



CSL

SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

been brought into force during the Premiership of the Marquis of Salisbury. His Lordship, when Secretary of State for India, very emphatically expressed the opinion in his evidence before the Parliamentary Committee on Indian finance, that the most effectual way of securing financial justice for India was for the House of Commons to be constantly watchful on our behalf. His Lordship said that in order to save India from being oppressed, the House of Commons should keep a sufficiently sharp eye over matters concerning India. And yet it is in his time that these new rules have been passed, whereby the House is precluded from exercising even that little watchfulness over Indian matters which it hitherto used to do. But, gentlemen, as has been explained to you, this has been an unforeseen result of the rules. I hope with confidence that the rules will soon be amended, and that not only will our old privilege be restored to us, but that the Hon'ble House will fix such a date for the consideration of the Indian Budget as will allow of a fair and full discussion of questions affecting the welfare of the 200 millions of people entrusted by Providence to their care.
(Cheers and loud cries of Vote.)



INDIAN GRIEVANCES AND THEIR REMEDIES

In seconding the following resolution of the Seventh Indian National Congress held at Nagpur in 1891, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya said.

That fully fifty millions of the population, a number yearly increasing, are dragging out a miserable existence on the verge of starvation, and that, in every decade several millions actually perish by starvation.

That this unhappy condition of affairs is largely due to—

(a) the exclusion of the people of India from a due participation in the administration, and all control over the finances of their own country, the remedy for which has been set forth in Resolution II;

(b) the extravagant cost of the present administration, Military and Civil, but especially the former; and to

(c) a short-sighted system of Land Revenue Administration, whereby not only is all improvement in the agriculture of the country, on which nine-tenths of the population depend for subsistence, rendered impossible, but the gradual deterioration of that agriculture assured.

That hence it has become imperatively necessary—that the cost of the administration be greatly reduced; in the military branch, by a substantial reduction of the



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

standing army, by the substitution of long term local European troops like those of the Hon. E. I. Company for the present short term Imperial regiments with their heavy cost of recruitment in England, in transport and of the excessive mortality amongst non-acclimatized youths; by the cessation of the gigantic waste of money that has gone on now for several years, on so-called Frontier Defences and by a strict economy in the Commissariat, Ordinance and Store Departments; and in the Civil Branch, by the wide substitution of a cheaper indigenous agency for the extremely costly imported Staff; and that measures be at once taken to give, as was promised by the British Government thirty years ago, fixity and permanence to the land Revenue demand and thus permit capital and labour to combine to develop the agriculture of the country, which, under the existing system of temporary settlements, in recent times often lasting for short periods, in some cases only extending to 10 and 12 years, is found to be impossible and to establish agricultural banks.

That this Congress does most earnestly entreat the people of Great Britain and Ireland not to permit any further sacrifice of life by the shortcomings of the existing, doubtless well-intentioned, but none the less unsatisfactory administration, but to insist and speedily, on these reforms.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—It is my duty to second the proposition, or part of the pro-



INDIAN GRIEVANCES AND THEIR REMEDIES

position which has been so ably moved by my friend Mr. Wacha. That duty is rendered easy by the exhaustive manner in which he has dealt with the subject; still I must ask your indulgence a few minutes in order to lay before you a few more ideas bearing on the same subject, and to show the extreme necessity and urgency of the reforms which we are advocating. It has often been said that we Congress people repeat from year to year the same old cries, the same demands, and then go back to our homes after completing this part of our work. But, gentlemen, who is to blame for this state of things? Are we to blame for repeating these old cries, or does not the blame rather pertain to the Government which turns from year to year a deaf ear to those our most earnest appeals? Numberless officers of the Government have said that the poverty of this country is unquestionably very great, and that poverty is growing from year to year. Sir W. Hunter, Sir Charles Eliot, Sir A. Colvin and a number of others have, from their seats in the Viceroy's Council, constantly repeated mournfully and sadly the fact that India is poor and is becoming poorer and poorer every day. And what do we find? Have any measures worthy of the name been adopted to ameliorate that condition, to check the growth of that poverty, and to stamp it out of the country? No, to our deep regret, and (I am extremely



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

sorry to say it) to the shame of our Government, nothing, absolutely nothing, has been done. Ten or fifteen years ago Sir William Hunter said that nearly a fifth of the population of India, nearly 40 millions, go through life on insufficient food. Sir Charles Eliot, while Commissioner of Assam, said: "I do not hesitate to say that half our agricultural population do not know from year's end to year's end what it is to have their hunger satisfied." Sir E. Baring, Financial Minister in the Viceroy's Council, said "That the average income of the Indian people was Rs. 27 per head." Mr. Dadabhai Nowroji has proved, and Mr. Digby has also recently shown, that the amount is under Rs. 21 per head. But in view of these admitted and undeniable facts, what measures have the Government taken to check the growth of poverty and stamp it out of the land? They may no doubt have made efforts now and then to show that they are willing to check the growth of this poverty. They now and then appoint a Commission to take evidence, here and there, and submit reports. But what is their treatment of these Commissions, and what do they do with these reports? They throw them aside for ever. There was the Simla Army Commission; there has been the Public Service Commission; there was the Finance Committee. What have their labors brought about? no doubt bulky reports ably written and printed; but



INDIAN CRIEVANCES AND THEIR REMEDIES

nothing further has resulted from them. It is therefore no fault of ours. It gives us no pleasure to repeat these same old cries—cries prompted by the intense agony of our condition—cries which go out of our hearts and our lips, not because we desire to talk of these things, but because the pain we feel compels us to utter them, to make these appeals to the Government in the hope that their hearts may yet melt, that they may yet take pity on the condition of the people and make an honest, manly effort to cut down expenditure, and to save the people of this country from the misery they are suffering at the present moment.

Of course, we know that the causes of this poverty are manifold. No one can expect us, in the course of our debates here, much less in the short speeches made on any of these resolutions, to deal exhaustively with all the causes of that poverty. In this resolution we deal with the causes for which the Government is mainly responsible, and we point out the remedies which the Government can directly apply, if it chooses to do so, and which it is the plainest duty of the Government to apply, if it cares to call itself a civilized Government. What are those duties and those remedies? In the first three clauses you speak of the exclusion of the people of India from a due participation in the administration. That has been dealt with by my predecessors, and I will leave it. Those who



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

follow me may well take up the question of revenue administration. My friend, Mr. Wacha, has spoken of the military expenditure of the country. It pains me deeply to think of that question. You know that in the gracious Proclamation of Her Majesty she said that she held herself bound to her Indian people by the same ties and obligations as those which bind her to her subjects in Great Britain and Ireland; and further that no Indian subject of Her Majesty will be excluded from any appointment by reason of birth, color or creed. And yet what do we find? Take the military branch of the service. Our countrymen have served the Government, and will continue to serve it with remarkable fidelity and unflinching courage; they have gone beyond the borders of India, wherever Her Majesty has desired them to go, and have fought and shed their blood. And what have been their rewards? They are confined to such subordinate positions as *Subedar* and *Resaldar* majorships; they are not allowed to go higher, after 25 years of valorous service, they remain subordinate to the sub-lieutenant, who joined yesterday. Is that carrying out the intentions of Her Most Gracious Majesty? Where is the justification, in reason or in fact, for not allowing Indian soldiers to be appointed as captains, as colonels, and as generals in Her Majesty's Army. Have they not faithfully and bravely served Her Majesty in numberless battles? Can the



