate to the work of the diocese. The number of Protestant Europeans and East Indians in the diocese is estimated at 24,000, scattered over 47 chaplaincies and stations.

The Bishop paid especial attention to the condition of the native churches in the districts of Tinnevelly, Tanjore,

and Travancore. Those who are unacquainted with the extent to which the bonds of caste fetter the minds of the people of India will be surprised to hear the Bishop's testimony to the extent to which caste is a burden upon the Christian Church. Now, as thirty years ago, when Bishop Corrie and Bishop Wilson visited the place, the strange anomaly is presented of the Christian high-caste convert refusing to kneel at the same altar with his low-caste brethren. All the efforts which have been made to induce these professors of a faith that admits of no distinction of persons, to lay aside their prejudices, have been in vain. As Bishop Gell says, "The cords of caste-tyranny are stronger than those of Christ's love." The Syrian churches in the South, which attracted the attention of Bishop Wilson, and led him to indulge the hope that they would be one day amalgamated with the Protestant churches, have shown some symptoms of life and progress. Some of them have ceased to celebrate Divine Service in an unknown tongue, and use the vernacular, and in other respects they give indication of a desire to conform to the usages of Protestant worship. During the three years preceding the Bishop's visitation, there had been an increase of 7,243 members to the native churches, making a total of baptized Christians of 55,495. In addition to which, there were 21,093 persons who had renounced idolatry, and were being prepared for baptism. The number of European and East Indian missionaries is 53; there are 34 native clergymen, a number which has since been increased to 40.[1]

The diocese of Bombay was less fortunate in its Bishop, Dr. Harding, who rendered himself notorious all over India by his iconoclastic zeal on Christmas-day, when on entering the Cathedral, before taking his seat, he stood in the aisle and deliberately stripped to pieces the ornamental floral cross which fair hands had the afternoon before

[1] The *Madras Times*, March 27th, 1867, from which the statistics condensed from the Bishop's charge are taken.

affixed to his seat, throwing the poor withering leaves and petals on the ground; and when he approached the altar for the celebration of the Communion service, his first act was to destroy with similar Vandalism the cross of flowers and evergreens on the altar-cloth. And this incredibly bad taste was evinced on two occasions on two successive Christmas festivals.

The political history of the present year centres upon the introduction of the Licence Tax by Mr. Massey. This was a tax, as its name denotes, on professions and trades, to which the utmost opposition was raised outside the Council—a public meeting being held at the Town Hall at Calcutta to protest against it. In principle the tax, although it was so unpopular, has little that is objectionable; in the way in which it was introduced, and in the extent to which the operation of the tax was limited, it was most objectionable. In their method of dealing with this bill, the Council irresistibly remind us of mischievous little boys bent on the pastime of ringing door-bells and then running away. The bill was proposed for the first time on the 8th March; and as if the Legislature were engaged in some work of which they felt ashamed, or as if it was an act the consequences of which they feared, the most unheard-of and unprecedented expedient was adopted, and the bill was brought before the Council and became law on the same day! The promoters of the memorial to the Secretary of State who addressed the public meeting very aptly remarked, "That a measure of such grave importance should not have been laid before Council for final decision without due notice being given to allow of some expression of opinion upon it on the part of the public, and the haste with which the bill was hurried through the usual stages and passed was as unseemly as it was unnecessary."

As it is unlikely that the Council was actuated either by fear or shame in passing the bill, there is only one other motive upon which the "unseemly haste" is to be

explained. No one can study the progress of Indian administration for the last ten years without being struck with the ever-recurring expression of contemptuous indifference to the wishes and opinions of the public which characterises the measures of Government, and too often colours the speeches of its members in Council. Of whatever material the European community in the three Presidency cities may be composed according to official tradition, one would suppose that the interest and opinions of an important class—for, after all, what would India be to England if it were not for commercial transactions between the two countries?—would not be deemed utterly beneath the notice of the governing body.[1] It is not impossible that the manners of the Indian official world may have been corrupted by the evil communications of the Home authorities, some of Sir Charles Wood's despatches being famous for the contemptuous indifference with which he seems to have regarded the views and representations of the local government, and that the scant courtesy dealt out to Chambers of Commerce and deputations may have proceeded on the principle that seems to be inherent in human nature, and by which the boy who cannot retaliate upon his oppressor vents his feelings by bullying one weaker than himself; and so the scale runs down from the top to the bottom of the social ladder. The practice is at times mischievous. If Lord Canning had not, acting under the counsels of his civilian advisers, refused with this contemptuous indifference the aid of the Calcutta European community to raise a volunteer force early in June 1857, the tragedy at Cawnpore might have been prevented, hundreds of invaluable lives saved, and untold sufferings averted. Courtesy and respectful treatment of our neighbours cost little and are often of much value.

[1] See also a recent work of Colonel Chesney on "Indian Polity," where throughout the official view of all independent classes, especially the European, colours the representations and language of the writer.

The great fault to be found with the Licence Tax was that all professional incomes above 25,000 rupees a year paid no increase of duty. Thus members of Council, who legislated for themselves, and other high officials drawing 100,000 a year, paid no more than the barrister or the collector drawing 25,000; while the tax demanded as much from an income of 10,000 as from one of 24,000, from 5,000 as from 9,000, from 1,000 as from 4,000, and from 500 and 200 as from 900 and 400 respectively. And while the wealthiest classes wholly escaped proportionate taxation, the hard-earned pittance of 20*l.* per annum was mulcted in a sum of eight shillings. The objections to the clause affecting companies are similar in principle. On a paid-up capital of 5 lacs, the same sum was to be levied as on a capital of 9 lacs; on 10 lacs as on 1 crore or 100 lacs, whether such companies had paid dividends or not.

The meeting which protested against the unseemly haste with which this measure had been passed into law, and appealed against its injustice, was not actuated by any foolish opposition to taxation on general principles. They were fully prepared to admit that a permanent addition to the resources of the country was an imperative necessity; all that they argued was, that a tax unjust in its operation, which was to yield only 500,000*l.*, which practically exempted the wealthiest classes to which the Legislature themselves belonged, so hastily shuffled through Council, was a measure unworthy of a Government like that of India. Their appeal to the Secretary of State met with the usual fate of such representations, and was rejected.

The episode, however, exemplified the force of the old adage, "the more haste the less speed;" for, after hurrying the obnoxious bill through Council, with the chance of its being vetoed upon the representation of the memorialists, the Government did not like to put it into operation, and it was eventually delayed much longer than it would have been if the ordinary course of procedure had been

observed. The original bill was repealed, and another bill in an amended form passed later in the year.

Another instance of this contemptuous indifference to public opinion is afforded by a characteristic incident which occurred early in the year. One of the social peculiarities of the natives of India is a generally-accepted idea that there is something derogatory in having to attend a court of law. No matter whether as a suitor, a defendant, or a witness, a native of high rank considers it an insult to be forced to attend court. The Government, who have from time immemorial humoured the natives into one-half of what are called their "caste prejudices," always winked at this little weakness, and have by law exempted from attendance at court a certain class of persons. The Bengal Government, acting on its privilege in this particular, granted the usual coveted exemption to seven Bengalees, one of whom was a merchant, on the ground that they either had been or were members of the local Legislative Council. The Bengal Chamber of Commerce remonstrated against this silly extension of a most mischievous Act, for the members of the Legislature surely of all others have, or ought to have, the least reason to be ashamed of the courts of the country, and might be expected to set a good example in this respect to their less-enlightened fellow-countrymen. The Chamber of Commerce pointed out that the privilege was one unknown in any other part of Her Majesty's dominions, that it is opposed to the first principles of justice, and that it should only be allowed in certain families where it had been held as an hereditary privilege for many generations. To this very reasonable memorial the Lieutenant-Governor replied, declining to withdraw the boon, ending with thanking "the Committee for the interest and trouble they have taken in a matter which had no apparent connexion with the commercial interests of Bengal, and regarding which, therefore, it did not occur to the Lieutenant-Governor to consult them!"

The results of efforts to obtain an accurate return of the

population of two of the principal subdivisions of British India—the North-West and the Central Provinces—were published this year. We are much indebted to Mr. Chichele Plowden, the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, for a very clear and lucid statement of the census of the North-West, which presents us with several very interesting facts. The Hindoos bear the proportion of more than six to one of Mahommedans, the former being 25,674,819, and the Mahommedan 4,105,206. The Hindoos have been divided into the four great castes or sections, for the word "caste" hardly represents the distinction between the original great divisions of the race or races. These four divisions or sections are, as every reader of elementary geography knows, the Brahmins or priests, the Cshetriyas or military, the Vaisyas or agricultural, and the Soodr or servile classes. The castes proper are no less than 560, but the four great sections of the Hindoo community stand respectively as follow:—Brahmins 3,451,692, Cshetriyas 2,817,768, Vaisyas 1,091,250, Soodres 18,304,309. It would be uninteresting to the general reader to follow the census into details, although, from the list of trades or occupations set down, some amusement might be derived. Here we find all the degrading pursuits invented to minister to the lusts and passions of the rich which are unhappily represented in every community that has made any advance in civilization. But apart from these we have callings and trades, some of which, though they may have their counterparts in European communities, are seldom represented by separate classes, such, for instance, as "pedigree-makers" and "flatterers for gain," of whom the North-West Provinces can supply twenty-eight in the one case, and 226 in the other. Although there are in the list upwards of 400,000 beggars, and 111 of another species of the same genus called "alms-takers," 900 "budmashes" or scoundrels who live by their wits, the whole province is represented by the official returns to contain but one "vagabond." Of "ear-piercers" there are eighteen, "sturdy beggars" thirty-

five, "hangmen" the prodigious number of 133, "fortune-tellers" three, "jesters" 800, and one "informer." It is remarkable that the numbers of informers and vagabonds should be represented by the unit, and it is impossible to avoid the suspicion that he may be the same person under two characters. The number of native Christians is set down as 14,126, Europeans as 27,761—which of course includes the army, and 5,069 Eurasians. This census, compared with Bishop Gell's census of the Native Church of Madras, shows that native Christians are as one to four in the North-West Provinces and the Southern Presidency, a proportion we should have been fully prepared to find.

It is important to notice that out of the whole population the agricultural class is said to number 17,656,006, the industrial 3,868,822, among whom there are reckoned no less than 135,515 gold and silver smiths.

The Census of the Central Provinces was taken on the 5th November, 1866, after great precautions to impress on the people, who are less advanced than the inhabitants of the North-West, that the process of numbering them was not to be followed by any unpleasant consequences, of which they appeared in much apprehension. In these provinces we find the Hindoos bear a much larger proportion to the Mahommedans than in the North-West, there being 6,864,770 Hindoos to 237,922 Mahommedans. The aboriginal tribes number very nearly two millions. The proportion of population to area in the Central Provinces is 365 to the square mile of cultivated soil, whereas that of the North-West is 351. But the immense extent of waste and jungle lands in the former territory is illustrated by the proportion of only 79 to the square mile, if the whole area, cultivated and uncultivated, is reckoned. The whole population of the North-West is given at 30,110,615, the Central Provinces 9,104,511, making a total of upwards of thirty-nine millions, out of which four and a half millions only are Mahommedans. Statements of figures on paper convey to the mind but

an imperfect idea of the actual number represented. But some notion of the amazing extent of the population of India in the aggregate may be gained by a visit to the great religious gatherings or fairs as they are called, which periodically attract millions to some central spot, generally the banks of a sacred river, for devotional purposes. The most famous and most familiar to the English reader of all these fairs or religious gatherings, is that of Hurdwar. In the present year (1867) the collection was unusually large, owing to the return of a sacred cycle which recurs every twelfth year, and is called the "Coombha" fair, so named from the planet Jupiter being then in the sign of Aquarius, at which season the pilgrimage to the sacred river, and bathing in it, are supposed to be accompanied by especial and peculiar blessings. Every 144th year the sanctity of the ceremony is increased in proportion to the rarity of its recurrence, and the cycle fell in 1867. "In addition to this a belief had gained ground in all parts of the Peninsula that the sacred character of the Ganges was being interfered with, and that ere the time of another gathering could arrive, it would be entirely destroyed." This idea, it is suggested, arose on the completion of the Ganges Canal, which it was supposed would eventually dry up the river by exhausting its waters. The notion may also have a deeper signification, indicating that the advance of intelligence, the result of British rule and education, is destined to undermine the influence of the Brahminical priesthood, and the sanctity of the holy stream.[1]

Some particulars of the Great Coombh, as related by an eye-witness, may not be uninteresting. It is necessary to premise that, owing to the immense concourse of people which was expected, and the certainty that it would be attended or followed by the outbreak of some epidemic,

[1] These are the suggestions of the late Mr. Robertson, of the Bengal Civil Service, magistrate of Saharunpore. See an interesting account of the Hurdwar fair of 1867, in the fourth annual report of the Sanitary Commissioner with the Government of India for 1867.

the Government had taken every precaution possible to secure attention to sanitary arrangements, as well as to preserve the peace, for large bands of devotees assemble in thousands under rival spiritual guides, and not uncommonly enact the same sort of scene that might be witnessed in former years, at the church of the so-called Holy Sepulchre, where pilgrims who came to pray remained to fight.

The gathering of the people from different parts of India commenced about the 10th of March, and increased steadily up to the 7th of April. From that day till the 11th, the rush of pilgrims pouring in upon the sacred spot was immense. It is supposed that there were not less than from two and a half to three millions collected in the place. On the 12th, the sacred day, this mighty concourse of human beings arose as one man for the ceremony of purification.

One of the first objects of the authorities had been to erect ten bridges across the river at certain intervals, which were placed under the charge of police, and marked off with different coloured flags, in order to prevent collision between streams of people crossing over bridges in different directions. One of the most striking features of the fair is the assembling of the different sects or followers of various "fakirs" or "mahunts," who are noted for some peculiarity in their religious teaching. In 1843 a very serious collision took place between the followers of two opposing sects, regarding precedence in bathing, which was attended by loss of life. On the present occasion measures were taken to bring them in under an escort, which both acted as a guide and prevented any breach of the peace. It was a curious sight to watch these processions of devotees, under the leadership of their several "fakirs," marching with a cavalry escort headed by the magistrate, a road being made for them through the surrounding mass of human beings by the foot police. After performing the seven prescribed immersions in the sacred

water, the processions returned as they came across the bridges to their respective encampments. The writer, whose account was published in the *Delhi Gazette* of the 18th April, proceeds as follows:—

"I must here make prominent mention of the admirable arrangements made by Major Watson, Superintendent of Police, for checking the progress of the overwhelming crowd approaching the 'sacred ghaut' (bathing place) at the time when the sects of 'faquirs' were in the water. This was executed by means of red flags placed in the hands of policemen stationed on prominent localities at intervals of three and four hundred yards all along the main road appointed for the people, and where strong bodies of police were posted and barricades erected. When each set of faquirs approached the bridge of boats to cross over to the 'sacred ghaut,' the red flag at the ghaut would be exhibited, a signal for all other flags to be waved, indicating that the ghaut was occupied by the faquirs. The police at the barricades immediately drew up in line, and stopped the onward progress of the multitude. The communication was so rapid and effective, that the mass was simultaneously broken into divisions, and stopped without the dread of the people falling over one another and being crushed. When these flags were withdrawn, it was a signal for the crowd to be allowed to proceed again. Had this method not been adopted, great loss of life would inevitably have occurred during this momentous day. But one death happened on the Dehra Dhoon side, owing to the giving way of one of the barricades through the immense weight on it, and by which a few persons were injured.

