

INDIAN MONEY MATTERS.

The Story of a Famine Insurance Fund, And What was Done With It.

A Speech

BY

CHARLES BRADLAUGH, M.P.

*Delivered in the House of Commons, on August 27th, 1889,
during the Debate on the Indian Financial Accounts*

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NOTE.

THE greater part of the speech here reprinted is taken up with the details of a scandalous story of the misappropriation of public funds of a charitable character. It is earnestly hoped that Britons generally will so far interest themselves in the management of Indian affairs—for which, it should never be forgotten, they are, in the last resort, responsible—as to read what Mr. Bradlaugh has said, and thus become acquainted with the manner in which financial matters are, sometimes, conducted in India. Mr. Bradlaugh tells the story of the imposition of the Famine Insurance Tax and its misappropriation with vigour. No similar incident can be found in British financial annals. The proceedings condemned were entered upon in India with a light heart, and are supported in England by the present Under Secretary of State for India with an airy unconcern which can only arise from a want of thorough acquaintance on his part with the circumstances—a want of adequate acquaintance which, in respect to such a matter, is highly culpable in an official occupying his position. Ex-Indian officials, like Sir Richard Temple, of course, support what has been done. To them, “whatever is, is best”. In their eyes the Government can do no wrong. The advantage supposed to be derived by the appointment to the Parliamentary Under Secretaryship of India of an English politician of character and eminence, to correct the bias of permanent persons in the India Office, is lost when a man like Sir John Gorst becomes the blind apologist of such an incident. His defence was,

probably, the feeblest ever known in Parliamentary experience. So far as it goes that may be counted to Sir John Gorst for righteousness. What has happened was possible only because neither in India nor in England is there any public power of control over the Indian purse. This may be remedied if the British people will support the programme of the Indian National Congress and aid, as it will have an opportunity of doing next Session, the passage through Parliament of a measure intended to enlarge the powers of the Indian Legislative Councils and to increase the number of members of such Councils.

It simply remains to be further remarked that the Famine Insurance Fund has been absorbed into the general revenues of India and the Famine Relief Tax is duly collected. When, as frequently happens, famine threatens and the agonies endured by the suffering people are very great, the most meagre relief is very grudgingly given. This, too, though there is no Poor Law Relief administered in India, and though the Famine Insurance Tax was intended to be, in a measure, a Poor's Rate, and "sacred" promises were given that it should not be diverted from the purpose for which it was imposed.

INDIAN POLITICAL AGENCY,
25, Craven Street, Charing Cross, London.

September, 1889.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, AUGUST 27TH, 1889.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I have placed on the Paper notice of my intention to move an Amendment expressive of the deep regret of the House that the accounts have not been laid before it at a period when they could be properly debated. I do not propose to move that Amendment, because the state of the House is such that no division on it could accurately represent the feeling of the House upon it, and if I did divide, it might go forth to the people of India that a very large number of members had no regard whatever for the Indian people, and that a very small number of members of this House thought their affairs ought to come before Parliament for discussion. Therefore, while making as I do a most earnest protest—a protest which, I believe, would be joined in by members on the other side of the House as well as by members on this side, if it were not for Party exigencies at this late period of the Session—I desire to give it especial emphasis, because of the fact that the modification in the new Rules of Procedure, during the last two years has deprived those who desire to present to this House any statement or criticism, of any opportunity whatever of doing so, unless such opportunity is furnished by the action of the ballot. Even if a member happens to be fortunate enough, as I was early this Session, of obtaining first place for a motion dealing with the affairs of India, it may be that the Government will take away the opportunity which the ballot has given him. India stands here in an entirely different position from any other part of the dependencies of this great empire. There is no colony, however small, but that, upon the estimates, we have afforded us one or more opportunities of raising any question which any member thinks ought to be brought before this House in relation to it, but the same thing cannot be said with regard to India, with the enormous population, to which the hon. gentleman the Under Secretary has referred, of something like 210 millions of actual subjects of the Imperial Crown, and another 65 millions of people more or less subject to its influence. I think the present system is one which any person taking any interest whatever, however remote, in the honour of Britain ought to deplore and endeavor to have changed. I would venture to appeal—it seems rather a mockery to say to the Government, with only the Under Secretary for India, able representative of the Government as he is, present in the House. It seems also a mockery to appeal to the leaders of the party on this side of the House, none of them being present. I deem it right to say that if the Government are deaf to our appeal, and if they will not so modify the new rule as to