INDIAN GRIEVANCES AND THEIR REMEDIES

most confirmed of our opponents point to one instance (setting aside the doubtful case of the sad Mutiny) in which Indian soldiers have not discharged their duties faithfully and honorably? Send Mahomedans to fight against the Afghan, they lay side all considerations of religion and fight against brethern of their own creed. Send Hindus to any part of the country beyond India; they fight for Her Majesty faithfully and honorably. Why then exclude these people from any participation in the reward of the higher branches of the military service? What is the result? That a large proportion of the income of this country goes to foreign lands in the shape of pension and pay. The same remark applies to Civil Administration. There is that gracious Proclamation, and there is the practice of Her Majesty's representatives here and in England. Is the practice in conformity with the Proclamation? You exclude Indian people almost entirely from the Convenated Civil Service by saying that you will hold the examinations for it only in England. You do not employ the children of the soil even in those positions which Secretaries of State for India have declared are resered for the children of the soil.—I mean employment in the Uncovenanted Service. You recruit officers for the Covenanted Civil Service. A hundred officers are needed; you recruit a hundred and fifty. The result is, in the fistst place, that you make the



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

country pay for service which it does not require; and, in the second place, you make these covenanted officials encroach upon the grounds reserved for men in the Uncovenanted Service. For all matters, whatever branch you take up, forest or railways, or the P. W. D., the desire is not that Indians should be employed, not that fit men should be employed, but that places may be found (I am sorry to say so) for Englishmen in India, so that they may draw incomes far beyond their market value at their own homes, and take their savings and pensions hence to spend them in England (*Cheers.*) Let none think that I am prompted by any unkind feeling towards my English brethren in saying so. I have the same love, affection and esteem for them as I have for my other fellow human beings. What I say is that it is most improper, that it is unrighteous, that it is criminal and sinful to let people living in a distant country come here and enjoy all these advantages while you have a host of people starving at your door. You speak of the poverty of the country. What else can the country be but poor! The Marquis of Salisbury himself declared that much of the revenue of India is exported without any equitable equivalent in return. There are others who say that a large proportion of the revenue of India goes out in the shape of pay and pension to England and other



INDIAN CRIEVANCES AND THEIR REMEDIES

places. The total expenditure of the Civil Service is about 14 millions. Of this nearly two-thirds go to Europeans, and only one-third to natives of this country. In the Military Service, again, all the loaves and fishes, all the best and most honored offices are given to Europeans, not because they are a whit fitter than their brother Indian soldiers, not because they are more courageous, more able to fight and to defeat the enemy, but because they happen to possess a fairer complexion. (*Shame*). Combining the Military and Civil Services: you will find, I cannot give the exact figure, but it cannot be less than 15 millions sterling every year going in the shape of pay and pensions and home expenditure of various kinds to England from India never to return to it. The result has been well pointed out in the press and on the platform, but no one has put it more pithily than Mr. J. Wilson in the *Fortnightly Review* of March 1884, and his remarks are true now, with the necessary corrections. He says: "In one form or other we draw fully £30,000,000 a year from that unhappy country, and there the average wages of the natives is about £5 per annum, less rather than more, in many parts" (of course we know that it is nothing like £5; it is £1 and a few shillings.) "Our Indian tribute, therefore represents the entire earnings of upwards of six (in reality 100 millions) of the people. It means the abstract



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

tion of more than one-tenth (really one-third) of the entire sustenance of India every year." I will not longer occupy your time. I have had my little say, and I hope that those who follow will make it clearer still that the Government, in excluding the children of the soil from employment in the higher branches of the service, are persisting, not only in a most unrighteous but a most suicidal policy. Gentlemen, Government cannot live without the people. Let the people continue to grow poorer and poorer, and the Government is nowhere, or at any rate it ceases to deserve the name of Government. We have hitherto appealed almost in vain; let us hope that our present appeals will not be entirely fruitless. It is true that we are interested, and, therefore, we speak with bitterness and warmth. Who else will speak but those who are interested? It is the man who is being flogged who cries out, not the mere bystanders! We appeal to the English people who are our brethren to make their administration of this country more in conformity with reason, with justice and with common sense, with those high and noble principles, which have always been their pride, and which have raised them to the proud position which they now occupy before the world. Then, and then alone, will British rule in India be the glory, as it should be of England. Let me quote, in conclusion, the words of Mr. Bright on this subject: "You must remem-



CSL

INDIAN GRIEVANCES AND THEIR REMEDIES

ber that all this great population has no voice in its own affairs. It is dumb before the power that has subjected it. It is never consulted upon any matter connected with its government. It is subject to the power that rules over it, in a manner that cannot be said of the population of any civilized Christian people of the world." Let the English people make haste and take away this great reproach cast upon them by a man whom they revere and then we shall always be happy in our mutual union and to our mutual benefit (*cheers.*)



GRIEVOUS DISTRESS AMONG THE PEOPLE OF INDIA

In moving the following resolution of the ninth Indian National Congress held at Lahore in 1893 Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya said :

That this Congress, concurring in the views set forth in previous Congresses, affirms:

That fully fifty millions of the population, a number yearly increasing, are dragging out a miserable existence on the verge of starvation, and that in every decade, several millions actually perish by starvation.

And humbly urges once more that immediate steps be taken to remedy this calamitous state of affairs.

[MR. PRESIDENT AND BROTHER DELEGATES,—
It is with a heaving heart I rise to propose this motion. It is a matter of very great regret that a resolution of this character should have to be passed year after year without our having the consolation of recording that the Government had paid earnest attention to the matter. I say, it is a matter of very great regret because of all the grievances under which our people are suffering, of all the troubles that they have to undergo, this question of poverty is the greatest, and as such, one would expect



GRIEVOUS DISTRESS AMONG THE PEOPLE OF INDIA

that the Government would devote its attention to remedy the grievance which year after year the best intelligence of India has put forward for its consideration. Gentlemen, as I have said, it is a matter of deep regret that we should have to use the words of this resolution once more. This subject was brought to the attention of Government as early as 1885, when the first Congress met in Bombay. Again in 1886, when we met at Calcutta for the first time, the subject was, if anything, more emphatically dwelt upon and we urged Government to institute enquiries and to take steps to remedy the spread of poverty which we complained of.

Though nine years have rolled by, the Government have not yet taken any step to remedy the state of affairs. All they did was to institute a hole and corner enquiry in 1888, not with a view to remedy the grievance, but to silence the complaints, if possible, by saying that the poverty complained of existed not so much in reality as in imagination and the reports published by Government, and the Resolution of the 24th October, 1888, was directly meant to serve that end. But if Government make these hole and corner enquiries, and evidence is not sought and evidence is not received, and reports and resolutions are hurled at the heads of the people, with a view to throw dust into their eyes, who is to blame if the people don't.