"The greater portion of the crowd took up their position on the vast tract of land opposite the river, familiarly called the 'Island of Roree.' This part of Hurdwar was marked off into bazaars, 'mohullas,' and marts for cattle of all kinds, and placed by Major Watson under the superintendence of Captain Bramly, who worked it as a district, with six police stations, composed of 140 constables, irrespective of officers. The sanitary arrangements of this island, together with that for the whole fair, were conducted by Dr. Cutliffe, F.R.C.S., the civil surgeon of Saharunpore. To this officer's unremitting exertions the total absence of sickness was attributable; his close supervision and directions to the police respecting the keeping clean all latrines, and the burning and reducing to ashes all filth, in furnaces erected for the purpose, effectually checked the birth of any disease. No epidemic or infectious diseases showed themselves. Hospitals were erected in different parts of the grounds to accommodate the sick, but happily they were but little used. It would only take up too much space were I to detail the sanitary arrangements; suffice it to say that, had irregular squatting been permitted, as was too well experienced at the late Agra

durbar, cholera would to a certain extent have made its appearance in so dense a crowd.

"I cannot mention in language too high the commendable exertions of the police of the North-West Provinces and Punjab. They have as a body worked hard and with a will; their exertions at the 'sacred ghaut' were the theme of praise. Young and old, infirm and blind, alike received their needful help in pulling and assisting them up the wooden steps at the water's edge. Women in hundreds rushed frantically into the water with babes in their arms, which in the immense crowd were torn from them, but none lost their children; people who had accidentally lost their wives and children found them after a short time at an adjoining police station, where all were conveyed and kept till owned. It is wonderful that no loss of life occurred.

"It would have been impossible to have made anything like a correct estimate of the crowd which assembled at this fair, but calculating by the Oriental system of one lac of souls to every square 'coss,' it was judged that there were no less than three millions of people at this 'Coomb fair.' For miles round Hurdwar, and on the Dehra Dhoon side, a vast encampment as far as the eye could reach was seen. Most conspicuous of all was that of His Highness the Maharajah of Cashmere. His Highness the Rajah of Bhurtpore offered up his orisons to the shrine of 'Mahadeo,' but in quite a different way to the pomp and show displayed by the Maharajah of Cashmere. Various people of note and respectability were here, among them Sir Deo Narain Singh, K.S.I., with bare head and the customary small winding sheet; but now all, poor and rich, are wending their way homewards.

"This fair will long be held in remembrance, chiefly and solely for the completeness of the arrangements that were adopted for the convenience and well-being of the crowd, both as regards the 'sacred ghaut' and in a sanitary point of view. Certainly some little confusion and discontent made itself apparent at the onset, but a little trouble soon made the people acquainted with the different routes appointed to take them to and from the 'ghaut,' as well as the object of the latrines which had been prepared for them on different parts of the ground. The names of Major Watson and Mr. Robertson, the magistrate of Saharunpore, with those of other officers, will long be remembered, and will spread far and wide, as the 'pundits' have made a note in their books of all officers' names. This vast crowd is fast dispersing, praising the *British raj*, and crying out '*Watson, sahib ke jye*,' for the ease and convenience they little expected to find, as it is notorious that no 'Coomb fair' has yet taken place that has not been attended with loss of life and sickness."

The arrangements which reflected so much credit upon the officials were successful in preventing disease as long as

the concourse remained subject to them ; but the moment the fair broke up, and the pilgrims commenced their return march, their route, diverging as it did into thousands of different directions, was tracked with disease. Cholera broke out, and all Upper India was threatened with a tremendous visitation of the scourge, carried, as it was feared it would be, by the pilgrims into every large city, into thousands of villages, along every high road.

The report of the Sanitary Commission for 1867 deals exhaustively with the subject of the origin and spread of cholera in and by the Hurdwar fair. The progress of the disease is traced from station to station, from city to city, and the conclusion is inevitable that its *dissemination* was due to the fair, and the pilgrims returning from it. At any rate this is undoubtedly the case within certain limits. In all the cities of the North-West of India, and the southern portions of the Punjab, the progress of the disease is clearly traceable. It would only be natural that the further we get from the source the fainter should become the track of the great destroyer; and, accordingly, when we get to Peshawur and to some of the trans-Indus towns, the ostensible connexion is so slight that many altogether deny that the outbreak in these places, at any rate, had any connexion with the fair.

It is well known that during the actual existence of the fair itself the pilgrims were remarkably healthy. It was wonderful, considering what an immense mass of human beings had collected on one spot, that there was so little disease among them. It was only when the gathering was over, and the pilgrims had set about returning to their homes, that the disease appeared in any formidable shape. Up to the 12th April, according to the returns from the dispensaries and hospitals, there were not more than one in two thousand sick. All the medical officers concur as to the remarkable immunity from sickness. As far as can be ascertained there was no case of cholera till the 13th April, and on that day eight cases were sent to hospital. But

from noon on the 12th the vast multitude had begun to depart. The 12th, the last day, was the great day for bathing, which concluded the ceremonies, and the pilgrims were then at liberty to return to their homes. By the evening of the 15th they had all left.

It is highly probable that the disease received its first stimulus on the last day, when the great ceremony of ablution took place. The bathing-place was a space 650 feet long, by about 30 wide, shut off from the rest of the river by rails. Into this long, narrow enclosure the pilgrims from all parts of the encampment crowded as closely as possible from morning till sunset. The water within the space was during the whole time thick and dirty, partly from the ashes of the dead brought by surviving relatives to be deposited in the sacred waters, and partly from the washing of the clothes and bodies of the bathers. The custom is for the pilgrims to dip themselves three times into the liquid filth (water it can no longer be called), and then, oh horror! to drink it! This part of the ceremony is never omitted; and when two or more members of a family bathe together, each from his own hand gives to the other water to drink. And the reciprocal offerings of water take place between friends as well as relatives, the drinking being accompanied by vows of love, and fidelity, and friendship. The quantity of water thus imbibed varies, but it is never less than about as much as can be taken up by the palms of two hands held together so as to form a cup, *and usually several cupfuls are drunk.*[1]

It appears, further, that a place called Bazpore, near Hurdwar, was infected with cholera at the time, and the people from the adjacent places do not come to the fair till the very last. It is therefore quite possible that some pilgrims with the seeds of the disease upon them might have come to the fair the last day, and taken part in this

[1] See Report of the Sanitary Commissioner with the Governor-General for 1867.

final bathing, and every subsequent phenomenon that took place is thus accounted for. The disease broke out the following day.

The report is accompanied by a map showing the different places between the Himalayas and Peshawur at which the cholera made its appearance, and the date—in almost every instance, a day or so subsequent to the entry or passage of some pilgrims through the place, except at Peshawur, and Bunnoo (where, however, it is said to have been introduced from Kangra), Dera Ismael Khan, Jhung, Murree, Huzara, and Simla (where it is traced to a traveller, not necessarily a pilgrim).

It is to be noticed, however, that Dr. Brydon, "who has studied," as the report says, "the general facts of the actual distribution of cholera in India with an industry and research which have been unsurpassed," does not agree with the opinion that the outbreak originated with the Hurdwar pilgrims. As early as the 25th February, judging from his experience of general laws that appear to regulate the phenomena of cholera, he predicted an epidemic in 1867, at Hurdwar, and over Kumaon and Ghurwal in April and May. He drew attention at that early period to the probability of a distribution of cholera parallel with that of 1857–8 and 1862. Dr. Brydon's anticipation proved correct, but the fact does not militate against the theory of the dissemination of cholera over the whole country by means of the pilgrims.

If the general reader, with the average knowledge of Indian history which is attained by most educated people in England, were asked what were the characteristics and prevailing features of Indian history, he would at once reply, military operations. Yet a review of the past nine years, so far as we have gone, will leave in the mind of the reader the impression of a series of natural catastrophes,—a succession of floods, famines, and epidemics rather than of military operations. Nature appears to be ever holding a scourge of some kind over the country, and applying it

year by year with merciless severity upon some portion or other of the vast continent. During the period India has been partially free from war, and it is seldom visited by severe earthquakes, but the destructive effects of famine and pestilence and flood are much greater than those resulting from either of the former visitations, terrible as they undoubtedly are. Nor is the record even yet complete. While the rapid and extensive spread of cholera after the Hurdwar fair was carrying consternation into every bazaar and every garrison all over Upper India, Calcutta was visited with another cyclone, not quite so terrible as the great hurricane of 1864, but very destructive and very awful to witness. It occurred on the 1st November, and the conflict of the elements was in one sense more appalling than on the last occasion, as it took place in the darkness of the night. The centre of the storm passed to the east of Saugor Point, and swept round the north of Calcutta. Indications of the approaching disturbance were observed early in the morning of the 1st. At Calcutta the wind was from the north-east, and shortly after dark it became fitful and threatening, the gusts gaining gradually in strength until they reached their maximum between 2 and 3 A.M. of the 2d. The loss of life was not nearly so great as on the last occasion, although the hurricane of 1867 was also accompanied by the storm-wave which destroyed the tramway belonging to the Canning Company, and carried off about 2,000 feet of metal from the roadway, besides committing other ravages along the coast. The police-reports returned about a thousand lives as having been lost in and about Calcutta, including women and children; two ferry-steamers were destroyed, sixty-seven cargo-boats, and between four and five hundred boats of other kinds. Some thirty thousand huts were levelled to the ground, and about two hundred brick houses blown down. The shipping escaped with comparatively few disasters. The passenger-ship the *Blenheim*, which was at the time making its way up the Bay of Bengal, and was

dismasted by the storm, was able to put into Coconada to refit.

It remains to say a few words about the discussions on the proposed railway schemes that took place this year, and the condition of the Bank of Bombay.

In marking out great lines of railway across a continent, it often happens that the calculations and forecastings of the wisest men are at fault. Every consideration that can be urged seems to indicate a certain line of country as the one which should be selected for a projected railway; experience gained after it has been completed shows that it would have been more advantageous to have adopted a different route. This has been the case even in England; it has been the case to a certain extent in India.

The outlines of Lord Dalhousie's great scheme were to connect Calcutta with Delhi by a line up the valley of the Ganges, prolonged from Delhi through the Punjab to Attock on the Indus, which is within fifty miles of Peshawur. A second line was to run from Bombay through Baroda to Agra, thus connecting Upper India with the western seaboard and Europe. In the Madras Presidency he recommended a line across the peninsula to Beypore, a seaport on the western coast, and another to the north-west to unite with a south-eastern line from Bombay.

The first of these schemes has been carried out by the East India Railway Company, whose line runs from Calcutta to Delhi, and the Madras and Beypore line has also been completed. The Madras railway is to join the Great Indian Peninsular from Bombay at Sholapore, about half-way between the two seaports. Great expectations were at one time formed of Beypore as a seaport, which experience has not borne out, but the railway is not altogether thrown away, as it passes by the foot of the Neilgherries, the great sanatorium of the Southern Presidency. From Delhi, the Punjab and Delhi railways will be, by the time these pages come before the public, open as far as Umballa, a large military cantonment, near a city of that

name, the head-quarters of the Sirhind division, and within fifty miles of the foot of the Himalayas in the direction of the hill-stations of Dagshai, Subathoo, and Simla. From Umballa northwards there is a break as far as the river Beeas, in the Jullundur Dooab; but from the Beeas, all the way passing the cities of Umritsur and Lahore, there is unbroken railway communication to Mooltan. Below Mooltan to a place called Kotree, on the Indus, opposite Hyderabad in Scinde, there is another hiatus. This part of the journey has to be made by the steam flotilla, and occupies about three weeks in ascending the stream from Kotree to Mooltan, and about a third of that time descending. From Kotree to Kurrachee the Scind railway has been complete for some years.

From Bombay the Bombay and Baroda line runs up northwards *viâ* Baroda to Ahmedabad. And the Great Indian Peninsular connects Bombay with Nagpore, on the border of the great cotton-fields of the Central Provinces; the main branch of this line is eventually to meet the East India line at Jubbulpore, when there will be direct communication between Allahabad, on the Ganges, and the Western Presidency. This line will be open probably in 1870. At present, the traveller wending his way across the continent of India has to exchange the railway at Jubbulpore for a carriage, in which he travels over a splendid road and with great facility to Nagpore, where he meets the rail again. This line is a divergence from Lord Dalhousie's original plan, which was to connect Upper India and Bombay by the Agra and Bombay line. After much discussion he was persuaded to change this project, and to adopt instead a line across the continent, striking the Ganges at Mirzapore, a little below Allahabad, and eventually it was resolved upon making Allahabad the point of junction.

In this grand scheme two mistakes were made. The East Indian line ought to have been made direct from

Calcutta to Benares, instead of following the valley of the Ganges, and the route first marked out between Agra and Bombay ought to have been maintained. That part of the original design, the extension of railway communication to Attock, a most important section in a political point of view, was abandoned. Thus two great centres of communication remain to be connected,—the Western Presidency direct with Northern India, and the extreme Northern frontier at Peshawur and Attock with Lahore. Three lines were projected: one the extension of the Bombay and Baroda line to Agra, which would thus become the direct channel of communication between Upper India, the Western Coast, and Europe, the saving in distance by the adoption of the direct route, as compared with that *viâ* Allahabad and Jubbulpore, being enormous; the second, a line from Lahore to Peshawur; and the third, a line connecting Kotree on the Indus, the terminus of the Lower Scind railway, with Mooltan.

The subject was much discussed during the year in the papers, and a very able minute was penned by Sir Bartle Frere, who pointed out that of these three lines, two of them, at any rate, were quite distinct, and might fairly be entered upon together. Sir John Lawrence was not very favourably disposed towards either, but strongly deprecated the construction of more than one.

The question was disposed of by the Secretary of State in a minute dated the 7th March, 1867, who decided that complete surveys for the Rajpootana line, or the extension of the Bombay and Baroda line, which was to connect the western coast with Upper India by a junction at Agra and Delhi, should be carried out at once; the other scheme remaining in abeyance. Political considerations have, however, subsequently led to a modification of the policy; the survey of the Rajpootana line has been suspended, and the necessity of speedily completing the connexion between Peshawur and Lahore and Mooltan fully recognised.