enable us to raise questions which we cannot now raise during this debate, I shall take the one opportunity which I have never taken since I have been a member of this House, and shall take care that the question is raised by an amendment to the Address. At any rate, the Government cannot deprive me of that opportunity as they have twice this session deprived me of the opportunity I had obtained by means of the ballot. While I admired the good-humored and able speech to which we have just listened, I could not help being struck with the marvellous coolness—I suppose I must not say audacity—which characterised some of the statements of the Under Secretary for India. He was good enough to tell us that the only proposal of economy had come from the Government, but he coolly ignored the fact that he and his Government had taken away from me the opportunity I had obtained of submitting to the House proposals which I thought would have tended in that direction. He had the frank audacity to inform the Committee that the Council of India Bill had been hindered on this side of the House, and had only got through with great difficulty, when he knows as well as any other member of the Committee that the Government never put it down earlier than the ninth order of the day—I think that one night I saw it the 19th—and when he knows it was in the power of the Government to have put it down as the first or second Order of any day they pleased, and so have tested the question whether there was any real opposition to it. Surely the hon. gentleman might have acknowledged that on the first appeal made to me by the leader of the House, to the effect that if I kept on the paper a notice of amendment I had to the second reading of the Bill he would be obliged to withdraw it, I at once withdrew the notice, although I regarded the Bill as wretchedly small and exceedingly ineffective, and although I regarded it as being more effective in words than it would be in reality. If I had pressed my amendment on the attention of the Committee I should have pointed out that any discussion of the Indian Budget with the benches as they are now is utterly impossible. It is impossible to take the sense of the Committee on any proposition which may be submitted to it without a shameful and disgraceful exhibition of the utter neglect by so many members of Parliament of the interests of so many millions of our fellow-subjects. I cannot say I quite followed the right hon. gentleman's first figures. It seems to me that they do not quite agree; but on this point it may be that I did not pay sufficient attention to his corrections, and I shall confine myself more especially to the figures which I have in print, and which at any rate are capable of being more clearly examined. The hon. gentleman complained that he was met by ironical cheers when he referred to the chief increase in the income of India this year as resulting from the Salt Tax; and he went to the length of saying that he was shocked by the statements made by people who ought to know better as to the effect of the increase of the Salt Duty on the consumption of salt. Well, he managed to shock me, because, with