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

believe them and if we complain of the cruel indifference of the Government ; who is to blame if we have to appeal again and again to the Englishmen who have come to govern the country and those who have taken the responsibility of guiding our destinies in England ; who is to blame if we have to appeal again and again for justice in this country ? When a proposal was put forward recently in the House of Commons, asking that a Royal Commission might be appointed to enquire into the complaint, it was said by those who did not care to have such an enquiry, that honorable gentleman who presides over this assembly, had not supplied sufficient evidence of poverty, but, as, the President well remarked, you cannot make people see if they are not inclined to see. Facts and figures have been supplied both this year and in previous years which leave no room for doubt that poverty has been increasing, goes on increasing and will go on increasing, unless something is done to remedy it. If they chose to ignore all that is said to them they cannot tell us with decency that we have not given them evidence. They talk of sense of solemn responsibility in having undertaken the task of guiding the destinies of the millions of this land. When you come to think of the small attention they bestow on Indian questions and the light-hearted-ness with which they deal with the most solemn questions, you begin to suspect, they



GRIEVOUS DISTRESS AMONG THE PEOPLE OF INDIA

do not realise their responsibility to God and man ; for injustice, oppression and suffering, are going on under their rule. They have asked us to supply evidence of the poverty. Will they come and see? If they believe in God and believe they will have to render an account of their stewardship in this country, let them come out to this country once in their lives and go from village to village and town to town and see in what misery the people live. Let them come out and ask the people what the country was, say, before the Mutiny. Where are the weavers, where are those men who lived by different industries and manufactures, and where are the manufactures which were sent to England and other European countries in very large quantities year after year? All that has become a thing of the past; every one sitting here is clothed in cloth of British make, almost every one—and wherever you go you find British manufactures and British goods staring you in the face. All that is left to the people is to drag out a miserable existence by agricultural operations and make infinitesimal profit out of the little trade left to them. (In the matter of the services, in the matter of trade, our people are not enjoying one hundredth part of the profit and again which they used to enjoy fifty years ago. How then is it possible for country to be happy? How is it surprising that the country is not more poor than it is?



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

There are only two kinds of evidence we can offer to our critics, one is the direct evidence of the eyes, and we invite them to acquire that for themselves, the other is the indirect evidence supplied by the experience of those who have lived in this country and know the way in which the people live. Any such evidence I am ready to place before you, the evidence of men in the veracity and accuracy of whose statements no man dare utter a doubt. I will first call attention to what Mr. John Bright said in 1853, in the House of Common. Speaking of India he said, "what is it that the people of of India, if they spoke by my mouth, have to complain of? They would tell the House that, as a rule, throughout almost all the Presidencies, and throghout those Presidencies most of which have been longest under the British rule, the cultivators of the soil, the great body of the population of India, are in a condition of great impoverishment, of great dejection and of great suffering." Later on, Lord Lawrence in 1864, said, "India is on the whole a very poor country. The mass of the population enjoy only a scanty subsistence." Speaking in 1873, he again said, "the mass of people were so miserably poor that they had barely the means of subsistence." In 1868-69 Mr. W. R. Robertson, then the head of the Agricultural Department in Madras said, "The condition of the Agricul-



GRIEVOUS DISTRESS AMONG THE PEOPLE OF INDIA

tural labourer in India is a disgrace to any country calling itself civilised." Sir Auckland Colvin speaking in 1885 in connection with the License Tax Amendment Bill remarked, "The masses of the people are men whose income at the best is barely sufficient to afford them the sustenance necessary to support life, living as they do on the barest necessities of life." In 1882 Sir Evelyn Baring said, speaking as the Finance Minister of this country. "It has been calculated that the average income per head of the population in India is not more than Rs. 27 a year, and though I am not prepared to pledge myself to the absolute accuracy of a calculation of this sort, it is sufficiently accurate to justify the conclusion that the tax paying community is exceedingly poor. To derive any very large increase of revenue from so poor a population as this, is obviously impossible, and if it were possible, would be unjustifiable." Again in the discussion on the budget after repeating the above statement regarding the income of Rs. 27 per head per annum, he said: "But he thought it was quite sufficient to show the extreme poverty of the masses of the people. In England the average income per head of the population is £ 33 (it is now £ 41), in France it was £ 23, in Turkey which was the poorest country in Europe it was £ 4 per head. He would ask honourable members to think what Rs. 27 per annum was to support a person and then



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

he would ask whether a few annas was nothing to such poor people." Again if you come to 1888 you find that the Government of India admit indirectly that there was a great and increasing poverty, for, what did they say in their white-washing resolution? They said: "There is evidence to show that in all parts of India there is a numerous population which lives from hand to mouth, is always in debt, does not save and has little or nothing to fall back upon in bad seasons." It is unnecessary for me to multiply these quotations; any man who cares to know the real facts can read the valuable papers of our illustrious Chairman and the paper issued by the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha in which the condition of the country is graphically and truly depicted. There was no shadow of fact in the excuse that our illustrious Chairman did not supply facts, for by official papers the fact is proved that there is great poverty and that Government is doing nothing, or precious little to remove that poverty or check its growth. I ask you to say by this resolution that there are fully fifty millions of the population dragging out a miserable existence on the verge of starvation. It is a serious statement to make, yet I am emboldened to ask you to give consent to this motion, because, if any thing, it does not fully express the poverty of the land; it falls short because I think the numbers are not correct, it underrates the numbers.



CSL

GRIEVOUS DISTRESS AMONG THE PEOPLE OF INDIA

You might ask me to give my authority for saying this I appeal to your own experience, but if you want indirect authority, there is that of Sir Charles Eliot and Sir William Hunter. The latter says, "The remaining fifth, or forty millions, go through life on insufficient food;" whilst Sir Charles Eliot says, "I do not hesitate to say that half of our agricultural population never know from year's end to year's end what it is to have their hunger fully satisfied." Let the rulers think over those words and ask themselves what they will have to say to God when they go before Him. I accept all these statements of officials of Government, and ask, why does not Government do something to remedy the evil? We say that several millions perish by starvation. It is unnecessary to tire you with many figures but I will say this to prove that statement. The loss of life by war from 1793 to 1890 in the whole world was 4,500,000; the loss of life in 8 years by fever alone in India was 4,349,922. Does that not prove conclusively that several millions of our people die from sheer starvation, and are we not justified in asking our rulers to earnestly give this matter their most earnest consideration before the danger develops into a danger of a serious character?" (Loud applause.)



POVERTY AND FAMINE

In supporting the following resolution of the twelfth Indian National Congress held at Calcutta in 1896 Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya said :

That this Congress deplores the outbreak of famine in more or less acute form throughout India and holds that this and other famines which have occurred in recent years are due to the great poverty of the people, brought on by the drain of the wealth of the country which has been going on for years together, and by the excessive taxation and over-assessment, consequent on a policy of extravagance, followed by the Government both in the Civil and the Military departments, which has so far impoverished the people that at the first touch of scarcity they are rendered helpless and must perish unless fed by the State or helped by private charity. In the opinion of this Congress the true remedy against the recurrence of famine lies in the adoption of a policy which would enforce economy, husband the resources of the State, foster the development of indigenous and local arts and industries which have practically been extinguished and help forward the introduction of modern arts and industries.

In the meantime the Congress would remind the Government of its solemn duty to save human life and



POVERTY AND FAMINE

mitigate human suffering, (the provisions of the existing Famine Code being in the opinion of the Congress inadequate as regards wages and rations and oppressive as regards task work,) and would appeal to the Government to redeem its pledges by restoring the Famine Insurance Fund (keeping a separate account of it) to its original footing and to apply it more largely to its original purpose, viz., the immediate relief of the famine-stricken people.