To show with what caution the recommendations of Indian officials, as to the selection of routes for railways, ought to be received, it may be mentioned that the adoption of a line west of the Aravelli range between Ajmere and Delhi, for the Bombay and Baroda extension, has been recently urged on Government. The route traverses enormous wastes of loose sand, where there is neither water, nor vegetation, nor human habitation. The chief argument in its favour is the absence of engineering difficulties, but anything more than a mere superficial acquaintance with the subject would show that an engineering difficulty of a grave and, as far as experience has gone, of an insuperable character does exist. In these deserts, the sands shift under the influence of winds prevailing regularly from one quarter. In this way huge hillocks are formed in parallel rows, like ranges of little mountains, a feature with which most travellers in Asia and Africa are familiar, and this moving sand is about the most formidable enemy the engineer or the architect can encounter, for in the course of time it even buries whole cities, a fate which would speedily overtake a railway, with all its accompanying buildings in the solitudes of Bikaneer. Art, in the person of the railway engineer, has conquered nature in the obstacles offered by rivers, by valleys, even by mountains; but in the wide expanse of comparatively level plains of sand, nature is still supreme, and the traveller who would cross the lonely tracts of Bikaneer must be content to journey by the old-fashioned ship of the desert, whose domains will not be invaded by the iron horse for many years yet.

The following table shows the extent of the main lines of railway completed, and the amount of guaranteed capital up to the date of the Report, 1867-8:—

Lines.	Extent, Miles.	Guaranteed Capital.	No. of Miles to be completed.
		£	
1. East Indian	1,501¾	28,650,000	145
2. Great Indian Peninsular . . .	1,266¾	19,000,000	393
3. Madras	825	10,000,000	180
4. Scind, including Punjab and Delhi	675	10,624,000	266
5. Oude and Rohilcund	672	4,000,000	630
6. Bombay and Baroda	312½	7,500,000	6½
7. Great Southern of India . . .	160½	1,350,000	—
8. Eastern Bengal	159	2,662,000	45
9. Calcutta and South Eastern . .	29	600,000	—

In one or two instances, the figures in the third column, which shows the number of miles to be completed at the date of the Report, must be slightly modified before they can be taken to represent the existing condition of the work.

The story of the decline and fall of the Bank of Bombay will only be fully disclosed by the publication of the report of the committee of inquiry; and from what has already transpired during the progress of the investigation, it is to be feared that the disclosure will form one of the most disgraceful episodes in the commercial history of India. The temporary failure of the Agra and Masterman's Bank, in 1866, occasioned much distress among a vast number of old officers, widows, and families, whose savings were either invested or deposited there. But if the reckless trading that caused the temporary stoppage of the bank was discreditable to those who were entrusted with the management of its affairs, the speedy resuscitation of the institution evinced and justified the confidence of the public. But the Bank of Bombay was founded on a basis that attracted a far greater share of public confidence than would have been given to a mere private firm, and the trust therefore which the directors held was all the more onerous, and its breach all the more reprehensible. No doubt the public, who do not often take the

pains to inquire closely into the legal status of banks and companies they deal with, were under an impression which was in a great degree a false one, that the Government in reality were responsible for their deposits and investments. The Government were large shareholders, and were well represented in the direction; and although nothing can possibly excuse the moral delinquency of the officials who could so shamefully abuse such trust, it is another question altogether how far the State can be held legally responsible for the losses. Such a connexion as that which the Government of India has with the Presidency banks is not altogether free from objection. The Government ought either to be in a position to control their operations altogether, in which case, of course, it would be responsible to the public who invested in them, or it ought to have nothing whatever to say to their management. The position it held, or, which is much the same thing morally, the position it was supposed to hold in Bombay, was especially a false one, because it will not make itself responsible to those who confided in the bank on the strength of its State connexion. It will be interesting to note the opinions of some eminent authorities on this subject. In July 1867, Sir John Lawrence wrote: "I submit that the circumstances which have led to the ruin of the Bank of Bombay resulted from the neglect of obvious and reasonable precautions at a time of unprecedented temptation, and that if care had been taken in the selection of the Government directors, as well as in their supervision, that Bank would have surmounted all its difficulties, just as those of Bengal and Madras have done." This, in plainer words, is putting the blame of the failure on Sir Bartle Frere, for not selecting proper men for the direction, and not overlooking them after their appointment.

The *Friend of India*, which reflects faithfully Sir John Lawrence's views, speaks out more plainly. "To Sir Bartle Frere," it says, "or to his sanction, we owe that charter of 1864, which by doubling the capital of the

Bank added fuel to the flame which allowed advances on bubble shares, and, by permitting more than three lacs of rupees to be lent to individuals on personal security, created the scandals with which Bombay is still ringing." And again, "If Sir Cecil Beadon is responsible for the Orissa disaster, the late Governor of Bombay is more directly so for the moral and pecuniary ruin of Bombay."

Sir William Mansfield candidly confesses: "Having myself been a member of the Bombay Government during the years immediately preceding 1865, I am able to bear personal testimony to the manner in which a local Government can hardly fail to be carried along by such a movement as was witnessed in this year. It is too much to expect from human judgment, that when placed in the midst of such circumstances it should not be influenced by the swelling tide around, which is felt alike by every man and in every thing, and to take advantage of which in the public interest cannot fail to be the object of every Government."

Mr. Massey speaks more to the point. He says: "It would be understating the case to say, that the position of the Bank of Bombay was and is that of an insolvent whose liabilities are covered by a responsible guarantor. A guarantee would extend only to the debts of the partnership. But the Government, by the course it pursued, went much further than this. In the summer of 1865, the Bank was hard pressed; its shares fell below par. But no sooner was it announced that the Bank was supported by the unlimited credit of Government than the depositors brought back the balances they had withdrawn, and the shares rose to sixty per cent. premium. At that time the Bank had absolutely lost half its capital, and had two millions sterling of outstanding debts, which have since proved to be worthless. Thus, in consequence of the action of the Government, the public were induced to repose confidence in an establishment which was unworthy of confidence, and to give 160*l.* for property which was

not worth more than 25*l.* But could the Government have refrained from interference? could they have taken any other course than they did take? I think not. They were partners in the Bank; they were directors of the Bank. The difficulties (since ascertained to have been the ruin) of the Bank had been mainly caused by the culpable remissness of those Government directors. Sir W. Mansfield admits this to be the fact. But when his Excellency blames the Government directors, he blames the Government itself, which must be responsible for the acts of officers and nominees."

It would serve no purpose to recapitulate the discussions that went on through the whole of 1867, and the schemes which were proposed and rejected for the resuscitation of the Bank of Bombay, for its amalgamation with the Banks of Bengal and Madras,—measures stoutly and effectually resisted by the prudent counsels of the Madras Presidency; of the establishment of an agency of the Bank of Bengal at Bombay; and of the final relinquishment of the water-logged vessel to its fate, and the launching of a new one under better auspices. The committee of inquiry was not formed till a year later, and did not commence its sittings till the summer of 1868.

The principle enunciated by Sir John Lawrence was a sound one. The head of a Government must be held liable to some extent for the failure of the officers he appoints.

The excuse pleaded by Sir William Mansfield will not be admitted for a moment, for it is obvious that the same principle would justify the bloody assize of Judge Jeffreys, the atrocities of the French Revolution, or the barbarities exercised under the "No Popery" cry in the time of Titus Oates.

CHAPTER XIII.

1868.

Disturbances in Kattyawar—History of the Waghurs—Military operations—Mahommedan disaffection—Revolution in Muscat—Expedition to Yunan—Breaking up of the Chinese Empire—Affghanistan—The Oude and Punjab Tenancy Bills—The Bank of Bombay scandal—Progress of public works—Barracks—Fortresses—Security of the Empire—Railway progress—Failure of private enterprise—Earl Mayo arrives—Sir John Lawrence's administration.

THE freedom from political disturbances and military operations which, as a general rule, characterises the history of the Indian administration from 1859, appears to have ceased with the close of 1867. In the latter end of that year an affray of rather a serious character, which was attended by the loss of some valuable lives, occurred with the Waghurs on the Western Coast in the Bombay Presidency.

At the extreme west of the peninsula of Saurashtra, or Kattyawar—itself the remotest province of India on the south-west—is an insulated point of land, called appropriately enough, Jugut Coont (land's end). On this island, comprising, together with the adjoining islet of Beyt in the Gulf of Cutch, the district of Okhamundel, stands the town of Dwarka, on the bold sea-coast; and on the most commanding eminence of the town is built the great temple of Krishna. That it is the holiest and most ancient of all the shrines consecrated to this divinity, may be inferred from another name for Krishna in the Hindoo mythology being Dwarkanath, or "Lord of Dwarka."

With reference to the remote situation of this celebrated temple, I may remark, in passing, on the strange superstition which has placed all the most sacred shrines of the Hindoos in the remotest and most inaccessible localities, as if to enhance, by material difficulties and dangers, the merit of the pilgrimages enjoined by their religion. The Hindoo shrines at Budrinath, Kidarnath, Gungootree, Jumnootree, are situated in the most inaccessible heights of the far Himalaya. Other shrines, in different parts of India, will occur to the reader who has any local experience to illustrate this remark. So dangerous was the approach to Budrinath especially, that hundreds of pilgrims perished annually on the way, till the British Government, pitying the superstition it could deplore but not control, constructed the pilgrim road leading from Hurdwar up the valley of the Alakanundee and Guneshgunga, to that holy of holies, the main source of the Ganges.

The temple of Dwarka being so sacred a shrine attracted thousands of pilgrims annually, high and low, from all parts of India. The Waghurs who possessed it, as also the adjoining shrine at Beyt, appeared to have lived from time immemorial in idle dependence on its endowments and the votive offerings of the pilgrims. When these failed, or time hung on their hands, they are said to have followed piracy for diversion or profit—a course for which their position, at the mouth of the Gulf of Cutch commanding the approach from the Arabian sea, afforded peculiar facilities. The first attempt we know of to reduce the tribe to order was in 1809, when Colonel Walker was sent against them with a force, and defeating them after a stout resistance, decreed a certain sum against the tribe in compensation for their depredations. In 1815 the district of Okhamundel was sold to the Guicowar on payment among other purchase-moneys of the amount of compensation above referred to, which we had been unable to realize. The acquisition of so barren a district was valued by the Guicowar solely for the honour of becoming the patron

of the celebrated shrine. But the Waghurs did not approve of the transfer. After giving the Guicowar's officers much trouble, they defeated his troops, and turned out his Governor, thus re-possessing themselves of their strongholds and profitable shrines. As we had sold the district to the Guicowar, and been duly paid, we appear to have considered it necessary to reinstate his rule by force of arms. This was accomplished in 1820 by the employment of a force under Colonel Stanhope, but not without having to make an assault on Dwarka; in an ineffectual attempt to repel which the Waghur chief, Mooloo Manik, fell like Tippoo at Seringapatam, in the breach. After the mutinies of 1857, Okhamundel was re-transferred by the Guicowar to the British, and the fact of our having immediately to move a force against the Waghurs, and make the desperate assaults on Beyt and Dwarka, was proof sufficient, that during the long interval the district had remained under the Guicowar, he had wholly failed, even if he had attempted, to reduce to obedience that lawless tribe.

These people never wholly abandoned their restless and predatory habits; and whether under an idea that the vigilance of the British Government was relaxed, or that it had grown tired of coercion, or acting under some of those sudden impulses which occasionally drive half-savage races into wanton and fatal excesses, for the last year they had been incessantly giving trouble, plundering villages, and slaughtering inoffensive villagers. Accordingly, the Political Agent, Colonel Anderson, took the field against them with a small force of forty cavalry and thirty British infantry, with a native contingent, accompanied by his two assistants, Captains La Touche and Hibbert.

After marching some distance across the country, Colonel Anderson obtained information of the enemy being within twelve miles of his camp, and leaving the infantry to follow, the officers, accompanied by Captain Reynolds of the 17th, and the mounted portion of the little force, set off, and

after riding a considerable distance reached the foot of an isolated hill some three hundred feet high, upon the summit of which the outlaws were said to have taken up a strong position. The cavalry could not act upon such ground, so the party awaited the arrival of the infantry, who came up in about half an hour. The attack was then made: Captain La Touche, followed by a party of sepoys, gallantly assailed the position of the enemy from one direction, while Major Reynolds and Captain Hibbert ascended the hill on two opposite sides. Captain Hibbert was the first to cut down a Waghur chief, but was himself mortally wounded immediately after, being shot through the spine. Captain La Touche also fell in a hand-to-hand encounter while in the act of despatching the fourth of the outlaws he had slain with his own hand. Major Reynolds was dangerously wounded. Dearly purchased, the victory was complete; out of twenty-five desperate men, seventeen were slain, and two taken prisoners, but the success was a poor compensation for the loss of two such valuable officers as Captains La Touche and Hibbert.

A few months later, in February 1868, a body of rebellious Bheels were defeated by Captain Macleod, with parties of the 28th and 6th regiments of Bombay Native Infantry, and some of the Guicowar's horse. And shortly afterwards, on the further confines of the British Indian Empire, near Kohat, a gallant young officer, Captain Ruxton, lost his life in an encounter with one of the frontier tribes, the Bezooties, against whom a force had taken the field. The issue of the combat had been a little doubtful; but our troops vastly outnumbered the enemy, who were however strongly posted in such a position that it was extremely difficult to dislodge them. Captain Ruxton, carried away by excitement and youthful ardour, ventured rashly and against orders upon the ground held by the enemy, where he was killed, and his body left in their possession. They subsequently restored it to his friends.

Later in the year it was deemed necessary to assemble a considerable force on the North-west frontier, under General Wylde; and a regular campaign against certain tribes, occupying a large hilly region, called the Black Mountain, was undertaken. This being a military operation of some magnitude will be related in the chapter devoted to military operations on the North-west frontier.

It is somewhat curious that the symptoms of disaffection which accompanied the Umbeyla campaign of 1863-64, should have shown themselves in connexion with the Black Mountain campaign of 1868. There has been a repetition of the same activity among the Wahabee Mussulmen of the more southern part of India, especially in Bengal and the neighbourhood of Patna, which in 1863-64 eventuated in a regularly organized transmission of recruits and supplies from many of the principal cities of Bengal, even as far south as Dacca, to support the cause of the trans-Indus Mahommedan fanatics in arms against the British Government. And generally throughout India, during the year under review, there has been an active proselytizing spirit abroad, both among Hindoos and Mahommedans, itinerant preachers of both these religions having been constantly noticed in the bazaars and streets of large cities, preaching much as missionaries do, to any of the passers-by who may be disposed to listen. The feature is peculiar, because, generally speaking, neither Hindoos nor Mahommedans exhibit any proselytizing tendencies.