the almost blind reliance that I have on the accuracy of everything told me by the hon. gentleman, notwithstanding that I have occasionally found that he has been misled by those who instruct him to reply in this House, I had thought that the Blue Book circulated under his authority amongst the members of the House, only within the last few days, has told us expressly that the consumption of salt had fallen off in consequence of high prices, which I proposed to show were the result of the increase of duty. I do not understand why he should be shocked at our entertaining an opinion which the Government of India officially puts to us. The hon. gentleman complains also that we have spoken of the "Famine Insurance Fund". Well, that is how his own Government have spoken of it and have described it. They have now spent the whole of the fund, and do not like to acknowledge that such a fund existed. In a marvellously emphatic tone the hon. gentleman appealed to the Committee, and said: "We have spent the surplus we had; if a larger surplus is wanted for this purpose, do gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House advocate increased taxation, which is the only way of getting a larger surplus?" Our answer is that we have had increased taxation for the purpose of raising a specific sum which you pledged yourselves never to apply to any other purpose, that you have applied it to many other purposes, that you have seldom applied it to the purposes for which it was intended. Before examining the memorandum of the Under Secretary, which was issued later this year than last, I will very briefly draw the attention of the Committee, in view of the fall in silver, to the impolicy of maintaining even the slightest hindrances to the consumption of silver for manufacturing purposes. As was most fully pointed out in a debate on this question in another place about a month ago, the duty of 1s. 6d. per ounce and the requirement of hall marking are practically prohibitive of the importation for trade purposes of Indian manufactured silver articles, and the exportation of English manufactured silver for the Indian market. I appeal specially to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on this question, which is of high importance to India, and vitally affects our silver trade with many foreign countries. I now come to that branch of the speech made by the hon. gentleman the Under Secretary for India, which has occupied so prominent a position in this evening's debate. I allude to that portion of it which relates to the provision for famine relief and insurance, or, as I prefer to call it, to the famine insurance fund. I ask the Committee to turn to the famine relief and insurance item, on page 50, in the explanatory memorandum of the Under Secretary. But, in the first place, I desire to say a word or two as to what has been urged by the hon. gentleman with reference to the correction of figures which appear in that memorandum. I would point out that it would have been quite possible for the Government to have taken the discussion on the Indian Budget a week or a fortnight after the Indian Budget statement had been circulated, and

had the hon. gentleman taken that course there could not then have been any necessity for the corrections he now makes. The hon. gentleman has taken credit for the fact that the memorandum has been circulated for a period of more than six weeks; but I would point out that it was published later this year than last year, and it might have been criticised at an earlier date, as the financial year ends at the same date in one year as in another. I think that, considering the matter is one which affects the welfare of 275 millions of her Majesty's subjects, the Government ought to recognise it as being one of sufficient importance to be discussed in this House at a period of the year when it can be freely and fairly debated, and nearer to the end of the financial year. It is quite possible that every explanation the hon. gentleman has given has been comprehended by every member of this House except myself; but I certainly do find it difficult to follow a set of figures as to which the hon. gentleman himself is not quite sure, and which, even in their corrected form, do not commend themselves to us as matters about which there is a possibility of our all being in agreement.

THE FAMINE INSURANCE FUND: THE PLEDGES GIVEN, THE PLEDGES BROKEN.

The hon. gentleman has referred to the Famine Insurance Return, which I myself moved for, and which has been laid on the table of this House. He referred to it as a document of which the Government might fairly be proud. Now, sir, I should say that if it were possible to imagine any man holding the position of a minister being capable of shame—and I believe such a phenomenon has never been known in the history of Parliament—I should have thought that that return was a document of which any minister ought to be heartily ashamed; and although I do not put it personally to the hon. gentleman as being any ground for shame on his part, yet I think he might reasonably feel a sort of vicarious shame in finding that promises which have been so solemnly made have, nevertheless, been so deliberately broken, and that a large sum of money collected for a particular purpose, has been just as deliberately misapplied. The hon. gentleman the Under Secretary for India referred to the origin of the Famine Relief Fund, but he did so in the vaguest of all fashions. The first reference I will make is to the financial statement for 1878-9, to the financial resolution of the Government of India, dated 18th March, 1878, and to a minute by the Viceroy of India, dated 12th March, 1878, for a detailed explanation of the principles on which it was proposed to make a systematic provision against periodical famines and deaths from starvation. In the Parliamentary Paper, No. 37, dated 1878, page 5, the speech of the finance minister in the Legislative Council of the Government of India proposes to raise an additional £1,500,000 a year "on account of famine alone", and he says that this is done because of the "recognition of her Majesty's Government of the duty of making