That in view of the fact that private charity in England is ready to flow freely into this country at this awful juncture and considering that large classes of sufferers can only be reached by private charity, this Congress desires to enter its most emphatic protest against the manner in which the Government of India is at present blocking the way, and this Congress humbly ventures to express the hope that the disastrous mistake committed by Lord Lytton's Government in the matter will not be repeated on this occasion.

Mr. President and Brother Delegates—The resolution has been spoken to by several gentlemen and the various parts of it have been ably dealt with by them. I would only ask your attention to certain points connected with the subject which I think would bear further consideration.

Gentlemen, we have now been under the benign rule of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen Empress for a very long period: and we have been under the rule of England for a much longer period still. We



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

are governed by what is admitted by all impartial critics to be on the whole the best Civil Service in the world. In addition to all that, you will remember that our country is not poor in its natural resources. With all our ample resources, with such an excellent Civil Service to govern us, why is it that we, of all people on earth, should be liable to suffer so fearfully from these periodically recurring famines? Why, I ask, there is not something very wrong in the present system of Government? My friend, Mr. Surendranath Banerjea, has said truly that if the reforms, which have so long and so strongly been advocated by the National Congress, had been accepted and carried out by Government, these dreaded famines would have become matters of past history. (Hear, hear). I invite your attention to the first portion of the resolution wherein we say that it is our firm conviction "that the first outbreak of famine, in a more or less acute form throughout India at present, and the other famines which have occurred in recent years, are due to the great impoverishment of the people, brought on by excessive taxation, consequent on the policy of extravagance followed by the Government, both in the civil and military expenditure, and that system has so far impoverished the people that at the first touch of scarcity they are rendered helpless and begin to perish unless they are fed by the State." Gentlemen, as has



POVERTY AND FAMINE

been happily expressed by our poet Kalidas, taxation is like the moisture absorbed by the rays of the sun,—absorbed that it may descend in a thousandfold measure to fertilise the land from which it has been drawn. But unfortunately for us, a very large portion of the moisture thus absorbed descends not at all here, but falls in heavy refreshing showers upon more fortunate lands which stand not much in need of it. In the Civil Service of this country, for instance, nearly six crores of rupees are spent annually upon the salaries of its European members, who are not residents of this country. Of the twenty-four crores spent every year upon the military department, nearly two-thirds of the amount paid as salary goes towards the pay of Europeans and only one-third towards that of the natives of the country. Add to this the large amount that we have to remit every year to England in the shape of Home charges. When such vast sums of money are drawn away year after year from the country, can you wonder that it should grow poorer and poorer and that the people should become less able to bear the ordinary burdens of life, and much less able to meet the calamity of a famine when it should come upon them? That, however, is not all. Look at the condition of our arts and industries. A time there was when the people of England were supplied with Indian cloth to such an extent that Daniel



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

Defoe, writing to an English Magazine, bitterly complained that the English weavers had thereby been thrown completely out of work. The nation was roused to a sense of its duty to its weavers. Parliament came to their rescue, and adopted measures to put down the extensive use of the products of Indian looms in England. The times have changed. Now in India we are surrounded on all sides with products of English and other foreign mills and manufactories. Even the little pins we use, we have to get from England. This influx of foreign manufactures has killed our indigenous arts and industries, and has taken the bread away from millions of our people. What they used to earn in the shape of wages goes now to enrich the foreigner, and leaves India the poorer for its loss. And yet little is being done to remedy this deplorable state of things here. Gentlemen, England would not have occupied the position that she does in the world, if the English Government had not sedulously fostered the arts and industries of England. Why should not Indian industries be fostered in the same way as those of England and other western countries have been? If the Indian Government had done what it should have done to promote technical education and to develop and encourage arts and industries in this country, if the Government had utilised and encouraged native talent and native industry, instead of foreign talent and



POVERTY AND FAMINE

ability, the country would not have been so miserably poor as it is at this moment; and if famine came, the people would have been able to bear its rigours without resort to Government or appeal to foreign nations for help. (*Cheers*). But this extinction of native arts and industries, and the exclusion of the children of the soil from the vast majority of the more lucrative appointments in the public service, have reduced the country to its present state of abject poverty. Our national average income is but £2 a year per head of the population, half of that of even Turkey, said to be the most mis-governed country in Europe. Out of this low income, we are forced to contribute largely to maintain the costliest system of administration known to the civilised world; and the bulk of the higher appointments in that administration being filled with foreigners, much of what we thus contribute is drained out of the country, never to return to it again. It was inevitable that such a state of things, so long continued, should bring the people to their present pitiable condition, when forty millions of them are believed to be living constantly on the verge of starvation, and when the failure of a single harvest brings millions to the door of death, and would make them perish unless the State intervened in time to help them. (*Hear, hear.*) This is not a view which we Indians alone entertain, but it is also held by more



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

than one eminent English statesman||I will quote to you the opinion of two of them only which must carry great weight with them. John Bright (*Cheers*) speaking in 1877 said:—"I say that a Government put over 250,000,000 of people which has levied taxes till it can levy no more, which spends all that it can levy and which has borrowed 100,000,000, more than all that it can levy --I say a Government like that has some fatal defect which, at some not distant time must bring disaster and humiliation to the Government and to the people on whose behalf it rules." Another eminent Englishman, Sir George Wingate, says:—Taxes spent in the country in which they are raised are totally different in their effect from taxes raised in one country and spent in another. In the former case the taxes collected from the population are again returned to the industrious classes. But the case is wholly different when the taxes are not spent in the country from which they are raised. They constitute an absolute loss and extinction of the whole amount withdrawn from the taxed country. . . . Such is the nature of the tribute we have so long exacted from India. From this explanation some faint conception may be formed of the cruel, crushing effect of the tribute upon India. The Indian tribute whether weighed in the scales of justice, or viewed in the light of our own interest will be found to be at variance with humanity, with common sense, and



POVERTY AND FAMINE

the maxims of economic science," (*Hear, hear*). It is unnecessary for me to dilate any further on this point. I think I have said enough to justify our belief that unless the Government introduces changes in the administration to make it less costly than it is at present, and thereby reduces the burden of taxation, unless it utilises native talent and promotes native arts and industries and minimises the drain of the country's wealth to other lands, our liability to suffer from these dreaded famines will not cease; and, as has been observed by Sir George Chesney "till the danger of famine has been guarded against to the fullest extent the English in India may replace anarchy by peace and may distribute equal justice, and remove ignorance, but it cannot be said that they have fulfilled their whole duty by the people of the country." (*Cheers.*)

Gentlemen, having made these few observations with regard to the first paragraph of the resolution, I will ask you to bear with me for a few minutes more, while I say something on the state of affairs in the North-Western Provinces and Oudh. Times have been hard with us in the North-Western Provinces for the last three years. We have had a succession of bad seasons, and the people have been less and less able, to bear the severity of the present season. The distress that is now prevailing in my part of the country is widespread and



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

intense. But fortunately for us, we have at the head of affairs in our provinces, a ruler with a large, sympathetic heart, (*Cheers.*) clear foresight, and a statesman-like determination to do all that can be done by his Government to prevent death by starvation. You have rightly and justly made your acknowledgments to Sir Antony Macdonnell. (*Cheers.*) Were it not for his presence in my provinces, you might have had to hear at this moment that scores of thousands of people had died from starvation in the Bundelkhand and Allahabad divisions alone. I believe all that can be done by the head of the Administration at a time like this is being done by Sir Antony Macdonnell. It is due to His Honor's prudent forecast of the coming calamity, and the timely arrangements he made to cope with it, that you find nearly three lakhs of persons in receipt of state relief at this moment in my provinces. (*Hear, hear.*) The distress however, as I have said, is very widespread and is deepening every day. The measures of relief require to be extended and supplemented. The number of persons employed on relief works is but an index of the suffering which the people generally are undergoing; and even such as it is, it will multiply itself fast and frequently during the months that lie between us and the next spring harvest.