As on the former occasion in 1863-64, the conspirators made use of the ready-made machinery our commissariat system provided them with, to carry out their designs, passing men and money up to the frontier in the guise of commissariat *employés* and bills on commissariat agents, so now it appears they resolved to avail themselves of the means which modern civilization places within their reach, and established depôts conveniently situated as regards the railways for the transmission of recruits and contributions.

The history of the Abyssinian expedition is foreign to the plan of this work. The preparations for the part which India took in it, however, for a while awakened almost as much interest in military matters as if the whole expedition had been an Indian campaign. It was not till the 9th of January of this year that the rear of the Bengal brigade left the Hooghly under Brigadier-General Stewart, with the mountain train battery and the last of the Bengal cavalry. But although the Abyssinian war, except for the share the army of India took in it, is unconnected with the history of that country, the state of affairs in the Persian Gulf, and the revolution in Muscat, can hardly with propriety be passed over. Some acquaintance with this subject is also desirable, because, unlike the Abyssinian campaign, matters in the Persian Gulf are very far from having reached the climax where our interest in them may cease, and a knowledge of the political complications that preceded the recent revolution will enable the reader to understand the object of any future operations which England may undertake in that quarter.

The "blue waters" of Oman, immortalized by the muse of the Irish bard, are subject to the sway of the Imam of Muscat. Early in the present century we were engaged, in conjunction with Syad Said, the then Imam, in waging war against the Wahabee pirates, who interfered with the commerce of the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, and ever since that time we have preserved friendly relations with the successor of the Syad. The venerable old chief, after a reign which extended over half a century, was gathered to his fathers in 1856, leaving several sons, one of whom became ruler of Zanzibar and another succeeded his father on the throne of Muscat. His name was Thowaynee. After these arrangements had been completed, the two brothers of Muscat and Zanzibar fell out, the Sultan of Muscat claiming a tribute from his brother of Zanzibar. This tribute had no doubt formerly been paid by the ruler of the latter country to the Imam of Muscat: and the

brothers not being able to settle their differences, agreed to refer them for arbitration to Lord Canning. This nobleman being the referee—as if he had not enough to claim his attention in India—gave a decision, calculated, as he supposed, to content both parties. He ruled that Zanzibar should be independent of Muscat, but that the tribute should be paid.

So matters went on till 1865, when the Sultan of Muscat was murdered, it was supposed by his own son, Selim, who, after a nominal acquittal of the guilt of parricide by the chiefs and people, was raised to the throne, and the British Government being but little concerned in the matter of the guilt or innocence of the new sultan acknowledged his authority. His uncle of Zanzibar, however, deemed it a good opportunity for crying off the tribute, and receiving some countenance from the Shah of Persia, declined to pay it any longer. The Shah had for many years allowed the Imams of Muscat to occupy for trading purposes the port known as Bunder Abbas, on payment of a certain tribute. In short, the Imam rented the port on a sort of lease, but he had been a tenant for so long that he claimed at last rights of occupancy; and the Shah, although he would have been glad to dislodge him so as to resume the harbour, did not know very well how to set about it, for he had no marine that could cope with that of Muscat. Pretending, however, a righteous horror at the alleged parricide of the reigning Sultan, he declared his lease of Bunder Abbas forfeited and prepared to seize the place, while the Imam, on the other hand, threatened a blockade. At this juncture the British Government were obliged to interfere to protect their own interests, which palpably would be better served by keeping the ruler of Muscat in possession of so important a marine port as Bunder Abbas, and they refused to allow the Shah to obtain possession of the coveted harbour. The question of the tribute was under discussion when news was received of another revolution in Muscat, Sultan Selim having been driven from his throne by his

brother-in-law, Azan ibn Ghas, who took the capital by assault with little trouble.

This was the condition of affairs at the close of 1868 and the commencement of 1869. It may be remarked that Muscat is a place of some importance, as it commands the entrance to the Persian Gulf, and our policy will probably be directed to maintaining, as it has always done, the authority of the *de facto* sovereign.

The reader is now solicited to follow me across the continent of India to the extreme eastern limit of British dominion, where the noble river, the Irrawaddy, flows through the forests and swamps of Burmah. Upon its bank, in the dominions of Burmah Proper, is the capital city of Mandalay. Following the course of the river up the stream, to the north of Mandalay is another city, marked in large letters on the map, called Bhamo.

In former years a brisk trade existed between Yunan, the south-western province of China, and Burmah, and of late years a desire has often been expressed to re-open, if possible, the long-choked-up channels of commercial intercourse. With the view of collecting the necessary information regarding the physical geography of the intervening country, and the disposition of the inhabitants there, and in the province of Yunan, Captain Sladen was despatched early in the year at the head of a small party of explorers, to make his way from Bhamo to Momein, the first city of importance on the route, in Yunan, and if possible to the capital of the province, Tali. After a great deal of trouble, and after overcoming many obstacles and difficulties, which were chiefly due to the treachery and jealousy of the King of Burmah and his people, Captain Sladen accomplished the purpose for which he had been sent, and returned in September, having left in January, after penetrating as far as Momein. His further progress to the capital was barred by the disturbed state of the country, over which the Chinese imperial troops were swarming, nominally engaged in resisting the progress of the revo-

lutionary party in Yunan. The officials at Momein received him most courteously, and expressed themselves most anxious that the old trade should be restored. They entertained him and his suite with the utmost hospitality, and his return journey was accompanied with none of the difficulties and deprivations that our treacherous ally, the King of Burmah, had contrived to throw in his path before.

There can be little doubt that the Chinese empire is disintegrating. Apart from the rebellion of the Taepings, several other movements of a similar kind have been in progress for years past, though very little has been known about them in Europe. One of these, and not the least important, has been brought to light owing to the proximity of the Russian forces to the territories where the revolutionary spirit has been at work, and a missing link in the chain of events has been supplied by the information collected and forwarded to the Government of India by the Political Resident at Leh, together with that furnished by Mr. Johnson, who was an uncovenanted *employé* of the Indian Government engaged in the survey under Major Montgomerie, and who incurred the displeasure of his superiors by penetrating without orders as far as Khoten. The revolution effected in Western China has been mainly a Mahommedan movement. There is a little uncertainty as to the events which led to the settlement of Mahommedans in Western China, but it appears to have originated in a Mahommedan contingent sent at the request of two successive Emperors of China,[1] in the eighth century, by the Caliphs of Bagdad. When the work for which their aid was solicited and supplied had been accomplished, a portion of the contingent, either as a grant in lieu of pay, or in reward for services rendered, were allowed to settle in one of the provinces of Western China. Here they flourished, and multiplied. The descendants of these men, who are called by the Burmese, Panthays, claim an Arabic origin; and the more learned among them still cultivate that

[1] *Edinburgh Review*, March 1868.

language, not only as the language of their religious services, but as the medium of polite communication. This would seem to indicate a difference of origin between these people, who belong to the southern districts of Western China, and the Mussulmans of Northern China and Eastern Toorkistan, who are clearly of Toork descent.

The Panthays, or Mahommedans of Arabic descent in the South-West, are of the sect of Soonees. It is supposed they took advantage of the progress of the Taeping rebellion in 1855 to assert their own independence, which they succeeded in establishing, now twelve years ago, and have maintained ever since. In 1857, vague rumours were abroad of a great Mahommedan movement somewhere in the unknown regions to the eastward of our eastern frontier, which it was suggested, might have some connexion with the Mahommedan element of strife then active in India. But there appears to be no foundation for the report, for the Mussulman rebellion in China commenced two years before the mutiny occurred in India. Success attended the effort. The imperial troops were everywhere defeated, and the new Mahommedan kingdom was established under a sovereign called by the Mussulmans themselves Suleiman, by the Chinese Tuwintsen. He assumed all the signs and symbols of imperial sovereignty, and was assisted in the government by a council of eight (four military and four civil) ministers. The administration is conducted much on the old Chinese model; taxation is light, consisting principally of moderate assessment on land.

One curious result of this change of rule has been the total cessation of traffic that formerly existed between this part of China and Burmah. It will be recollected that a project for a railway connecting Rangoon with Western China was recently set on foot, and it now appears that, had it not been found impracticable owing to physical obstacles, and the difficulty of obtaining labour in the tract of country through which the proposed rail-

way would have had to be constructed, the results aimed at would not have been attained, in consequence of the policy adopted by the King or Emperor Suleiman, who, true to Chinese prejudices imbibed during the connexion of the country with the celestial empire, forbade his subjects to engage in trade with outside barbarians.

The exclusiveness of the Chinese is, however, rapidly wearing off, and accounts go to show that no impediment is now offered to a European traveller provided with proper passports. A similar influence appears to have guided the counsels of the Yunan government in their acceptance of Captain Sladen's proposal to renew the traffic so long closed.

While the southern part of Western China was thus becoming disintegrated from the dominions of the Emperor of Pekin, the northern portion of it also, which is bounded on the west by Thibet, was slipping from his grasp. Very little is known even now about the progress of the rebellion in this portion of what was the Chinese empire. The reader may recollect the expedition undertaken by Colonel Sarel some years ago, which penetrated within 150 miles of Ching-tu-fu, and then was forced to return in consequence of the whole country being in a disorganized state from rebellion. This rebellion must be still making head, as Jung Bahadoor's embassy, which started from Khatmandoo in August 1866, was unable to reach the capital, and forced to return to Nepal, in consequence of the country being in such an unsettled state. After crossing the Chinese frontier, a message reached the ambassador from Pekin, desiring him not to proceed, as the journey was impracticable, but to exchange the royal presents at the frontier town and return. This rebellion is not a Mahommedan movement, as was that in the Southern Province, although it is supposed there are a great many Mahommedans mixed up in it. It appears to have arisen from a love of plunder and a desire for independence, advantage being taken of the embarrassment caused to the

Imperial Government by the old Taeping rebellion. That the country has been much desolated by the violence of the rebels appears from the following extract from the report furnished by the Nepalese ambassador:—

"In our journey onwards from the city of Batang, every city we passed through had been destroyed by fire and deserted by the inhabitants: habitations were rarely met with. As far as Lithang the country is in the same bad state, and everything is dear. . . . The war has now lasted nine years, and the country is in a miserable condition."

To the northward, again, of this tract of country lies a vast territory, comprising Eastern Toorkistan and Dungana, the desert of Gobi, and the Chinese provinces of Kansu and Shensi, inhabited mostly by a race of Mahommedans called Toonganies or Dungeas. They are Soonees, like the Mussulmans of the Lower Provinces, and in their observance of the tenets of the Koran exhibit considerable enthusiasm. They are completely under the influence of their Imams or Akhoonds, even in secular affairs. They are remarkable for their abstinence from spirituous liquors, opium, and tobacco; but in temper they are passionate and overbearing, and unhappily addicted to the use of the knife in the settlement of their disputes with one another. But they have the character of being industrious and honest in commercial dealings. They had a great antipathy to the Imperial Government of the Manchoo dynasty, which feeling was not lessened by various measures designed to coerce them into subjection, and which, as might have been expected, had the very contrary effect: such were imperial decrees subjecting them to heavy taxation, requiring the men to wear the hated pigtail, and the women to compress their feet into the dimensions prescribed by Chinese fashion.

Long smouldering, the spirit of rebellion burst into open flame first in 1862. The Imperial forces were despatched to suppress the outbreak with the usual result, and the insurrection spreading, the enthusiasm of the Mahom-

medan population was everywhere aroused by the well-known artifice of preaching a holy war. The emissaries despatched to proclaim the "jehad" went to work with a will, "and ere long there was not a town in the two provinces where the mosque had not rung with their passionate exhortations."[1]

It is hardly necessary to repeat that the rebellion was successful. And from the seat of its origin it rapidly spread over a very large tract of country, designated by names of provinces, cities, and mountains altogether unknown to and unrecognisable by the general reader, until the tide of revolution washed up as far as Yarkund and Kashgur, names with which we are all of us more or less familiar. At Yarkund the rebels speedily drove the Chinese troops into the fort, and there besieged them. At Kashgur, the commandant of the Imperial troops adopted a bloody stratagem with the view of destroying his enemies. He invited the Toonganies to a feast in the fort, and while they were doing justice to his hospitality he opened upon them a volley of musketry, which destroyed the whole of the guests except fifty, seven hundred having been invited. This atrocity was the signal for all the Mahommedan population of Kashgur to fly to arms, and the result was that the Imperial troops, with their treacherous commander, were shut up in the fort. Almost at the same time a similar tragedy was enacted at Khoten, where an attempt was made to massacre the Toonganies, who, however, proved too strong for their assailants; and the latter, having no fort to take refuge in, were totally destroyed, a moolla named Hajee Habeeboolla being raised to the throne of Khoten. The beleaguered garrison of Yarkund, being pressed by fresh reinforcements sent to the aid of the insurgents, set fire to their own magazine, and perished in the conflagration.

Meantime the Chinese troops, in the fort of Kashgur, were as hard pressed as their fellow-soldiers had been at

[1] *Edinburgh Review*, March 1868.

Yarkund. The insurgents were aided by a leader from Kokand, called the Kooshbegee, or commander-in-chief of the Kokand forces, who in 1847 betrayed to the Russian general, in return for a large sum of money, a portion of the territory of Kokand committed to his charge. This man arrived one day at Kashgur, with a following of about five hundred men. The siege was pressed, the garrison was decimated by famine; and in March 1865 the remnant committed suicide, and Yakoob Kooshbegee became master of the place.

The new Mahommedan power thus established in the north-west of China was now divided into three principal factions. In the east one named Rashud-ood-deen —whose rise to fortune space has not allowed me to relate—held sway; in the south reigned Habeeboolla, who, as we have seen, was raised to the throne of Khoten; and at Yarkund, Yakoob Kooshbegee, with the help of his Kokand followers, had seized the reins of government. The first and last of these successful adventurers were the first to come to blows; the third, or the Khoten ruler, standing aloof. And it was at this crisis of the affair that, in October 1865, Mr. Johnson, the first European traveller who, with the exception of M. Adolphe Schlagentweit, had been seen there for centuries, made his appearance at Khoten. The Khan Habeeboolla had sent him an invitation, which he accepted on his own responsibility. For this he incurred the displeasure of the Government, who reprimanded him for placing himself, without orders, in a position which might have led to serious political embarrassment. Much as we may admire the spirit of curiosity and research that induces travellers to venture into unexplored regions, and place themselves in the power of barbarian chiefs and rulers, Englishmen have too lively an impression of the enormous cost of the Abyssinian expedition to countenance acts of rashness in individuals which are calculated to lead to the loss of their own lives, or of the perhaps still more valuable lives of those whom

the country may deem it its duty to despatch to their rescue.

The contest ended in the victory of Yakoob Kooshbegee, who seized Yarkand in April 1860, and reduced to submission a large tract of country, including Khoten; the ill-fated Habeeboolla, Mr. Johnson's host, an old man of upwards of eighty years of age, having been cruelly murdered.