definite provision for the cost of famine". On page 24 of that paper he further says: "It is the firm intention of the present Government to apply the funds now to be provided for this special purpose strictly to the exclusive objects which they were designed to secure"; and he also goes on to say: "The Government of India intends to keep this million and a-half as insurance against famine alone". Now, there have been twelve years during which that sum of a million and a-half has been collected, making a total of £18,000,000 sterling, and I shall presently show that that money has not been kept, as was promised, and also how little of it has been spent for the purposes it was intended to serve. The hon. gentleman the Under Secretary has told us that it has been religiously disbursed. For my part, I cannot imagine in what sense the hon. gentleman uses that expression; but I can say that it was certainly not honestly disbursed nor truly disbursed. Well, in the same speech the finance minister says: "We consider that the estimates of every year ought to make provision for religiously applying the sum I have mentioned to this sole purpose; and I hope that no desire to carry out any administrative improvement, however urgent, or any fiscal reform, however wise, will tempt the Government to neglect this sacred trust". They imposed a specific tax of £1,500,000 and promised that it should be devoted to famine, and to famine alone, and hoped that no Government would be able to make away with it. Indeed, the then Viceroy, Lord Lytton, used language so strong that I feel bound to refer to it, and to show that this "sacred trust" was neglected by Lord Lytton himself for the purposes of war; while when the noble lord the member for Paddington, Lord R. Churchill, was Secretary for India the same "sacred trust" was abandoned for purpose of annexation. As I have said, Lord Lytton, the then viceroy, used very remarkable language on the 27th December, 1877, which is to be found on page 36 of the paper I am referring to. He anticipated that objectors might say, "Your good intentions are possibly sincere; but the path to the nethermost pit is already paved with good intentions". I do not know whether the hon. gentleman the Under Secretary was thinking of that downward path when he spoke of the money having been religiously disbursed; but Lord Lytton proceeds with what the objectors might say as follows: "Promise is a good dog, but Performance is a better: we have often heard the bow-wow of the first; we have yet to see the tail of the second. We have been told over and over again by the highest authorities that India is to be insured against famine in this way, or in that; but when famines come upon us we find that the promised way is still wanting." Lord Lytton then solemnly declared: "We promise nothing which we have not, after long and anxious consideration, provided ourselves with the means of performing. I must have very imperfectly explained myself thus far if I have failed to make it clearly understood that I am not now speaking of what we ought to do, or would do, to insure this country against the worst effects of future famine had we only the means of doing

it, but of what we can do, and will do, with the means already provided for, in the measures now before the council." In the debate on the 16th January, 1878, in the Legislative Council, in Parliamentary Paper No. 118 of 1878, page 5, a native member of the Legislative Council, speaking of this famine insurance, suggests: "That it should be formed into a separate fund with a separate account, so that it may satisfy the people that it is what it in reality is intended to be—a separate famine fund". And, on page 44, Lord Lytton says: "The necessity of a Famine Insurance Fund, and the duty of the Government to provide such a fund, has been generally acknowledged". And yet this session the Under Secretary denies that it ought to be called a fund, and admits that that duty has never been fulfilled. These are not mere empty words, for the hon. gentleman said he did not know whether his trusted Indian Councillors had been dead or alive.

Sir J. GORST: I did not say that I did not know whether they were dead or alive; but that the hon. gentleman did not ask the question whether they were dead or alive.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: Whether we were told that he did not know whether they were dead or alive, or whether the hon. gentleman's own experience of the Indian Council rendered it difficult for him to distinguish if it was a Council composed of living or dead men, is a matter upon which it is not necessary to dilate. At any rate, in order to raise that £1,500,000 it was necessary to levy increased taxes on the natives of India. Well, what does the finance minister say upon this? In 1878-9 the finance minister observed, by way of justifying the increased taxation: "I feel confident that I shall be able to satisfy the Council and the public that the resolution which the Government has proclaimed will be faithfully carried out, and that the proceeds of these new taxes will be expended for the purpose of providing what I have called an insurance against famine, and for no other purpose whatsoever". If words have any meaning at all Lord Lytton and his finance minister say: "We impose a special tax—a new tax—for the purpose of raising a special sum of money, and pledge the honour of ourselves and our councillors that that money shall never be applied to any other object". If hon. members will refer to the Return moved for by myself they will see that this promise was never kept, except when Lord Ripon was Viceroy. That I am not stating the case unfairly may be seen from the minute of the Viceroy, dated 12th March, 1878. The Viceroy then wrote: "The sole justification for the increased taxation which has just been imposed upon the people of India for the purpose of ensuring this Empire against the worse calamities of future famine, so far as such an insurance can now be practically provided, is the pledge we have given that a sum not less than a million-and-a-half sterling, which exceeds the amount of the additional contributions obtained from the people for this purpose, shall be annually applied to it". And here I would ask how have you applied the £18,000,000, and I repeat that I will show that, except when the Marquess of Ripon was Viceroy, you