Besides, beyond the circle of those who resort to relief works, is a vast number of *pardanashin* women and the respectable middle class poor who are keenly



POVERTY AND FAMINE

feeling the pressure of the prevailing high prices. They, too, badly need relief. The Government of Sir Antony Macdonnell has been good enough to place Rs. 15,000 a month at the disposal of the Relief Fund Committee at Lucknow for help to *pardanashins* and the middle class poor. I am told it is proposed to distribute relief at the rate of Rs. 2 per head, which I think would be too small. But even at that rate, the sum would reach to help 7,500 persons only. The Government has granted Rs. 5,000 a month for similar distribution at Allahabad. This with the addition of a small contribution from the fund raised by the people would only suffice to bring help to say three thousand persons of the respectable middle class. But the number of persons who need relief is very much larger in both these populous cities. And the number will be daily on the increase for some time. Then there are *pardanashin ladies* and the respectable poor in other districts of the United Provinces, people with small incomes and large families, who find it increasingly difficult to make the two ends meet during the present hard times. They cannot, owing to various social considerations resort to relief works. Many of them would seem not to require help. But they stand sorely in need of it, and, they would welcome it, if it is given to them in a manner to make it acceptable and effective. Gentlemen, many relief committees are being



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

formed in different places in my provinces. And I hope they will bring much relief to the people. But I must say, I fear, with all that the people will have to undergo a great deal of privation and suffering until the existing condition of things changes for the better. That change cannot, under the most hopeful view, come about until the spring crops have been harvested. For the next three months, therefore, the people of my provinces will, I am sorry to think, require help in a very large and daily increasing measure. And if any help is to come to us, either from this country or from other countries, this is the time when it should come in. And no one who has any spark of human sympathy or any sense of responsibility left in him should stand in the way of that help, if he cannot actively assist in bringing it. (*Cheers.*)

One word more, gentlemen, and I have done; and that is about the rations and wages allowed under the Famine Code. I am sorry to find that the rations prescribed in the code are smaller in quantity than those prescribed for prisoners in jails. My Hon'ble friend Mr. Tilak has been good enough to place in my hand a table which he has himself prepared, from which it seems that persons who are sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour, are allowed 24 ounces of flour with 5 of *dal* every day in the Bombay Presidency; 25 ounces of flour with 4



POVERTY AND FAMINE

of *dal* in Madras; 28 of flour with 2 of *dal* in the N. W. P.; and 22 of flour with 6 of *dal* in Bengal. But under the Famine Code the maximum ration prescribed as sufficient to maintain able-bodied relief-workers in health and strength is only 24 ounces of flour with 4 of *dal* every day! In the case of persons sentenced to simple imprisonment without labour, every adult male gets 20 ounces of flour with 4 of *dal* in Bombay; 21 of flour with 4 of *dal* in Madras; 20 of flour with 2 of *dal* in the N. W. P.; and 18 of rice with 4 of *dal* in Bengal. But only 16 ounces of flour with 2 of *dal* are allowed under the Famine Code to the inmates of the poor-house and to other persons who are unable to work. The rations prescribed for the different classes of prisoners were fixed as the result of a long and careful enquiry by the medical officers of Government, and may safely be taken to be the right measure of food that is needed to keep prisoners in health and strength. To allow less than that quantity to persons whom calamity and not crime has brought to depend on the State for food, is to say the least, of it unbecoming and unjust. (*Cheers.*) If they are to be saved from death by starvation, they should certainly be given enough of food to be able to keep up their health and working strength. Then again there is no provision for supplying the necessary clothing to the poor in the



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

Famine Code. The Code requires to be amended in these respects. And I hope the amendments will be soon made. In the matter of tasks, it was recommended by the Famine Commission that not more than 75 per cent. of the work done by an ordinary labourer should be imposed upon relief workers; but the complaint comes from many parts of the country that the full amount of work is exacted from people who go to the relief works, and, perhaps, this combined with the rather short wages given, forms the reason why people keep away from relief works as long as they can. These are matters which call for the urgent consideration of Government. The Famine Code, admirable in other respects, requires to be amended in regard to the matters noted above. To illustrate the necessity of an early amendment, I will quote to you but one instance. There is no better poor-house on my side, so far as I know, than the one at Lucknow. Mr. Gray, the Deputy Commissioner of Lucknow, had at first ordered that every adult male should receive the 16 ounces of flour laid down in the Famine Code. But finding that it did not satisfy the hunger of the people, he directed that 18 ounces per day should be given to each of them. Three months later, he was told that he could only allow 16 ounces per day, and he had to go down, against his own better judgment, to the standard



POVERTY AND FAMINE

CSL

prescribed in the Code. I earnestly hope the Government will soon revise the Code, or issue instructions to its officers to give as much food as is necessary to those who come to relief works or poor-houses to maintain them in health and strength. I also hope that the Government will take immediate measures to bring in all the help possible, not merely from its own coffers, but also from England to the rescue of the people, before it has become too late, before they have been so far weakened and emaciated, so much broken down by suffering, as to be unable any longer to maintain the struggle for existence, when no help which the Government might bring them would avail to save them from the jaws of death. (Loud cheers.)



REFORMS TO PREVENT FAMINES

In seconding the following resolution of the fifteenth Indian National Congress held at Lahore in 1899, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya said :—

That this Congress, while gratefully recognising the endeavours made by the Indian and Provincial Governments to save human life and relieve distress at the present famine, urges the adoption of the true remedy—to improve the condition of the cultivating classes and prevent the occurrence of famine. This Congress recommends the curtailment of public expenditure, the development of local and indigenous industries, and the moderating of land assessment.

Mr. President, ladies and Gentlemen :—I have the pleasure to second this resolution, and I do not think I need say much in support of it. This is a question, gentlemen, which has not been brought before the Congress for the first time. Almost in an identical form this matter has been placed before the Congress in years past, and the Congress has expressed its opinion very emphatically as to the true remedy for famine. Gentlemen, the regret is that notwithstanding this recorded expression of opinion by the Congress, notwithstanding the expression of



REFORMS TO PREVENT FAMINES

similar opinion by English Statesmen and Politicians who have governed this country and, notwithstanding also the conviction which has been expressed in writing by many officials of State, the remedy which seems to be not denied, not seriously disputed by anybody but admitted by most, should not yet have been most seriously adopted, at any rate that no serious effort should have been made to grapple with the question, as it should have been done. Now, gentlemen, in the first part of the resolution you justly express your appreciation of the endeavours which are being made by Provincial Administrations to relieve distress and to mitigate suffering so far as they can, by administering relief in times of famine. It is undoubtedly a grand humanitarian sight to see the Government employing all its vast machinery to relieve distress, so far as it humanly can, when there is actual distress in the country. I do not think there is a single man who has seen the grand famine operations or heard of them and yet will fail to express his deep obligations to the Government for that measure. But when these sights recur with an unfortunate frequency as they do, when you find famines coming one after another (during the course of a short period of 3 or 4 years) you begin to turn away from the consideration of the humanitarian aspect of relieving distress when it comes, and you begin almost to feel callous for the time being as to the