This brief outline of recent events in a large, and to us not unimportant tract of Southern and Central Asia, belongs only indirectly to the history of Indian Administration. It is quite certain, however, so far as we can say that any future event is certain, that the writer who shall record the history of Indian Administration during the ensuing ten years will have much to relate of these countries in connexion with Russian progress and politics, as well as, it is to be hoped, in connexion with an extended trade between India and the Southern and Western provinces of China.

It is worthy of remark that, as the Russian power has approached the limits of the Chinese empire, a revolution, or succession of revolutions, should have come to a head, which have had the effect of bringing them in contact in the next step of their advance with a Mahommedan instead of a Manchoo power. With this new dynasty of Mussulman Chinese the Russians have next to deal, as soon as they have established themselves in the territories recently overrun. But although Mahommedan fanaticism is capable of arousing a martial spirit among races who could not be induced to offer any resistance worth speaking of by any lower motive, and although this instrument will no doubt be freely used to oppose Russian progress, the check their advance will meet with from the newly-constituted Mussulman kingdom of Western China will be only temporary. If Bokhara, with all its prestige and associations as the seat and centre of Islam in Upper Asia, has failed to kindle a spirit capable of resisting the encroachments of a Christian power, we need not expect

any result but that of a speedy victory from a conflict between the Czar's troops and such a man as Yakoob Kooshbegee. There can be no question but that all who desire to see the extension of civilization and the expansion of trade will find matter for congratulation, rather than alarm, in the establishment of a Christian Government in the room of the crumbling and blood-stained dynasties of Central Asia.

Allusion has been made to M. Adolphe Schlagentweit. He was murdered at Kashgur. It was during the progress of one of the insurgent movements, the outline of whose progress has been just detailed, that the lamented traveller happened to visit the country. One of the bloodthirsty monsters who during that period alternately rose to power, Wulee Khan Turra by name, had gained temporary possession of Kashgur (and memorialized his short reign—for he was soon driven out by the Chinese) by erecting a pyramid of human skulls on the banks of the river. As one after the other the heads of Chinese and Mahommedans were brought to construct the hideous pile, the savage sat and watched its growth. The heads of some of the best and bravest of his own followers were cut off to gratify the whim of the monster, and the head of Adolphe Schlagentweit was taken to crown the apex of the pyramid.

The recent history of Affghanistan, since the death of Dost Mahommed, affords nothing more interesting to the general reader than a succession of internal feuds, battles, and sieges. The outline of events, however, may be thus briefly described. Dost Mahommed died in 1863, after nominating his son, Shere Ally Khan, as his successor. Shere Ally's seat on the throne, however, was insecure, owing to the jealousy of his two brothers: one, Afzul Khan, who was at the head of the Toorkistan army as it was called, that is, the troops quartered in the northern region of Affghanistan; and the other, Azim Khan, who governed the country to the south and east between Cabul and the British frontier. Against both these rivals Shere Ally was

at first successful, having gained possession of Afzul Khan's person by treachery, and driven Azim Khan out of the country. The latter repaired to Rawul Pindee, a town and British settlement in the north of the Punjab, where he resided with a few followers, till another revolution in the political wheel of Affghan affairs enabled him to return. Shere Ally carried his brother, Afzul Khan, a captive to Cabul. The latter, however, fortunately had a son, a chief of some genius and energy, and a favourite with the troops composing the Toorkistan garrison, which his father had for years commanded during the lifetime of Dost Mahommed. Putting himself at their head, he marched on Cabul, dethroned and drove away Shere Ally, liberated his father, and seated him on the vacant throne. Afzul Khan did not live to enjoy for long the royal honours; and on his death was succeeded by Azim Khan, Abdoolrahman Khan, the son of Afzul Khan, generously waiving his rights in favour of his uncle. The uncle and nephew now became fast friends. But Shere Ally was indefatigable in his efforts to regain the throne he had lost; and obtaining assistance—some say from Russia, others from Persia—or depending solely on his own resources, he managed to collect an army, and principally by the genius of his general-officer, Yakoob Ally Khan, fought his way back to Cabul and the throne, which he re-occupied in July 1868. Azim Khan, and his nephew Abdoolrahman, have still a strong party in their favour, and, it is said, the sympathy and secret assistance of Persia. But since the close of the year the Ameer Shere Ally has been received with every demonstration of respect by the Viceroy, Earl Mayo; and although the British Government have not pledged themselves to any line of policy in Central Asian affairs, yet the mere fact of a cordial reception having been given to the Ameer by the British Viceroy has so raised his prestige that, unless the rival claimants to the throne are powerfully aided from some external quarter, they are not likely to succeed in again

dispossessing Shere Ally, who is now both *de jure* and *de facto* sovereign of Affghanistan.

The year 1868 is remarkable for having witnessed, under the administration of Sir John Lawrence, the conclusion of a controversy which for the last century has divided Indian statesmen into two opposing schools. It may be briefly described as the Tenant-right controversy, although many rights, besides those of tenants, were involved in it. The outlines of this dispute are familiar to most readers who take an interest in the modern history of India. To enter fully into it, even to recapitulate, however briefly, the opinions and views which have been set forth by writers on both sides, would occupy volumes. The mass of opinions, in the shape of evidence taken before parliamentary committees, in minutes, and Indian blue-books, &c., which have accumulated upon this much-debated question, is enough to appal the most enthusiastic or most diligent inquirer.

The broad principles upon which land settlements are made in new provinces are laid down in Regulation VII. of 1822, and it is that settlement-officers are to inquire into and record existing rights as they find them. This has ever been the law and procedure. It is somewhat illustrative of Indian legislation, that in 1868 the question should be mooted in Council, as it was in the discussion on the Punjab Tenancy Bill on the 21st October, whether, after the period for which the first settlement was made has expired, the settlement-officers had or had not the power of revising the records of rights made at the first settlement. It is strange that a point so important, striking at the very root of our whole administrative revenue system, should have remained undetermined for forty-six years. The Punjab Tenancy Bill was passed on the 21st October, 1868, and the necessity for the interference of the Legislature with the tenant-right of that province arose in this way. The first settlement having expired—a settlement which Sir John Lawrence not unnaturally upholds as being as perfect

and just a measure on the whole as could be effected—another became necessary; and it seems that the officers engaged upon it, acting of course under the orders of the local government, considered that they were called upon to take cognizance of claims to rights whether or not they superseded or set aside those recorded at the first settlement. "It appears," says Mr. Maine, in the debate on the bill, "that in the single division of Umritsur 60,000 heads of households were recorded at the first settlement of the Punjab as entitled to beneficial rights of occupancy. At the recent settlement 46,000 of these cultivators have been degraded to the status of tenants at will. If the same proportion be maintained for the whole province, these numbers denote some hundreds of thousands. It would appear, however, from a minute of the Chief Court of the Punjab, that though the settlement-officers employed the Settlement Regulation of 1822 to produce these formidable results, they did not think fit to follow the prescribed procedure, but have adopted a procedure of their own unknown to the law. The Chief Court states accordingly that all the settlement operations have effected is a superior description of registration. But this is not all. It seemed that the settlement-officers, from compassion or compunction, did not in all cases degrade the occupancy tenant at once to a tenant at will. They allowed him a period of years, during which he was to retain his rights of occupancy. The Chief Court has decided that they had no power to do anything of the kind, and that in such cases the higher status must continue indefinitely. This decision of the Chief Court in the division of Umritsur alone affected no less than 22,000 cases. In one division there have been 46,000 rulings on rights to land, of which 22,000 are bad in law. We are threatened with an agrarian revolution, to be immediately followed by an agrarian counter-revolution."[1]

[1] *Gazette of India* (official), debate on Punjab Tenancy Bill, October 26th, 1868.

We have seen in a former chapter[1] the disastrous effect of the crude settlement made in Oude in 1856, which of itself shows how little dependence is to be placed upon the supposed guarantee afforded by the regulation of 1822, that the settlement-officers will confine themselves to a faithful record of existing rights. Mr. Strachey has shown, in the passages from his speech quoted in the former chapter, what terrible havoc the civilians of the North-West Provinces committed with existing rights under the shelter of this regulation. And the fate of the two original settlements in Oude and the Punjab will not inaptly illustrate the nature of this controversy.

It appears most strange, when we come to reflect upon it, that for near a century the ablest men the Indian services have produced have been at issue upon a question of fact. The differences that separate contending parties of politicians, the disputes between opposing schools of science, philosophy, and theology, are matters of principle. It is scarcely conceivable that for half a century statesmen should be at issue upon facts. Yet it has been the case in India, and it is so unique and singular a phenomenon as to suggest an inquiry into its cause. No Indian administrator has ever desired, or would ever advocate, any interference with existing rights in land. To discover what was the species of tenure under which land was held when a province first came under British rule has always been the aim and intention of every successive government. Inquiries were always conducted on the spot, and generally by picked men, often by the ablest and best officers that could be employed. Yet it would be impossible to state two conclusions more diverse and irreconcilable than those at which the highest authorities have, with seemingly the same data to go upon, arrived, on the subject of Indian land-tenure.

The inquiry dates back even to a period anterior to 1796, when Lord Cornwallis introduced the Permanent

[1] Chapter II.

Settlement of Bengal; and in 1812, and again in 1832, an immense mass of most valuable evidence was recorded by the parliamentary committees that sat to investigate this point in both these years. We need not, however, dive into the depths of these bulky volumes for an instance in illustration of the singular error into which some of the highest authorities have fallen. It is now amply shown that the settlement of Oude in 1856, so far from recording existing rights, trampled them down on every side.

One would think, *à priori*, that it could not be possible for statesmen to be at issue for upwards of half a century upon the fact whether proprietary rights in lands belonged to the cultivator or to the superior landlord, zemindar, or talookdar, or raja, under whatever name he might happen to be specified in each different locality. Yet it is upon this point that the two schools of Indian politicians have been divided, one party contending that the cultivator held as tenant or tenant at will of the superior landlord; the other that the landlord had no proprietary right at all in the soil—in short, that there was no such thing as a landlord in our sense of the word, but that the peasantry were peasant-proprietors under other designations. In Bengal the zemindar, who, it is pretty clear now, was originally merely an official collector of revenue for the Crown, has been recognised under the Permanent Settlement of Lord Cornwallis as landlord, and thus he was confirmed in rights which may be said to have been created for him by law. At that time the tendency clearly was to recognise rights in superior tenure, even to the extent of creating them when they were not previously in existence. When the territory known as the North-West Provinces came into our possession, the inclination was altogether the other way. Then the proprietary right was recognised as vested in village coparcenaries. No one can come into frequent contact with the transactions of Government in the first ten or fifteen years of our rule in the Upper Provinces without feeling that their most prominent feature was the systematic

setting aside of farmers and talookdars, and the admission of village proprietors to direct engagements.[1]

This was the system often called, but erroneously so, the Thomasonian, for Messrs. Bird and Thomason, to whom the policy is popularly ascribed, acted merely as the executive, carrying out the policy of their superiors, and as channels to convey to subordinate officers the orders of the Supreme Government. But by whatever name it may be recognised, it was the system in vogue for many years, and formed the principle of revenue administration most warmly advocated by the school to which Sir John Lawrence was attached.

In Southern and Western India different principles prevailed. Throughout the greater part of Madras the normal state of the ryots is to hold immediately from the Crown; "and wherever he so holds without the intervention of any middleman, proprietary right is vested in the occupant of individual fields, or it has a tendency so to grow up, though often imperfectly, and shackled by special incidents."[2]

Throughout Bombay the tenure of land resembles that in Madras. There we mostly find villages with their municipal constitution complete, and their headman as their representative, who is called the "Potail." The entire cultivated area is owned by the ryots, each man's holding being his share. The same system prevails in Sind, and in the large tract of country called the assigned Berar district, belonging to the territory of the Nizam in the Deccan. And a tenure similar in its essentials was found to prevail generally over the southern and western portions of the continent.

How, then, it will be asked, did it come to pass that throughout this long period, from 1796 to 1868, the best authorities on Indian revenue questions have been at issue

[1] *Vide* Memorandum by Sir William Muir on the investigation into tenant right in Oude, in the Second Blue Book, 1867, Appendix II.

[2] Ibid.

upon facts? There are two or three considerations which it appears to me will serve to throw some light on the matter. We all know how utterly impossible it is for any living man, no matter how able he may be, to arrive at a fair, just, and discriminating decision on any single point, when he comes to a consideration of it with a bias one way or the other. Take the most ordinary question that may present itself to our mind for solution, and let there be a bias one way or the other, and how forcibly facts, arguments, premises, and conclusions dovetail themselves so as to suit that view to which the mind was previously inclined! It may be doubted if it is possible for any man to enter on the consideration of any question with a mind quite evenly balanced. The scale may be turned one way or the other during the course of the investigation, but a preponderance one way or the other there will be from the first. This is why in all judicial questions, where facts are in issue, the decision should be entrusted to more than a single judge. To do justice absolutely and perfectly, the mind must be perfectly evenly balanced. But justice is an attribute not of man, but of God, and nothing short of a perfect nature can possess or exercise the attributes of perfection. Hence it is that no inquiry which requires an even balance of mind to elicit a just conclusion ought to be conducted by one man. There must at least be two, for one mind cannot divide itself so as to provide within itself a counterpoise and check. It is not easy to imagine any field for inquiry where the mind would be more readily warped by a leaning one way or the other than the Indian land question. The more evenly balanced the evidence on both sides, the more liable is the conclusion to be influenced by preconceived ideas. In this case there was every danger not only of evidence being forced to lead to a preconceived conclusion, but of its being absolutely created in accordance with that conclusion. Take an instance, selected almost at random from the thousands that might be cited out of the voluminous mass of records from the days of Holt Mackenzie to

Muir, a sentence out of Sir John Lawrence's speech on the Punjab Tenancy Bill in 1868: "When the Jalandhur Dooab was being settled," he says, "I remember asking the Hill rajas, To whom did the land belong? With one voice they answered, 'To us, the rajas.' Then when I asked the same question of the dominant section of the villagers, they said that the land belonged to a particular class or caste in the village, the Rajpoots, Brahmins, and the like. The cultivators, lastly, would affirm that while the lands held by the village proprietors and the waste lands certainly belonged to those parties, the lands in possession of the cultivators also belonged to that class. The real explanation of all this is simply that the land as a rule exclusively belonged to no one class."

Now this is a most instructive passage, as illustrating the foregoing remarks. The reader here sees a field for inquiry, where a preconceived conclusion would be quite sure to find something to support it.

A settlement-officer with an idea of a landed aristocracy foremost in his mind, would here find undoubted testimony of such a tenure. Another, with his mind prepossessed in favour of the cultivator's right in the land, would here find the condition of things he anticipated. A third, with a strong feeling that if there were no cultivating occupancy rights there ought to be, would adopt exactly the conclusion which Sir John Lawrence adopted, "The land belongs to no one—here is a *tabula rasa*, with which we can do what we like."