never applied it to the purpose for which it was intended, and that if you have not got it now it is because you have devoted it, as I have already said, to purposes of war and annexation and the erection of costly buildings at Simla, and for similar purposes, while the people of India have been starving. The Viceroy's minute goes on to say: "We have explained to the people of this country that the additional revenue raised by the new taxes is required, not for the luxuries but for the necessities of the State, not for general purposes but for the construction of a particular class of public works; and we have pledged ourselves not to spend one rupee of the special resources thus created upon works of a different character". The English language has very little value if this can be so translated from the Ministerial benches as to explain away its plain and direct meaning; and surely in such a case we ought not to be treated with what I must call a miserable farce of arithmetic like that I hold in my hand. But there were people who doubted whether this £1,500,000 would be applied to its intended purpose; and when the British Indian Association later on hinted at the possible breach of faith on the part of the Government, Lord Lytton openly rebuked them in these memorable words—"You have entirely failed to recognise the fact that the sole purpose of this additional taxation you complain of was the preservation of the lives of the people from the effects of famine. To insinuate the contrary is to insinuate a calumny." After the 11 years' experience we have had, I not only insinuate the contrary but I say that that which Lord Lytton characterises as a calumny has been proved up to the hilt. I now proceed to complain of and criticise the Return. The tax was first imposed in 1875, and its operation commences with 1879-80. Why is the year 1878-9 omitted? Surely £1,500,000 is a sum worthy of being accounted for. Probably the hon. gentleman the Under Secretary will tell us what was the intention of the Indian Government in omitting that year. He might also tell us what was the amount applied in 1878-9 to the prevention of famine, that being a year so close to Lord Lytton's solemn promise. I refer again to the summary of the twelve years contained on page 4 of the Return. There ought to have been £18,000,000 sterling raised by additional taxation for famine relief alone during those twelve years. How is that sum accounted for? It is only alleged that 9,900,737 tens of rupees, or much less than £10,000,000, has been so applied; and I ask what, in that case, has become of the remaining amount of over £8,000,000 sterling? The only years in which Lord Lytton's promises were kept were the years 1881-2, 1882-3, 1883-4, 1884-5, and 1885-6, during which years Lord Ripon was Viceroy. In those years the promise which Lord Ripon did not make was kept; but the promise which Lord Lytton did make has never been kept at all, and since Lord Ripon's time no one appears to have been in a position to keep it. I may here say that I am going to make the Under Secretary and the Secretary of State himself both responsible for what has been going on. Reverting to Lord Lytton's specific declaration that the "sole purpose of the