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

fate of the few who are suffering when you think of the fate of the many who may be overcome in time to come by the same dire calamity. (You ask, where is the remedy? Where is the guarantee? Where is the assurance, the hope, that this dire calamity will not overtake many more millions in the year to come? (Hear, here.) I am sorry to say, gentlemen,) there does not seem to me to be any response of a hopeful nature to that question at least for the present moment. / It has been long understood that famines in India do occur with greater frequency than they occur in more civilised countries. When I say more civilised countries let me tell you, in one respect there is no country which is more civilised than India, (*cheers*) namely in having the good fortune, the exceptionally good fortune of having what has been pronounced by several competent men as was also expressed the other day by our President, a magnificent civil service for the country (*cheers*). Now, gentlemen, with such a service to guide the affairs of the country, with men of the highest culture, men of the broadest humanitarian feelings, men who come out with the idea of serving the country in the best way they can and also to a country not at all poor in its natural resources, what is it that brings famine to the doors of India so often and so repeatedly? What is it that prevents the Government of this country from driving out the famine practically from India as



REFORMS TO PREVENT FAMINES

it has been driven practically from other civilized countries which have not such an excellent service there as we have a good fortune to possess. There must be some reason gentlemen. It is not the service which is to blame, but it is the system which is to blame (*hear, hear*). The pity, the great pity, the deplorable pity of it is, that notwithstanding the matter has been so often brought before the Government, the true remedy has never yet been seriously thought of being applied. Gentlemen, the question that you have before you to day is that of famine occurring repeatedly; and the remedy that you point out briefly in this resolution is that the condition of the cultivating classes must be improved. Gentlemen, remember it is no use my repeating to you that 4/5 of the population of this country depends upon agriculture. Now, the condition of agriculture cannot be improved unless the Government take good care to consider what is necessary to improve that condition. There are two aspects of the question, the Government revenue demand and the fixity of tenure to the cultivating classes. With regard to the first, gentlemen, we have repeatedly expressed our conviction that Permanent settlement should be extended to all those parts of India where it does not obtain (*cheers*). With regard to the second, we have also expressed our deep conviction that a fixity of tenure should be secured to the



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

cultivating classes, so that they may be better able to bear the rigours of famine when it should approach them. With regard to the first, it seems to me that certain officials of Government think that it is an impracticable scheme, that the days are long passed when Governors or Statesmen, British Indian Statesmen, would think of extending the permanent settlement, that we must not hope that it would ever be extended, that huge mistake was committed in Bengal where a large portion of the revenue of Government was made over to the Zemindars of Bengal, to the detriment of the rest of the country.

The government, so say some of these statesmen, is not going to repeat that huge blunder. Well, gentlemen, if it were that only the zemindars of Bengal or any other part of India that were to be taken into consideration, I should not be taking up your time and spending energy in speaking on this aspect of the question. The zemindars are only a small body in the country, compared to the great mass of the population in whose midst they live, and I am sure that nobody would desire that the measure should not be adopted because while it will benefit a large body of men in the country it would also benefit the zemindars (cheers). Gentlemen, the conviction has long been expressed that permanent settlement is needed, and I would only read to you some quotations from high



REFORMS TO PREVENT FAMINES

official authorities in support of that view. It is no doubt in 1793 that permanent settlement was introduced in Bengal. The Government had not then all that information before them which they have now after a century. It is not that English statesmen have given up their idea until a very few years ago, of extending permanent settlement to other parts of the country. In 1862 the Secretary of State in a despatch pointed out that it was desirable to extend permanent settlement wherever a certain portion of the area has come under cultivation. Again in 1865 the same opinion was expressed. Now, gentlemen, the words of the despatch are so important that I ask your permission to read some of them. Writing in the despatch of 1862, Viscount Halifax said :—

“After a most careful review of these considerations, Her Majesty’s Government are of opinion that the advantages which may be reasonably expected to accrue not only to those immediately concerned with land but to the community generally, are sufficiently great to justify them in incurring the risk of some prospective loss of revenue in order to attain them, and that settlement in perpetuity in the districts in which the conditions require it or, may hereafter require it, is a measure dictated by sound policy and calculated to accelerate and develop the resources of India and to ensure in the highest degree the welfare



and contentment of all classes of Her Majesty's subjects." Now, gentlemen, such an opinion as that coming so late as 1862 and being laid before the Government of India, and the conviction of vast numbers of educated Indians who live in India in the midst of the people and who are better acquainted with the evils which are incidental to a temporary settlement of land revenue, should set the Government of India at least into a mood for serious enquiry whether that was not the real and true remedy for the state of things which we in common with the Government of India deplore. Then, gentlemen, there is the question of the fixity of tenure to the cultivating classes. I am glad to find, and I am sure we are all grateful to find, that not in one but in several Provinces, the Government is anxious to obtain fixity of tenure to the cultivating classes. In these Provinces, you are aware that efforts are being made in that direction, and efforts have been made in other Provinces too. Now, gentlemen, you must remember one thing. There is a great deal of opposition shown at times, particularly by the Zemindars to the advantages of ryot only being looked to in the proposals of the Government. I do not speak here for the Zemindars, but I speak in the interests of the ryot. The Government ought to introduce such rules and make such arrangements as will not have to be given up or gradually modified



REFORMS TO PREVENT FAMINES

to prevent discontent among Zemindars or to pacify them; and one essential condition of success in the line is that while Government wants to give fixity of tenure or certainty of long lease to the cultivating classes, the Government ought also to restrain its hands and not repeatedly demand increased revenue for over 12 or 20 or 33 years from the Zemindars (*Cheers*).

In the unusual excitement which the Land Revenue Act has produced in these Provinces I have had occasions to meet and discuss the question with several Zemindars and I find, gentlemen, that not one, but many of them said to me:—

“We would be very glad and we are very willing that the Government should extent to the ryot what they want, if the Government would give us also permanent settlement as to the revenue demand.” (*Cheers*.)

Therefore, gentlemen, to that extent, I say the question of permanent settlement is one which concerns the ryots also. Place some restriction on your revenue demand and place a corresponding restriction upon the demand of the Zemindar from the cultivator, so that the cultivator may be secured against undue enhancement and against capricious ejectment; and you will have secured the happiness and contentment of the very greatest portion of the population of India (*Cheers*).



Gentlemen, there are just two other matters that I want to touch upon. I am very sorry I have trespassed too long upon your patience. Of the two other matters to which I will briefly refer, one is, amongst other recommendations we make, we say that Government ought to foster native industries and native arts. Time there was, when in this very city of Lucknow any number of persons were employed in producing things of native manufacture, and earning a very handsome living by that means. Unfortunately to-day if you go and inquire of the old citizens of Lucknow, you will find that products of English and other foreign mills have entirely killed Indian industries. Gentlemen, we do not blame the Government for it. That is a matter about which we make no complaint to the Government. What we pray is that the Government would take measures to give technical and industrial education to the people, so that they may be able to find out the means of producing those things which are required in India in their own midst and not send away crores upon crores to foreign lands in lieu of things that exist (Cheers). It seems that even if all our prayers regarding greater employment of Indians in the public service were granted, that would bring us only a very small relief, compared to the great relief which would come to the country by the introduction or revival of native arts and industries (Hear, hear).