It would probably be impossible to have found anywhere a single settlement-officer, or any one else, who could if he had tried have gone into the inquiry without a leaning one side or the other. And Mr. Forsyth, the Commissioner of Jalandhur, struck the key-note of the whole question in a remark quoted by Sir William Mansfield in the debate on the Punjab Tenancy Bill: "I have not given," he says, "my assent, . . . because I consider that a commission of some kind should be first appointed to ascertain the general

feelings and wants of the people *before we create new rights which tend to perpetuate a double property in the soil.*"

But it is often more difficult to destroy than to create. It may be too late now, except as a matter of historical research, to decide the question whether it was right or wrong to create these rights. Assuming, as many do, that the rights were created on the first settlement of the Punjab, the question is, having created them, what is to be done with them ? Shall we destroy the work of our own hands ? Shall we break up the existing state of things, and seek to make a *tabula rasa*, as Lord Canning did when he confiscated all rights in the soil of Oude, in order that he might obliterate for once and for ever, not the iniquity of the old Nawabate, but the iniquity of our own settlement made in 1856? There is undoubtedly much in Mr. Maine's argument, that even if these beneficial rights of occupancy were really planted in the Punjab by the British Government, they have grown up and borne fruit under its shelter, and that it is not for its honour or interest to give them up to ruthless destruction now.

When, however, we recollect how long this subject has been a disputed one; how for near a century the best authorities have been at issue upon essentials; how upon Sir John Lawrence's own showing there was so much room for doubt; how of all questions that could come before successive governments, this one requires the most delicate handling and the most indefatigable and impartial research; we cannot fail to see the force of Mr. Forsyth's recommendation, that before the views of a majority of the small body composing the Legislative Council were stereotyped in the rigid garb of law, a commission consisting of men of both schools should have been appointed to give to the long-disputed point the benefit of a careful and sifting investigation.

This brief outline of the main points involved in the land tenure controversy will, with what has been said above[1]

[1] Chapter II.

regarding the previous policy in Oude, enable the reader to understand the position of the respective parties in the dispute about talookdary tenure and tenant right in Oude, which has formed so marked a feature in Sir John Lawrence's administration.

In the summary settlement made with the talookdars under Lord Canning's order, there was a reservation either expressed or implied that any adjudication of proprietary rights then made might be subject to revision at a future and more regular settlement.[1] Sir Robert Montgomery, however, declined to sanction that reservation, partly because it was deemed unfair to the talookdars, and partly because it was considered that the inquiry had been sufficiently complete to render any reinvestigation at a future time unnecessary. This settlement, it would appear, was made by the officers who conducted it under the belief that it was to be subject to future revision; nevertheless, after it had been completed, it was declared to be final. Subsequently to this, the talookdars, feeling not altogether secure in face of the leaning which our Government had of late years shown to a recognition of village proprietorship, begged that "sunnuds," or title-deeds, might be accorded them which should confirm them in their rights. These title-deeds were accordingly granted in October 1859, accompanied by a stipulation introduced by Lord Canning to the following effect:—"It is a condition of this grant that you will so far as is in your power promote the agricultural prosperity of your estate, and that all holding under you shall be secured in the possession of all the subordinate rights they formerly enjoyed."

In addition to this, and with a view of rendering his meaning still more clear, Lord Canning wrote as follows in a letter accompanying the "sunnuds:"—

"The 'sunnuds' declare that while on the one hand the Government has conferred on the talookdars and on their heirs for ever the sole proprietary rights in their

[1] *Calcutta Review*, Feb. 1868.

respective estates, subject only to the payment of the annual revenue that may be imposed from time to time, and to certain conditions of loyalty and good service; on the other hand, all persons holding an interest in the land, under the talookdars, will be secured in the possession of the subordinate rights which they have heretofore enjoyed.

"The meaning of this is, that where a regular settlement of the province is made, whenever it is found the zemindars or other persons have held an interest in the soil intermediate between the ryots and the talookdars, the amount in proportion payable by the intermediate holder to the talookdar, and the net 'jumma' (revenue) payable by the talookdar to the Government, will be fixed and recorded after careful and detailed survey and inquiry into each case, and will remain unchanged during the currency of the settlement.

"The talookdars cannot, with any show of reason, complain if the Government take effectual steps to re-establish or maintain in subordination to them the former rights, as these existed in 1855, of other persons whose connexion with the soil is, in many cases, more intimate and more ancient than theirs; and it is obvious that the only effectual protection which the Government can extend to these inferior holders is to define and record their rights, and to limit the demand of the talookdars as against such persons during the currency of the settlement to the amount fixed by the Government on the basis of its own revenue demand. What proportion of the rent shall be allowed in each case to zemindars and talookdars is a question to be determined at the time of settlement."

It having been brought to the notice of Lord Elgin's Government that the rights of tenants, who held a somewhat higher status than that of mere tenants at will, were liable to be obliterated altogether from their being omitted from the settlement made, as well as from the fact that the talookdars themselves exercised certain

judicial powers, the Viceroy drew the attention of the Chief Commissioner of Oude to the position of this class, intimating a desire that they should be entered in the settlement papers, so that there might be some record extant of their existence.

The matter was in this position when Sir John Lawrence assumed the reins of government in 1864. The question, of all others, that was likely to interest him most, immediately attracted his attention, and he at once inquired what measures had been taken to preserve the rights of these tenants. He was informed in reply that no such rights as those referred to existed. Not satisfied with this the Viceroy directed further inquiry, and in order to secure its being conducted in a thorough and complete manner, appointed an officer upon whose co-operation he knew he could depend, Mr. Davies, Financial Commissioner; not, however, before the Chief Commissioner, Mr. Wingfield, had declined to carry out the investigation himself, feeling that it was in a measure a reversal of his policy, and inconsistent with the Report he had already made.

A full and searching inquiry then took place amid a storm of angry discussion in the papers, many of which pointed out that to institute for the second time a search after right of this kind was in India tantamount to offering a premium to fraud; for that if heretofore the rights had had no existence, as reported by Mr. Wingfield, the measure looked very like a determination, on Sir John Lawrence's part, to create them. Very much to the credit of the Oude peasantry, the investigation resulted in establishing the fact that such rights did not exist. The result was creditable to the Oude peasantry, because it might have been expected that they would have taken the opportunity of fraudulently setting up claims which it was clear the Supreme Government were then only too anxious to find established. What rights, or rather privileges, they did possess, were shown to be in reality no rights at all,

but privileges they enjoyed by favour of the landlord. These privileges the talookdars refused to convert into rights. What amount, or what kind, of pressure was brought to bear on them it is impossible to say, or whether the pressure was wholly imaginary on their part. Certain it is that they were in an excited state about it, and clamoured lustily that the British Government had committed a breach of faith; that the promise made by Lord Canning had been broken by his successors; and, as Mr. Strachey says, they appealed to the proclamation once so loudly condemned as an exceptionally harsh measure, as their Magna Charta.

Sir John Lawrence indeed, in Council, in July 1867, indignantly denied that any pressure had been put by him on the talookdars to induce them to agree to any terms they did not approve. But then his Excellency forgot that pressure may very easily be put upon people in the position of the talookdars without the direct authority or even knowledge of the Viceroy, when it is publicly known that he has identified himself with a particular party in a dispute.

It will be observed, that the class of tenants about whom all these dissensions had arisen were a class superior to the mere cultivators of the soil, who have been designated—and the term is not a very clear or intelligible one—sub-proprietors.

Both in the case of Oude and in that of the Punjab the breach has been patched up, and the long-continued controversy between the two schools of politicians plastered over by a compromise, to which in the former case the talookdars themselves were a party. The Bill which defines their rights and those of their tenants was not passed till the select committee reported that the talookdars were completely satisfied with the provisions of the Bill. Mr. Strachey, in the debate on the 22d July, stated that they had repeatedly declared that the Bill carried out faithfully all the engagements of the Government;

and they had also themselves confirmed to his Excellency in person the accuracy of this statement during the Viceroy's visit to Lucknow in November 1867. The essentials in this compromise were, on the part of the talookdars, an agreement to recognise the privileges of all cultivators who had been once proprietors of these lands, so that what they held by favour they should hereafter hold by right; on the part of the Government, that all the orders recognising a right of occupancy or preference in non-proprietary cultivators should be cancelled: while the important principle was established, that, under certain circumstances, tenants might claim compensation for unexhausted improvements.

The charge of over-hasty legislation occasionally brought against the Indian Government, and not without cause, cannot with justice be laid to their door in the case of the Oude Tenancy Bill. Both in that and the Punjab Tenancy Bill, indeed, the subject underwent deep and prolonged discussion, so far as such subjects can be discussed by means of official inquiries, recorded opinions, minutes, and the like. The Oude Bill, as we have seen, was not passed till the matter had been before the public for a whole year, and reference had been made to the Talookdars, and conferences held by them. They have, since the passing of the Bill, declared themselves dissatisfied, and have once again raised the cry of breach of faith against Sir John Lawrence's Government. And they persistently deny, what has been so positively asserted by Mr. Strachey, that they saw and approved of the draft of the Bill *as it now stands* before it was passed, and that it was not passed till they had given their assent to it.

With regard to the Punjab Tenancy Bill, much difference of opinion still exists, diametrically opposite accounts of what occurred at the debate having been published. Certain efforts were made, no doubt, to discover the views of the people through the medium of the Punjab officials, but the result of those efforts was negatived by the constitution of

the Council at the time the Bill was passed, which in the absence of Sir H. Durand left a majority on the side of the President. The draft of the Bill as it originally appeared was returned to Sir Donald McLeod, the Lieutenant-Governor, for reconstruction, and as a matter of course the two parties in the Punjab, one deprecating legislation at this period and the other advocating its interference as the only method of solving a great difficulty, expressed their respective views, which in the one case, for lack of valid support and efficient advocacy in Council, served little purpose besides recording an empty protest. But it is said that some very important papers bearing on the subject at issue had been received at Simla only a few days before the debate, and Sir William Mansfield, as the representative of the party opposed to the Bill, declared that they had not had time to read them. Mr. Cockerell, another opponent, pressed for a postponement, but Sir John Lawrence refused to accede to it, and after some sharp recrimination the Bill was passed through Council, Sir John Lawrence himself announcing a decided wish, equivalent in such a case to a command, that the Bill should become law that day.

Thus a Bill affecting the dearest interests of the whole population of an important province was passed in the face of a declaration from a very large body of experienced officials, that its provisions were ill calculated to secure the prosperity or contentment of the people. Nothing can show more effectually the defects of a machinery for legislation which can admit of such a procedure. It would be better to leave the Viceroy altogether unfettered, and force him to bear the whole responsibility of enactments passed in face of an opposition which, though ineffective, was entitled at any rate to a fair hearing.

It may appear to the English reader not a little strange that such a crisis as that which was put forward as justifying and necessitating the passing of this Bill should be allowed to arise in consequence of the procedure of officers who, it must be presumed, understood their work, or at any rate

were supervised by those who did, and who, especially in the Punjab, were known to be picked men. That there should be a difference of opinion as to the bearing of Regulation VII. of 1822—that throughout all this long period of time the essential point should never have been determined, whether or not the record of rights framed at the first settlement may be recast at the second—is indeed singular. But, as Mr. Maine remarks, "these older enactments were not intended to stand the test now applied to them; if they were carried out in a sense not intended by their framers, an executive order which in fact emanated from an authority identical in point of *personnel* with the Legislature corrected the error. But I believe, chiefly because the authors of the Regulation were great men and men of strong sense, that they intended nothing so preposterous as a periodical wholesale officious revision of the record."[1]

But the question will occur, how was it that these rights, recognised at the second settlement, were not put forward at the first? Why were rights allowed to remain dormant and claims to slumber for fifteen years, and then set up, when the difficulty of establishing them must have increased a hundredfold? The explanation is given by Sir John Lawrence. "Under the Sikh rule," he says, "the position of the hereditary cultivators was practically very much on a par with that of the proprietors in the same village. And although the Sikhs in their social relations to each other set a high value on proprietary rights in land, more particularly when these were ancestral, their rulers acted very differently, and cared little who held or who cultivated these lands, provided that the revenue was punctually paid."[2] When British rule supplanted the comparative state of anarchy which succeeded the death of Runjeet Singh, rights in land were practically of so little value that those who might have claimed them did not in all cases think it worth while to do so. Many may have thought they would obtain

[1] Debate on Punjab Bill, *Gazette of India*, Oct. 26th, 1868.

[2] *Gazette of India*, Oct. 26th, 1868.

easier terms if registered as hereditary cultivators instead of proprietors. "As years passed by," says Mr. Forsyth, the Commissioner of Jalandhur, "the people, ignorant and careless, continued in their old way, taking no heed, and probably unconscious of the", [effect of] "the erroneous entries. But now, as lapse of time gives a validity to titles otherwise untenable, we are frequently assailed by petitions to correct alleged errors." Another cause for the *insouciance* of the Punjab proprietors may be found in a doubt as to the permanency of our then newly-acquired dominion. As time went on, and they saw the British Government more and more firmly seated on the throne of the Moguls, this feeling would wear away ; and as land rose in value, as it does rise every year in India, rights that at first were thought little of became too precious to be neglected any longer. And here the question will at once present itself to the reader's mind, how far are men entitled to a resuscitation of rights which they have allowed to remain dormant, either from neglect or a want of faith in the permanency of our rule, or because these rights were at first worth nothing, though they have since acquired value ? Sir John Lawrence was of opinion that legislation on the subject was imperatively called for. It was not likely that his successor, or any successor who might follow him, would be able to bring to the consideration of the subject the vast information and experience which he undoubtedly possesses. It is to be regretted that the matter did not engage his attention at an earlier period of his five years' tenure of office, when there would have been time to have appointed a committee of inquiry composed of settlement-officers of both schools, who by a careful and searching investigation might have satisfactorily cleared up the difficulty. Still some concessions have been made even in the Punjab Tenancy Bill to the representatives of the old aristocracy, but not sufficient, it is to be feared, to allay discontent. As regards Oude, it is the general impression among those friendly to the cause of the talookdars that their interests have gained rather

than lost by the recent enactments, their result being to confirm them in their rights and privileges, and to protect them from any encroachments on the part of the ex-proprietary tenants. Both Bills are shorn of many of the more obnoxious and mischievous provisions of Act X. of 1859, the Rent Law in force in the older provinces. And both in the Punjab and in Oude it is to be hoped that the people will accommodate themselves to the conditions fixed by the Legislature, and that those whose interests are injuriously affected by the new laws will set against that the many palpable advantages which they derive from British rule, without which the rights in land now so highly esteemed would have been valueless whoever retained them.