additional taxation" was the "preservation of the lives of the people from the effects of famine", I will ask the Committee to refer to page 2 of the Return. I would remind the Committee of the questions I have felt it my duty to put, sometimes, I fear, in a way that must have been somewhat wearisome to the House, and for which I invariably laid myself open to rebuke; and I would point out that since last October it was certainly known to the Government of India that famine was approaching in Madras and Bengal and was also threatening in Bombay. This was known, as far as a great portion of India was concerned, by the partial failure of the South-West Monsoon of 1888, which was due in June and July. The effect of this was aggravated by the almost complete failure of the North-East Monsoon which was due in October. The Government must have known that the natural result of these things without any other cause would have been higher prices for food, great pressure, possible hunger, and even probable famine. Well, what is the estimated provision made by the Government out of the earmarked £1,500,000? It is of no use your saying you have not got it. You have spent it. You took it, and promised to keep it for the purpose of saving life in case of famine. See what a mockery you have made of it. This Return shows that £20,500 was devoted for relief—namely, £500 for charitable relief in Madras and £20,000 for charitable relief in Bengal. No provision was made by the present Government for the relief works, for want of which hundreds of people certainly, many thousands probably, died of starvation before the works were commenced. I beg pardon; I was wrong in saying the Government made no provision. In 1888-9 they actually wrote off as a provision the sum of £200, which was the amount of debt due from some wretched Madras agriculturists whose debt had been outstanding from the famine of ten years ago. The general result is that in 11 years real famine relief has been given to the extent of 2,631,750 tens of rupees only; and on page 5 of the statement exhibiting the moral and material progress of India we are told that "no surplus was available as a reserve against famine in future years." This £18,000,000 has been extracted from the peasantry of India on the solemn promise that it should only be applied for the purpose of making provision against times of famine, and that promise has never at any time been kept. In 1877-8 the Government found itself unable to make provision against famine, but at least it did something for the prevention of starvation. I trust I shall not shock the Under Secretary in what I am about to state. I know that his feelings are generally shocked, especially by any statement made from this side of the House with regard to legal questions, which may be accounted for by the fact that the hon. gentleman has been sitting for so many years on the same bench with the law officers of the Crown. Now, what did the Government do? On the 19th January, 1888, they actually raised the salt duty 25 per cent—viz., from two rupees per maund of 82 lbs. to 2½ rupees per maund; and the Government themselves,

in their own statement, say that the effect of this was to reduce the consumption of salt. Less salt means less food, and the official declaration is that in 1888 the consumption of salt fell off markedly in the district of Ganjam. Page 75 of the statement—and a very explicit statement it is—shows that the consumption of salt in Ganjam fell from 12 31 lbs. per head to 8 27 lbs. per head, owing, as the Government say, partly to high prices, or, as I say, almost wholly to the high prices resulting from the increased duty. No wonder there has been famine and starvation in Ganjam. If I possessed the cool freedom of speech which characterises the hon. gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India when attacking members on this side of the House, I should be inclined to use exceedingly hard words against a Government which takes credit for its high officials going into a district where it had been pointed out that famine existed, and where they must have known that it was going on eight or nine months before (for it had been pointed out in this House), having previously extorted some Rx.1,800,000 to make provision for such contingency.

RAILWAYS; IRRIGATION WORKS; BURMA RUBY MINES; THE
NATIONAL CONGRESS; AND OTHER MATTERS

It is one of the misfortunes of only one debate in the year taking place on the finances of India that a member is obliged to be exceedingly wearisome in the length of the matter he addresses to the House. But I must ask the Committee to note on page 4 of the explanatory memorandum a most extraordinary difference between gross and net revenue and expenditure—the gross being swollen by matters of account, and clearly in some instances creating a false impression. For example, railway receipts go to make up gross totals. From page 12 it will be seen that in three years 1887-90, railways impose a burden upon the taxpayer of Rx.7,502,780, though the hon. baronet the member for Hythe (Sir E. Watkin) urges the Government to spend £100,000,000 on more railways. In the official statement, page 14, it is admitted that “Though the dividend on the total railway capital is apparently more than 5 per cent, and though the Government is not liable for more than 5 per cent on any guaranteed capital, or for more than 4 per cent on State Railway capital; still the Indian Treasury lost on its current railway transactions Rx 2,267,800 in 1887-8, and estimated to lose Rx 2,115,000 in 1888-9”. The actual loss turned out to be more than half a million of rupees larger than the estimated loss. I am sure the Under Secretary did not purposely omit it, but I should have liked an explanation of the fact that the actual loss was more than half a million of rupees greater than the estimate.

Sir E. WATKIN: The hon. member has referred to me. I should like to ask whether he is not aware that it has been proved that the advantage to the people of India is greater than the total value of the railways?