CSL

REFORMS TO PREVENT FAMINES

Gentlemen, it is for this reason that we pray to Government to take steps to give a better technical instruction to the people of this country than they have hitherto been doing. In England itself more is done than in India ; while in countries, like Germany, in Asiatic countries like little Japan much more attention is paid to important technical instruction, preparing the people to produce things that they require for their ordinary every day use.

Therefore, it is, we say that, in our opinion, the Government ought to spend much more money on establishing and maintaining colleges for imparting technical education, than it has hitherto done. Gentlemen, if these prayers are considered in a candid manner, if these prayers are listened to and a serious enquiry is instituted as to the means by which effect can be given to this, I have no doubt the condition of the people will greatly improve at no distant date, and if famine should even then come to the doors of our people they will be better able to protect themselves against that calamity and the Government will find it not necessary to come to the rescue of the people to the extent they do at present (Cheers).



✓ THE EXPENDITURE COMMISSION

IN supporting the following resolution of the eleventh Indian National Congress held at Poona in 1895 Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya said :

That the congress is of opinion that the enquiry by the Expenditure Commission will not be satisfactory to the people of this country, nor be of any practical advantage, to the Government, unless the lines of policy which regulate expenditure are enquired into, and unless facilities are afforded and arrangements made for receiving evidence other than official and Anglo-Indian. And this Congress also feels that the enquiry would in all probability yield better results, if the proceedings were conducted with open doors.

[Mr. President and brother delegates:—It is a painful duty I come to perform in supporting the resolution which has been moved by my friend Mr. Baikunthanath and which has been so well seconded by the last speaker. Gentlemen, when Her Majesty the Queen of England (*Cheers*) assumed the direct government of this country, we rejoiced over the event. We rejoiced because we felt that we were taken in hand by the sovereign of a country which boasted of free institutions, the like of which did not exist in any



THE EXPENDITURE COMMISSION

other country. We rejoiced because we felt that, whatever might have been the events of the early days of British rule, from the moment Her Majesty adopted us as her own subjects all unpleasant recollections of the past were done away with, and we could claim to stand on an equal footing with our fellow-subjects of Great Britain and Ireland. (*Cheers*). We also rejoiced because we felt and believed that the English people, having fought their own constitutional battles through centuries and having got the principle of "government for the people" established firmly in their own land would not fail to see that the administration of this Country was conducted on the same principle, so as to improve the condition of the people in all material respects. I am sorry, however, to think, gentlemen, that our administrators—the bureaucracy which govern us, here and in England—compel us at times to doubt whether we were right in rejoicing at that event; and why? Because before Her Majesty assumed the direct government of this country, more earnest attention was given to Indian affairs; there was a keener desire to see that no injustice was done which could be averted and that the interests of the people of India were properly protected and promoted, than unfortunately often seems to be the case now. In the year 1773, when the East India Company applied for a renewal of their Charter, there



was an enquiry by a Parliamentary committee into the administration of India by that Company. That enquiry was followed by another enquiry in the year 1793; and that was followed by similar enquiries every twenty years, until the Government of India passed from the company to the crown. Every one of these enquiries led to important reforms, because it disclosed the defects which existed in the administration during the preceding twenty years. Since Her Majesty has assumed the government of this country, no such enquiry has been held. (*Shame.*) We have long been crying for it, crying as hard as we could and as earnestly as we could, but I am sorry to say we have not yet been given that full and comprehensive enquiry into the administration of this country by Her Majesty's Government, which is essential to remove defects which exist in that administration, and to make those reforms which are needed in the interests of the people as well as of the Government. The necessity for such an enquiry has long been recognised. In the very first year of the Congress, when we met at Bombay, the first resolution passed related to the appointment of a Royal Commission to enquire into the administration of this country. In 1886 we had the satisfaction to note that a Royal Commission had been promised. I think Lord Randolph Churchill was then in office. There were words in the speech from the Throne which led us to hope that a Commission



THE EXPENDITURE COMMISSION

would be appointed. We expected it would be appointed. But years rolled away and no Commission was appointed. Our friends in Parliament tried, on every opportunity they could get, to impress the necessity of such a Commission in Parliament, but unfortunately, they too did not succeed. And why did they not?—because it seems to me, gentlemen, to be a hard fact that the English people do not take that interest in our affairs which they take in their own. (*Cheers*) It seems to be a fact that they are too much occupied with their own affairs to be able to devote any attention to the proper consideration of the affairs of this country. But are not our English brethren, therefore, to blame in this matter? We have asked them to allow us to exercise the right of considering our own affairs; we have asked them to give us Legislative Councils, empowered to consider all those questions of domestic administration which, it is necessary in the interests of good Government, should be considered by the representatives of the people, but they have refused to grant us those reforms. They have given us a nominal reform in the matter of these Councils, which notwithstanding all that may be said about it, leaves the Council as helpless as before so far as controlling the expenditure of the country is concerned. (*Cheers.*) Our Councils to-day are practically what they have been since their creation.



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

They only serve to delude the minds of the people into believing that they really have some voice in the administration of their affairs, which they have not. (*Cheers.*) Gentlemen, it is well to have the strength of a giant, but as Shakespeare says, it is tyrannous to use it as a giant. England has it fully in her power not to grant us anything we may ask for, but she should not abuse her power. What we say to her is this. If our request is a reasonable one, grant it; if it is not, tell us why it is not reasonable. (*Applause.*) If you do not think us fit to govern ourselves, if you think we cannot understand our own finances, and say what we can and what we cannot spend considering what our means are; if you think you are better judges of it, pray devote a little time and attention to the consideration of these matters. If you cannot find time to do so, permit *us*, pray, to do it. Why make us suffer by reason of your inability to attend to our concerns, and by preventing us from attending to them, from doing what we are most anxious to do, not only in our own interests but in the interests of the Government as well. (*Cheers*)

Gentlemen, I speak, I must confess, rather strongly, it may be, even bitterly, but that is because I feel so keenly on the subject. We believe that the existing administration is too costly for our people, that they are growing poorer and poorer under it. We ask



THE EXPENDITURE COMMISSION

that the expenditure should be reduced. We pray that a Commission may be appointed to inquire into the matter. Our prayer is not heeded ; however, when much Pressure was brought to bear upon the Government, they appointed a Finance Committee, and instituted *secret* inquiries into the condition of the people, during the time of Lord Dufferin. But they have never yet given us that comprehensive above-board inquiry into the whole administration, which we want, and which we believe to be essential for the betterment of our condition. Now, at last, when they have appointed a Commission, they would mar its usefulness by circumscribing the limits of its inquiry too narrowly. Why are we not satisfied with this Commission ? First, because we are told it will inquire only into the propriety or otherwise of the expenditure incurred on our behalf, without inquiring into the lines of policy which necessitate it, and our ability to bear it. Secondly, because it is not coming out to take evidence here. Just fancy. When a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the question of retaining or not retaining the Opium Revenue, the Commission came out to this country, and took evidence. The Commissioners travelled from one part of India to the other, and that was only one item in the large account-sheet of the Government of India. But this expenditure Commission, which is to deal with