The affairs of the Bank of Bombay continued to occupy a great share of public attention during 1868; indeed in the Western Presidency itself they may be said almost to have monopolized it. This disgraceful episode in Indian history has been briefly noticed in another chapter. It is only necessary to add here that during the year the new bank was opened with a capital of twenty-five lacs as a temporary arrangement, the old bank being put in liquidation. In May a commission was appointed under orders from home, consisting of Sir C. Jackson, Major McLeod Innes, R.E.V.C., and Mr. Maxwell Melville, of the Bombay Civil Service. They commenced their inquiry at Bombay on the 29th June, and concluded it, so far as the Indian evidence was concerned, on the 9th September. On the 25th they left for Europe, to continue the investigation there, several witnesses having to be examined in England. The evidence taken in India was such as to astonish all who heard or read it. In the history of bank failures, and careless, amounting to dishonest, management, it is to be feared that the episode of the Bank of Bombay will occupy a prominent position.

The administration of Sir John Lawrence has been marked by very considerable progress in public works of utility and permanence, which are destined to contribute

much towards the stability of our Indian Empire. One of the results of the great rebellion of 1857 was the recognition of the necessity for providing better and more extensive barrack accommodation for our European troops, and fortresses and posts of defence in localities important in a strategic point of view. These "military works," as they are sometimes called, were sketched out as far back as 1862-63, on a scale that was calculated to entail an expenditure of 10,000,000*l.* sterling. At the same time designs for irrigation works were added to the extent of 30,000,000*l.* more. We have seen in a previous chapter that the efforts of the Government to carry out irrigation works are necessarily limited by the extent of the means available—money and supervision. But the principle has now been fully admitted that the expenses of reproductive public works, such as canals and railways, may fairly be saddled upon posterity, and for the future the necessary funds for constructions of this nature will be raised by loans. In addition to the designs for irrigation works, on which 30,000,000*l.* are to be spent, there is a scheme for railway extension throughout India, generally calculated to cost 40,000,000*l.* more, so that the whole outlay which it is proposed to devote to these purposes amounts to no less than 80,000,000*l.* At the close of this year it is calculated that 5,000,000*l.*, or just one-half of the sum devoted to barracks and fortifications, will have been disbursed; the remainder will have been expended and the designs completed in 1872, after which it is proposed to devote the whole energies and resources of the department to those reproductive works upon which the wealth and progress of the country mainly depend. It is no doubt a wise policy to secure our hold upon India before proceeding with the investment of the enormous sums of money which it is intended to raise for the extension of railways and canals. The style of barrack which has been recently adopted is a vast improvement upon the old low thatched buildings in which our soldiers have been housed for the last half-century. In the minor

Presidencies these buildings have been commenced at Kirkee and Bangalore, but the main effort has naturally been confined to the Bengal Presidency, throughout which, in almost all the important cantonments, very considerable progress has been made. Altogether, six and three-quarters out of the whole ten millions are to be spent on the Bengal Presidency, the remainder being divided between the two minor presidencies of Bombay and Madras.

Fortified posts, consisting of an enclosure flanked by bastions and containing hospitals and barracks, are to be erected at Sealkote, Jalandhur, and Umballa, in the Punjab; at Nowgong, in Central India; and Secundrabad, the military cantonment adjoining Hyderabad, in the Deccan; while at Peshawur a fortress on a more extended scale is being erected, to be supported by two others at Mooltan and Rawul Pindee. These fortresses will contain barracks for troops and protection for large arsenals.

Allusion has been made in a previous chapter to the slender extent to which the British Government has hitherto availed itself of the means within its reach of quartering soldiers in healthy situations in the hills, and it is a question whether it would not have been a wiser policy to have expended the money now laid out in the expensive barracks under construction, in carrying lines of railway to the foot of the mountain ranges, and locating the soldiers on their summits and slopes, where they might be kept in a condition of the utmost possible physical efficiency, and at the same time be within easy distance by rail of almost every part of the country where their presence is ever likely to be required to quell an *émeute* or resist aggression.

While about seven millions sterling have been or are to be expended in the construction of better accommodation for soldiers in the plains, but few hill-garrisons have been added to the scanty number already available as depôts for invalids.

The most superficial acquaintance with India is sufficient to show that the only danger to which our empire in the

East is at all likely to be exposed—except, of course, from internal disaffection, which need not of itself be feared so long as a European garrison of the present strength is maintained—lies in the chance of invasion from the north and north-west. Nor is there any danger here, except from a European power. I have purposely avoided entering on the much-debated question of Central Asian policy; but so long as ordinary prudence and foresight guide the counsels of our rulers, no rash attempt to provoke or accelerate a conflict by putting ourselves in a false position will ever endanger the safety of British India. No more unsound policy was ever advocated than that of interfering with the affairs of Affghanistan with the view of strengthening our hold upon India, or—as it is the fashion to express it—to meet Russia on the Oxus now in order that we may not have to meet her on the Indus hereafter. If ever the two Powers are destined to come into hostile contact in Asia, it is sufficiently obvious that that Power will fight at a disadvantage which is the furthest removed from its resources. To go to the Oxus, therefore, to meet Russia, would be to abandon in her favour an advantage we now hold. Every hundred miles that we march northwards to meet the invader will be so much gain to him and loss to us. And as to immediate interference with Affghanistan, while it is certain that the possession or the military occupation of that country, at any rate, must precede any attempt by Russia upon the Indian frontier, it is clear that whichever of the two—England or Russia—first occupies Cabul will be exposed, in the event of war, to the danger of internal disaffection aided by all the resources of the rival European power. In case of our interfering with Affghan politics again, let it be for the purpose of delivering or aiding the people to deliver themselves from the hated yoke of the foreigner. If Russia has any definite designs upon India, those writers and politicians are her best allies who advocate British interference with Affghan affairs. Should Russia attack

us, let it be on our ground, not hers; upon the banks of the Indus, the point the furthest removed from her resources and nearest to our own. With good railway communication between Kurrachee and Peshawur—and on strategic grounds this line ought to be completed without delay by the extension of the lines from Kotree on the Indus to Mooltan, and from Lahore to Peshawur—the field of action would be far nearer the fountain-head of our resources than that of our rival: while, with her communications to keep up between the Caspian Sea and the Hindoo Koosh, through a country peopled by turbulent races, held in subjection at the best of times with difficulty and not without great expenditure of means—any break in which line of communications would be fatal to her—Russia must be indeed bent on her own destruction if she ventures to assail our position on the Indus within the next century.

It remains to notice very briefly two great public works, the one wholly, and the other partially, dependent for its success on private enterprise. On the 15th November, the section of the Delhi railway connecting Delhi and the East Indian line with Umballa, a city thirty-five miles from the foot of the Himalayas, on the high road to Simla, was completed and opened with much *éclat*, the Viceroy himself being present at a great public breakfast. As many as 500 or 600 guests assembled to do honour to the occasion, which was especially interesting as being the last opportunity that offered itself for Sir John Lawrence's old Punjab associates to gather round their chief on the eve of his departure. And, viewed in this light, some of the speeches made on the occasion are almost worthy of a place in history. Sir John Lawrence, in returning thanks, alluded with much feeling—his voice faltering with ill-disguised emotion—to his brother Sir Henry, and the other distinguished men with whom he had been so long connected. The section of the line then opened is especially valuable, because it connects Calcutta and the intermediate cities by rail (an interval of thirty-five miles only,

at the foot of the mountains, intervening) with the hill-settlements of Kussowlie, Dugshai, Subathoo, and Simla.

No such *éclat* has attended the other public work alluded to, the East Indian Irrigation scheme, designed to construct an extensive canal system in Orissa. At the close of 1868 it was finally determined to abandon this scheme so far as it is a work of private enterprise, and to make it over to the Government. It would be tedious and uninteresting to trace the causes which have led to these results. Suffice it to say that the company declares the main cause to be the want of encouragement afforded by Government. Whether there is any real ground for this allegation or not—and it is not very easy to see how, if the company were in a position to carry on their work to completion, it could have been affected either by official encouragement or the reverse—the result is lamentable, as showing how, with the best prospects of success, with great resources and long-sustained efforts, the attempt to carry out the scheme by independent capital has failed. The shareholders will suffer no loss, for the Government undertakes to purchase the works for a sum equal to the whole paid-up capital, with five per cent. interest, and a bonus of 50,000*l.* besides.

Before the year 1868 had quite ended, Earl Mayo landed at Bombay, and Sir John Lawrence prepared to make over to his successor the cares of office. In any estimate that is formed of Sir John Lawrence's character as a public man, his career previous to his elevation to the Viceroyship, and that subsequent to it, should be ever carefully distinguished. There are many who think that his name would have held a higher place in the estimation of posterity had he not been called upon to assume the government of India. It is certain, however, that his policy as Viceroy was conducted on the same principles as those on which he acted as Chief Commissioner of the Punjab. Whether that policy is to be approved or condemned, will depend upon the view which those who criticise or review

his public career hold upon the subject of Indian land-tenures. No reputation is so dear to the Bengal civilian of the old school, to which Sir John essentially belonged, as that of success in revenue administration. This principle is plainly marked throughout the whole system of Indian government. In every single instance all other branches of the administration are subordinated to the revenue. A young civilian who acquires a reputation as an efficient collector or subordinate revenue officer is sure of a rapid promotion, which no legal attainments, no diplomatic ability, no talent for organization, no genius for executive, magisterial, and police work, however brilliant, can ensure. After the grade of collector has been reached, or that which is equivalent to it, though it may be called by different names in different parts of India, an efficient officer is promoted in the revenue branch to a commissionership; an inefficient, or an indolent, or incompetent one is made a judge. And there can be no doubt that Sir John Lawrence, in taking on himself to settle the two most important revenue questions of the day, the land tenure in Oude and the Punjab—though I do not mean that he was actuated solely, or even mainly, by so low a motive—aimed at that which is calculated more than anything else to stimulate the ambition of a civilian, the reputation of being a great revenue authority. Beyond these two measures, he cannot be said to have initiated and carried through any policy peculiarly his own. During his tenure of office, the country happily enjoyed almost perfect immunity from those political troubles which usually monopolize the attention of the writer or the student of Indian history. That much of this immunity is due to the weight of his name, and the awe in which he is held by all natives of India, as well the independent sovereigns of Hindustan as the rulers of surrounding states, no one who is acquainted with the general feelings of the people can doubt. When he was first appointed, there was a general ferment of disaffection at work under the surface

of Mahommedan society, which might very possibly have been developed into overt acts of insubordination. The moment he landed it ceased; or at all events, if it went on at all, it went on so silently as to escape notice. And were the same thing to recur, were even organized disaffection to show itself, so much is Sir John Lawrence feared all over India, that his return to the country would of itself intimidate the conspirators into an abandonment of their design—provided, of course, they were not acting under any external political influence. The Bhotan *imbroglio* was a legacy left him by his predecessor. Under Sir John's administration the unhappy business was brought to as speedy and satisfactory a conclusion as was possible. The only other warlike operation he had to conduct was the Black Mountain campaign. The policy in this campaign, as well as on the frontier generally, acquired for him much unpopularity. That policy has been discussed elsewhere: here it is sufficient to say, that future history will approve of it as sound and statesmanlike. The interest Sir John Lawrence has always taken in the welfare of the European soldier has also elsewhere been noticed; indeed that class of his countrymen shared with the members of his own service the regard which seemed to be denied to every other section of the European community. As to the non-official portion of that community, Sir John scarce took the pains to disguise the sentiments which are engrained in every civilian of the old school, and in too many of the new—a tendency to discourage European enterprise, and to make English residents in India feel that they are in a false position there. With every mile of railway that is constructed in India there is a proportionate increase of the European element, whether in the shape of capital, of skilled labour, or of executive control. This is the secret of the obstacles which independent chiefs invariably throw in the way of railway extension through their territories. Nor can it be wondered at, for the class of Englishmen with whom the railway brings them and their subjects into

contact is just the class which the native of India holds in the utmost dread and abhorrence. In this feeling the civilian sympathises to a degree that is actually ludicrous. And the majority of them (possibly Sir John himself, could he be brought to confess his real feelings) would aver that the enormous advantage which railways are conferring upon India, and the rapid reformation which they are working out in the habits and character of the natives, is but dearly purchased by the introduction into the country of so many Englishmen. For a long while Sir John successfully opposed the extension of railways in Upper India, and only yielded at last under pressure to sanction the Lahore and Peshawur line, a line which but for his opposition would have been far advanced towards completion by this time, and which when completed will add the strength of fifty thousand men to our northern frontier.

From the non-official European population Sir John could scarcely have looked for popularity. By his own service, whose interests he keenly watched, he was undeservedly disliked. The feeling is unaccountable except on the score of jealousy, for his warmest eulogists will not deny that the Civil Service derived to the fullest extent the benefits a close corporation might expect from one of their own number being raised to the post of authority and endowed with the enormous patronage that falls to the lot of an Indian Viceroy. By the native aristocracy, with whom as a class Sir John had little sympathy, he was detested; not with the passive dislike of Oriental temperament, but with an actual hate, the more intense because accompanied by fear. By the cultivator class, for whom he did or intended to do so much, he was not known, nor have they yet learnt to value the privileges and rights he struggled to obtain, and did obtain, for them. Among the mass of the Anglo-Indian community, which consists chiefly of military men, officers of various branches and departments, and their families, he was unpopular; but this arose mainly from his

manner and behaviour to them when guests at Government House, or waiting on the dreary ceremonial of an Indian Viceregal levee.

If unpopularity be the test of the success or failure of an Indian Viceroy, there can be no doubt as to the judgment that history must pass on Sir John Lawrence's viceregal career. But there is probably no position in the world where popularity is less the test of success, or where a ruler, if he chooses to disregard public opinion, can do so with more complete impunity. The Indian Government is a despotic one, as despotic as that of Russia, more so than that of France. An official, in a recent debate in Council, not incorrectly described it as a despotism tempered by right of petition, which means a despotism pure and simple. In Russia or in France the will of the ruling power is a good deal under the influence of public opinion; but the despotism of the Indian Government is only tempered by the action of the Secretary of State, who may be, but very seldom is, swayed by public opinion in England. It is this that makes English residents in India so dissatisfied with the system. They go out there carrying with them their favourite notions of constitutional government and political freedom, and imagine that in a dependency of the British Crown they are to enjoy all the rights and privileges of their native land. They very soon find out their mistake, the right even of trial by jury of their countrymen being denied to them; but they never cease to chafe against the iron collar of despotic rule, so distasteful to every man that has once lived under a representative constitution. To administer successfully such a government as this, so long as it is what it is, there is obviously no necessity to canvass popularity. A despot with an iron will, a long head, and no heart, will be found the best man for the post. I use the word "despot" in no bad sense. There may be good and conscientious despots, as well as wicked ones, and Sir John Lawrence essentially belonged to the first, not the last. As he said in his fare-

well speech at Calcutta, he had laboured conscientiously before God and man to do his duty, and so no doubt he had, and he carried away from the shores of India the consciousness of having exerted himself to the utmost to do what he thought right. But he was none the less a despot, and as such eminently suited for the government of India as it is. Were that dependency endangered to-morrow, either by political disturbance within, or threatenings from without, or both, Sir John's presence in India would be worth an army. If England's object is simply to hold the country, a Viceroy of Sir John Lawrence's stamp is the best man for the post; if her object is progress—the moral and social elevation of the people—if it is her wish to encourage trade and promote commerce, to introduce European capital, and by the example of European to awaken and stimulate native enterprise, to instil into the native mind some idea of those political principles which have made England what she is, then she must select her Viceroys and her Governors from some other quarter than the ranks of the Civil Service.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE period between 1859 and 1868 is in many respects the most important epoch in the history of British India which the present century has seen.