Mr. BRADLAUGH: The hon. member will have an opportunity of

following me. I do not see how his interruption is to the point. There is one matter as to which the hon. gentleman the Under Secretary has told us nothing in his explanatory Memorandum, and I am rather surprised that he has not, because it is a matter upon which I have felt it my duty to ask him several questions already. He has not in the Memorandum under the head of "Railways" given any information as to the change of policy with reference to the projected railway to Chittagong, as to which a concession of 3,000 square miles of waste land with the right to prospect for coal and petroleum has either been actually granted, or is under consideration. If this be a wise policy there is no necessity for concealment, nor ought members of this House to be driven to obtain information from private sources. I do not suggest that such a concession would be bad or good, but the House is entitled to know what are the views of the Department and of the Viceroy. What is the reason of this entire change of policy? on what conditions are these rights of prospecting to be conceded? The hon. gentleman, in reply to a question the other day, said that if all railway enterprise was to wait until Parliament had expressed an opinion there would be no railways in India at all. I admired the cleverness and ingenuity of the reply, but unless the Secretary of State is the master of Parliament as well as of India, it was his duty in making his annual statement to tell us if such a change of policy has been made or is contemplated, to give the House information on this point, so as to enable the House to form a judgment upon it. Referring to irrigation works on page 13, I wish to ask as to table 2 which in col. 1 states the total cost to 1886-7 as Rx. 23,770,346, from what date the commencement of cost is taken? And whether the two tables mean that a total expenditure to the present date of Rx. 25,332,935 shows an estimated loss for the year of Rx. 725,400 and whether, as a higher loss still is shown in the two other years given, he will state the deficit for the preceding years? I also ask the Under Secretary, as he states the total capital outlay to date on the irrigation works, first, to state the total deficit of all the years covered by the capital outlay. I ask whether the Rx. 629,400 mentioned in col. 3, table 1, page 13, is the portion of the Land Revenue from new works only, or does it include receipts from old works? And I ask whether, to give the Committee an opportunity of comparing, he can state the amount credited to Land Revenue from irrigation in 1858? Further, I would ask him if he will state the net addition to the food production of the Empire which has accrued from the total expenditure of £25,000,000? In the statement of assets and liabilities on page 20 I would ask are the railway and irrigation works set down at their full cost? Is any allowance made for depreciation? Is any Sinking Fund provided? Referring to page 10, on Burma, I would ask the Committee to note that while the cost of annexation was originally estimated in November, 1885, at some £270,000, it has already cost some £8,000,000, and it is impossible to limit the further expenditure required to carry out what the Under Secretary

of State has called the pacification of the country. I note that in relation to the Burma Ruby Mines Parliament has never had submitted to it the particulars, with names and amounts of the various tenders. I would ask the Under Secretary to state the cost of and incidental to the sending out of Mr. Barrington Browne as Government expert. What kind of valuation he made, and the general nature of his Report, and how many higher tenders—and to what amount—were received than the one accepted, with the names of the persons tendering.

Sir J. GORST: I can answer that at once; there were none.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I should like to know whether the hon. gentleman attaches any subtle meaning to the word "tender", and whether there are not offers in writing within the knowledge of the Viceroy of India?