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

the entire administration of Indian revenues, is to hold its sittings in London only ! This Commission is not coming out to record any evidence in India ! If any one supposes that, under these circumstances, we can have a fair and satisfactory inquiry, I must say I differ from him. I cannot understand how any one could arrive at such a conclusion. Do you expect the people of India to travel in any large numbers to England to give evidence before the Commission, and would it be of much use if a few of us went there to do so ? What would be the evidence of a few Indians, of however well-informed they might be, before the large body of evidence which will be given before the Commission by retired Anglo-Indian officials, now living in England, who will, with a few honorable exceptions, endeavour to justify the prevailing policy and practice of the Government of India. Gentlemen, unless the Commission comes out to India, I feel satisfied that the result of its labours will prove more injurious than otherwise to the true interests of India. (*Cheers*)

I suppose, gentlemen, you have heard of or read Mr. Fawcett's Parliamentary Committee which sat from 1871 to 1874 to consider the state of Indian Finances. That Committee recorded extremely valuable evidence. Two of our fellow-countrymen, one of them being no other than Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, (*Loud Cheers.*) and the other being Mr. Nowrojee Furdoonjee,



THE EXPENDITURE COMMISSION

appeared before the Committee and gave evidence. Among the other witnesses examined were some very able and renowned administrators of India, one of them being the late Lord Lawrence. The evidence they gave covered a large area. The facts, figures, and arguments they put forward, showed conclusively that it was extremely desirable to curtail Indian Expenditure ; that it was extremely desirable to keep ourselves within the natural confines of the border of India ; that it was extremely desirable not to enhance the taxation which even then was considered to be high, to meet the increasing expenditure, but to economise in all directions, to secure the contentment of the people. All that evidence stands recorded. And I doubt if this Commission can obtain better, if not even equally good, evidence now in England on these subjects. It ought to come out to examine witnesses in every Province and city of India, and to enquire from persons who have a direct personal knowledge of the matter, what the actual state of things here is, and how the administration, as at present carried on, is influencing the lives and happiness of the great mass of the population. If this is not done, the evidence which it will record in England, might serve, in a large measure, as a counterpoise to the evidence recorded by Mr. Fawcett's Committee, which is very favourable to the views of the party of reform here, and might be used



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

to silence us, but it cannot afford materials for sound conclusions. If however, they want to find out simply whether the expenditure incurred is in itself not excessive, without any reference to the ability of the people of India to bear it, I must say I fail to see the wisdom of those who appointed the Commission for such a purpose. Did you ever hear of anything more preposterous than this—that without inquiring into the ability of any particular individual or community to bear any given amount of expenditure, without any reference to his means, you will enquire and decide that such and such expenditure is either proper or improper in the case of that individual or community? You cannot do it. That the Commission may be of any earthly use, and may entitle its recommendations to any weight in the minds of reasonable men, it must inquire into the capacity of the Indian people to bear the existing public expenditure. It must inquire whether their *means* permit of their having the civil and military services maintained at the present high scale of salaries. It must enquire and find out whether these services cannot be obtained at a cheaper rate, whether a larger employment of the children of the soil will not secure a great and a much-needed relief to the tax-paying community in India. Unless all this is done, no one should expect the Commission to be productive of any substantial



THE EXPENDITURE COMMISSION

good to the country. (*Cheers.*) (The President here touched the gong.)

I am afraid I have occupied too much of your time. (*No, no!*) So I will close my remarks very briefly. (*Cries of 'Go on!'*) I will not disobey the chair though I thank you for this kindly expression of your feeling. I will only say this now: I ask English gentlemen, I ask the people of England to seriously consider the position in which India is placed. That position is simply this. Educated Indians, representing the cultured intelligence of the country, have been praying for an enquiry, a full and fair enquiry, into the administration of this country during the last forty years. We have impeached that administration on almost every conceivable ground. We charge the Government of England, with having saddled us with an unnecessarily costly expenditure on the Civil Service of India, we charge them with having forced upon us a crushingly heavy military expenditure. We charge them with indulging in a great waste of India's money beyond the borders of India; we charge them with want of fairness in their dealings with India in the matter of the Home Charges; nay, more, we charge them—the Government of India, the Government of England, and the people of England with them,—with being responsible by reason of their neglect to adequately perform their



SPEECHES OF PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

duty towards India, for the loss of millions of lives which are lost in every decade from starvation, largely the result of over-taxation and inefficient administration. (*Cheers.*) We charge the people of England, because as some one has said,

“Hear him, ye senates, hear this truth sublime,
He who allows oppression shares the crime.”

(*Loud Cheers.*)

If the English Parliament, if the people of England, who have solemnly taken upon themselves the duty of governing India, by reason of their neglect to do that duty properly, allow any loss of life to occur in India which they could prevent, they are surely answerable before God and man for that loss of life. In the face of such an impeachment, does it become the great English people and the English Parliament to give us a lame Commission, to inquire imperfectly into one branch only of this administration? Would it not become them rather to stand up, like true Englishmen, and say: “We shall face all these various charges, and either prove them to be untrue, or admit that they are true and make amends for them.” The charges are not of a light nature, nor are they lightly made and if the English people do not care to inquire into them in the interests of their empire, if they care not to do so in the interests of suffering humanity, if they do it not even as a matter of duty, let them do it



CSL

THE EXPENDITURE COMMISSION

at least for the sake of England, which, I hope and trust, is still dear to every Englishman. (*Loud and prolonged Cheers.*) ✓



ROYAL COMMISSION ON INDIAN EXPENDITURE.

IN moving the following resolution of the thirteenth Indian National Congress held at Amraoti in 1897 Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya said :

That this Congress rejoices that the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure was pleased to decide to admit the public to its proceedings, and further desires to express its grateful acknowledgements for the opportunity afforded by the Honourable Commission to representative Indian witnesses to state fully the case on behalf of India. With regard to the three divisions of the reference the Congress desires most respectfully to submit the following prayers for the favourable consideration of the Honourable Commission :—

(i) As regards the Machinery to control Indian Expenditure, it is prayed—(1) that the non-official Members of the Viceroy's Council may be made more directly representative of the Indian people, and that they may have the right to move amendments and divide the Council upon the provisions of the Budget ; (2) that a sufficient number of representative Indians of position and experience may be nominated to the Council of the Secretary of state on the recommendation of the elected Members of the Viceroy's



ROYAL COMMISSION ON INDIAN EXPENDITURE

and Local Legislative Councils ; and (3) that each year a Select Committee of the House of Commons may be appointed to inquire into and report upon the financial condition of India ;

(ii) As regards the progress of Expenditure, it is prayed that the Military and other unproductive expenditure be reduced, that larger amounts be spent in promoting the welfare and the progress of the people, and a large saving and a more efficient administration may be obtained by the substitution, as far as practicable, of Indian for European agency in the higher grades of the Public service ; and

(iii) As regards apportionment of charges, it is prayed that the Imperial Treasury may bear a fair proportion of all expenditure in which the common interests of India and the rest of the empire are involved and especially that the expenses of the war beyond the frontier may be largely borne by the Imperial Exchequer. Lastly, that it be an instruction to the President to submit a copy of this Resolution under his own signature to the Chairman of the Royal commission with the least practicable delay.

Gentlemen, my task is easy. Every one of you who has either attended previous Congresses, or who has studied Congress literature, must be aware that this resolution only crystallises the opinions which have been repeatedly expressed at previous Congresses. Go through the report of the Congresses of earlier years,