It has been essentially a period of progress—of progress rapid, decided, unprecedented. No doubt the next decade, from 1869 to 1879, will present to those who live to watch it, still greater changes and more striking improvements than those which stamp the period under review with the characteristics I have assigned to it. But they who are called on to assist in those reforms, and whose duty or privilege it is to aid in the advance of civilization in India and the development of her future, will do well to study the history of the last ten years.

The condition of India much resembles that of a patient whose whole system has been labouring for a long while under some chronic disease, so subtle in its influence and so deep-seated as to baffle the vigilance of the physician. All he could say was that the constitution was affected by some morbid condition of the principal organs, which

resulted in a general decay of the vital powers, lethargy, and weakness. Suddenly an unexpected crisis occurs. The patient is seized with symptoms no longer undecided and doubtful. Rapid fever supervenes, and for a short time life trembles in the balance. Then the sharpest and strongest remedies have to be applied; under which recovery is rapid, the fever abates, the crisis is passed, and the patient, no longer the invalid he was before the attack, finds himself free from the debility under which he had been previously suffering, and restored to health, activity, and vigour such as he had never hoped to enjoy. It was in the rebellion of 1857 that the diseased condition of the system under which India had so long been suffering came to a crisis. The impure state of the blood, the feeble circulation, the general want of tone which had impaired the vital organs came to a head, and the symptoms, dangerous and violent, at once suggested a remedy and forced its application. The treatment was sharp and decisive. Throughout the disturbed districts the ordinary laws made way for the arbitration of the sword and cannon; and wherever the contagion spread, the remedy speedily followed. India, exhausted by the rebellion and the civil war, sank into a short but refreshing sleep, and awoke with the bloom of returning health upon her cheek and vigour in her limbs.

It is at this period, when she is just returning to consciousness, that I propose to take up the thread of her history, and to trace briefly indeed, in comparison with the importance of the subject, the events which have since transpired, reviewing the policy of the later part of Lord Canning's administration, the short career of the lamented Lord Elgin, and the whole term of Sir John Lawrence's incumbency as viceroy.

It is the misfortune of India that her real condition has never been fairly represented to the English reader. Hitherto, writers who have dealt with the subject have been either servants of the Government, who view everything

through the medium of official life, or travellers, who after a short sojourn, or a rapid progress through the country, record their hastily formed impressions. But the experience of the latter has been far too short to allow of their speaking from their own knowledge. They are witnesses who depose to facts on hearsay only. Well provided with introductions that admit them within the somewhat jealously guarded limits of official society in India, their intention of writing probably being no secret, they lay themselves open to receive impressions and gather ideas communicated exclusively from official sources. And the consequence is, that their record is but a repetition at second hand of official views. They, too, describe what they have seen through a coloured medium.

It is almost impossible for the English reader to realize the extent to which the official element pervades and colours all social and political questions in India. The non-official class among the European community is as a rule so small, and so wanting in influence, that anywhere out of the Presidency towns it may be said scarcely to exist as a class at all. And a residence within the Presidency towns does not of itself lead to any practical acquaintance with the condition of the interior, any more than a residence in the metropolis of the United Kingdom leads to an acquaintance with the internal condition of Ireland and Scotland. The travellers who visit India, as the generality do, in a hurried manner, provided with introductions to judges, collectors, commissioners, and military officers, for the purpose of "getting up" India, as it is called, are as much to be depended on as if they were to write an account of Russia or France after a visit to those countries accredited to a few officers in the imperial services, from whom they derived their impressions of the people, the laws, and the general condition of the two empires. Even among those Englishmen who have resided in an independent position many years in India, there are very few indeed who have succeeded

in breaking through the armour of reserve in which native society and native opinion shrouds itself. To most officials, the native mind is a sealed book. They are allowed to see exactly as much as the people by whom they are surrounded, and by whom their every slightest action is closely watched, think fit to let them see, and no more. A glass is held before their eyes, coloured with the hues which it suits the showman to represent; nor is it ever for one moment withdrawn, from the day they enter the country till the day they leave it. A native the best informed and best educated would no more dream of disclosing to an officer of Government his real ideas and opinions than he would of introducing him into his zenana. The Asiatic is always on his guard—always wary. His answers are well weighed: his opinions, when expressed, are all qualified to suit the temper, to chime in with the view of the official interrogator. You will never catch him unawares, never surprise him into the declaration of sentiments of which he has not, before he gives his answer, well studied the shape it is politic they should assume. This may at first sight appear strange or incredible to the English reader, accustomed to freedom of thought and independence of opinion. But that it is a true representation of an actual fact, I appeal to those few who, like myself, have, after passing many years in the service of Government, thrown aside their official character, and continued to reside in India in a private capacity or in the pursuit of some profession which brings them necessarily into contact with native thought and feeling. To such as these, the change is sudden and marked. It is as if you had worn coloured spectacles half your life, and they had been suddenly withdrawn, and you look upon the face of nature for the first time with your own eyes, and without any intervening medium.

The task of recording the exciting events of the rebellion of 1857 and the campaigns of 1858, I leave to other and abler hands. The conflagration is over at the point where

my story commences. The edifice has fallen down, the firemen have subdued the flames and cleared away the *débris*, and the work of reconstruction has commenced —a reconstruction upon a surer foundation and an improved plan.

In dealing with the subject, two courses appeared open to me: either to make the work a short history of the ten years, recording the events as they occurred in order of time, or to deal separately with the different subjects successively which the contemporaneous history of every country embraces. There were objections to both plans. In the first, the incessant breaking of the thread of the story, upon the termination of each year, would have precluded anything like a complete, however superficial, treatment of each particular branch of the subject; and in the second, the division of the whole into separate chapters or heads of discussion would have almost eliminated the historical character of the book, and made it rather a series of essays than what it attempts to be, a history of the last ten years. I have therefore determined to obviate the difficulty which presented itself, by first of all giving a rapid survey of the principal occurrences as they took place in the order of time, so as to preserve an unbroken thread all through the chronicle, and to reserve for future and special consideration certain parts of the subject which cannot be handled in the cursory manner with which it will be necessary to review, within the compass of a few pages, so eventful a period as the decade terminating in 1869. One chapter will thus be given to social characteristics, two chapters to the history of legislation, two to finance, one to education, one to the difficult and complex question of the army amalgamation. The progress of hygiene and sanitation presents so many interesting features in connexion with Indian history during the period under review, that a chapter may profitably be devoted to it. To deal, however, with a subject so essentially professional in a scientific manner would be difficult for a writer who has not had the advantage of a

medical education, and I am indebted to the able assistance of a medical officer of considerable experience in India—a well-known author of several professional works of great value, and a contributor of a great number of interesting papers to the "Annals of Indian Medical Science," and other philosophical journals—for the chapter on the history of hygiene and sanitation.

Military events should either be related in great detail, as in Kinglake's "Crimea," or Napier's "Peninsular War," or concisely, as in Gibbon, who in five lines disposes of a campaign that extended from Gaul to Constantinople. A bare recital of successive operations, wearying the reader with names of persons and places in which he can take no interest, because he knows nothing of them individually and separately, must always be dry and uninteresting. And this is the reason why, for the most part, Indian history is so unpalatable to the general reader. His eye runs over page after page of wars and battles, victories and defeats, and when he reaches the end, he finds that nothing he has read has left the least definite impression on his mind. All he derives is a cloudy recollection of a mass of names, in which no single feature is distinguishable from the rest. And Indian history is, for the most part, a chronicle of wars, and little else.

But with the exception of the concluding operations of the great campaign of 1857 and '58, the Bhotan war, and one or two military expeditions on the North-west frontier, the record of events in India from 1859 to 1869 is, fortunately for the writer no less than the reader, free from the prevailing features that ordinarily characterise Indian history. A chapter will be devoted to a brief description of the military operations in Bhotan, and the circumstances that led to them; and another chapter to a sketch of the two principal campaigns called the Umbeyla and the Black Mountain campaigns, on the Peshawur frontier, in 1863 and 1868.

It remains to say a few words as to the sources of

information to which I have resorted for materials. They are mainly the blue-books and official records, or reports published in some departments annually, in others triennially, in others quarterly, and supplied liberally to the press. The files of newspapers have been freely consulted, especially the *Calcutta Englishman* and the *Delhi Gazette*, the *Madras Times* and *Athenæum*, and in Bombay the *Times of India* and the *Bombay Gazette*, as well as the official *Gazette* and despatches, the Acts of Council, Harrington's "Analysis of the Bengal Regulations," the reports of the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Indian Affairs of 1812 and 1832, Col. Adye's "Sitana Campaign," Dr. Rennie's "Bhotan War," Mr. Algernon West's "Administration of Sir Charles Wood," and several other works of a similar character. These, aided by information from private letters, and my own notes, are the main sources of information. In dealing with the Umbeyla campaign, I have drawn largely upon a lively and animated description communicated in a series of letters to the *Delhi Gazette* newspaper by Dr. Sylvester, of the Bombay medical service, who was an eye-witness of the scenes he so graphically paints; and similarly, in the case of the Black Mountain campaign, I have availed myself of the account transmitted to the same journal by another eye-witness of what he describes, Deputy-Inspector-General Morton, of the Bengal medical service. I must not omit to mention the very prompt attention with which every requisition of mine for access to official records has been met by the various heads of departments to whom I have applied. Nor can I close this notice of the sources whence my materials have been taken, without alluding to the great assistance I have derived from the files of the *Friend of India*. Unable to concur in the views expressed by that journal on most questions, I have found its comprehensive compendium of news, collected and arranged with most praiseworthy diligence, of the greatest use in directing attention to original sources of information, and

in preserving the order of time in the multitude of events that crowd upon the memory.

In bringing the narrative down to the end of Sir John Lawrence's administration, I have necessarily had to encounter a difficulty which always attends the writer of contemporaneous, or almost contemporaneous, history. It is absolutely impossible to describe passing events in such a way as to give an historical character to the outlines of the picture, particularly in dealing with India, where political, financial, and legislative changes are so rapid and frequent. The care and research requisite to collect and arrange the information contained in this volume has necessarily occupied all the spare hours that could be snatched from the intervals of professional labour over a considerable period of time, and recent or contemporaneous measures in the legislative and political departments have rendered a careful revision of the manuscript indispensable, involving alterations in the text. Thus, since I left India, in the beginning of 1869, the income-tax, in a modified form, has been re-introduced, and the commission of inquiry into the Bank of Bombay has completed its sittings, although the report has not yet been made public; and I have, therefore, been unable to deal with so important an episode in the history of the last decade, in the manner which the nature of the subject demands. A new line of foreign policy has been developed, and several legislative measures, the necessity of which I had pointed out, as indeed it was generally recognised, have been passed. I have done my best, however, to grapple with these difficulties, and have spared no pains to ensure accuracy. It is very possible that my views on Indian affairs may be unfavourably received in official circles; but hitherto, the outside world has heard little or nothing of India from any other quarter than the official, and wherever discussion arises, all I ask for is a fair and impartial hearing from all who are interested in the welfare of British India.

CHAPTER II.

1859.

Conclusion of the campaign—Desultory operations—Critical state of the country—Tantia Topee—Sir Hugh Rose—Operations on the Oude frontier—Civil re-organization in Oude—Lord Canning's policy—Talookdaree tenure—Summary settlement of 1856—Pacification of Oude.

THE opening of the year 1859 found us engaged in trampling out the dying embers of the rebellion.

On the 18th January, 1859, Lord Canning, who was then at Allahabad, published a despatch from Lord Clyde, prefacing it with a few weighty paragraphs of his own. In this important State paper it is announced "that the campaign in which the troops under his (Lord Clyde's) immediate command have been engaged, is closed, and rebellion no longer exists in Oude. The Governor-General seizes the earliest opportunity of tendering his warmest thanks to the Commander-in-Chief, and to the noble army which he leads, for the accomplishment of this good work."

The campaign, indeed, was at an end. The enemy had no organized army in the field in any part of India. But there were hordes of armed men, bent on mischief, men hardy and inured to war, desperate, fighting as they thought with halters round their necks, traversing the country in large bands, varying from a thousand to ten thousand strong, and taking up positions in inaccessible places, sometimes in mountains, sometimes in fortresses, sometimes in walled towns. And wherever they went they brought desolation in their track. Strong enough to levy contributions by force from

those who would not willingly afford supplies, and to take a bloody revenge whenever aid was refused, these bands, half soldiers, half dacoits, struck terror into every part of the country through which they marched. There was a danger of this mischievous state of things continuing—of a chronic condition of guerilla war supervening upon the now extinguished rebellion. The Government, therefore, put forth all its strength to crush this threatening evil in the bud, and numberless brigades and detachments were set in motion all over that vast tract of country which may be roughly described as lying between the north-east frontier of Oude and the Nerbudda river. To trace the operations of these columns in detail would fill volumes, and to the English reader not well acquainted with localities, the details would be profitless and uninteresting. Every commanding officer of a detachment—and the rank of the commander varied generally with the strength of the party he commanded, from the brigadier-general down to the subaltern of irregular cavalry or military police—engaged the enemy as often as he could, and recorded the affair and its result in a report or despatch which was duly published in the official *Gazette*. The consequence is, that the Gazettes of those times are filled with reports couched in official language, and in general purport so much resembling each other that the perusal of them leaves on the mind a confused idea of a mass of straggling unconnected military operations conducted on no definite plan, and illustrating no known principle of strategy. The work resembles that which a man performs, who, when a fire has scarcely burnt itself out, goes about trampling on burning embers wherever he can find them. The duty was a severe one. The courage and skill of the officers, and the endurance and bravery of the men, were perhaps more severely tested in this series of petty campaigns than in a great action. Frequently an officer with a handful of troops under him, men and horses jaded and worn, would come at the close of a long march upon the

THE ADMINISTRATION OF INDIA

FROM 1859 TO 1868.

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