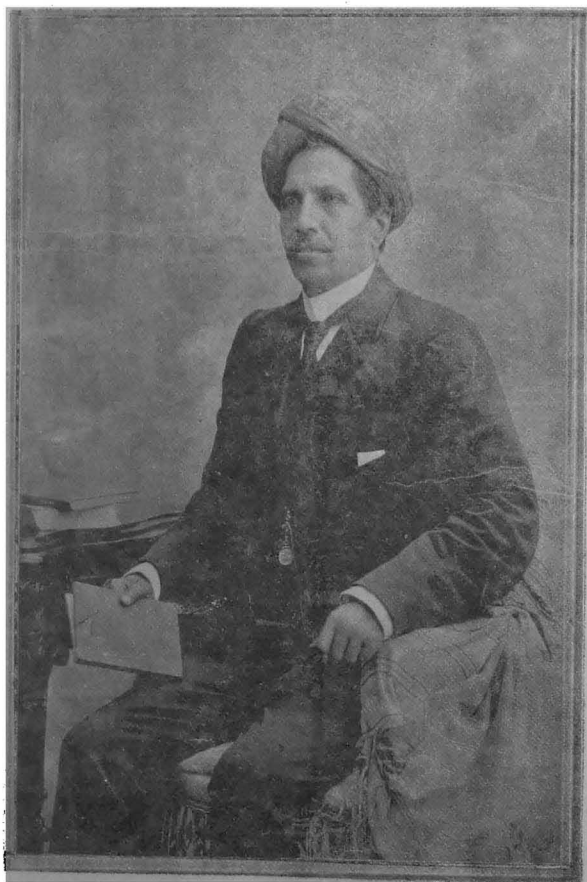
Sir J. GORST: The tender for the Burma Ruby Mines was settled in this country by public advertisement in the newspapers. Tenders were received at the India office, and they were opened in my presence. I can vouch for the fact that those tenders were received.

Mr. BRADLAUGH: I cannot think that I and the hon. gentleman mean the same thing in the words we are using. I should be glad, however, if the hon. gentleman would oblige the committee with the names and particulars of the various tenders, together with the replies, so that the committee may be enabled to form a judgment as to the higher or lower tenders. Will the hon. gentleman tell the committee why it is stated here—

Sir JOHN GORST: In what statement?

Mr. BRADLAUGH: In your own book [*holding it up*] on page 17 of the Government statement dealing with the moral and material progress of India—that a lease of the Burma Ruby Mines was granted to a British company in 1887-8, when the hon. member more than once in the most express terms has stated in the House that no such lease has been granted? The company is to pay a rental of £40,000 a year and one-sixth of the profits, and I should like to know why it is that in the estimated receipts for 1888-9 and 1890, there is no sum whatever even entered in the Estimates as likely to be received? If the hon. member tells me that this statement as to the rental to be paid is not true, I will not press him further, but he must not wonder if I am a little shocked—electrified—in dealing with such matters. And now, I have only to apologise to the Committee for the length of my remarks. I hope, however, that what I have said will show that there is some need for effective financial control in India, and that if it be possible—as I believe it to be—to exercise that effective financial control in this House, even supposing more than one day in the year is devoted to the work, something will be done to enlarge the legislative councils in the various provinces and to increase their powers, so that they may have a better opportunity of interpellating in relation to these matters of finance. I would assure the hon. gentleman the Under Secretary of State that

it is not our desire to destroy provincial activity in India. On the contrary, we desire to enlarge and develop it. I should like to see the Government carry out their promises in this respect. I should like, to use the words of Lord Lytton, "having heard their bow-wow of promise, to see at least the tail of the performance". We hope that there may be enlarged Councils strengthened by a Committee of this House, or a Joint Standing Committee of both Houses, to which may be addressed questions on which it is necessary that some expression of opinion should be obtained as to the advisability of bringing matters in dispute before Parliament. Although, in the present scanty House, it seems a mockery to do so, I would venture to appeal to hon. members, and, if necessary, I will go from this House to Parliament, and from Parliament to the people—that some opportunity of bringing forward their grievances may be given to those who are connected with the movement for reform in India. I agree that they are only a small body, but small as they are, they are sufficiently important to have some attention paid to them. There assembled at Allahabad some 1,200 delegates, representing some three millions of people, and I appeal to the English people for reasonable attention to the wants of India, especially as its grievances are now finding constitutional expression in the great Congress movement, of which Lord Dufferin said that he regarded with feelings "of approval and goodwill their natural ambition to be more extensively associated with their English rulers in the administration of their own domestic affairs". From the report of that Congress, it is evident that the natives are inspired with a laudable ambition to be more closely associated with their English rulers in the administration of their own affairs. It is, of course, impossible to hope that within these walls any criticism or complaint made under existing circumstances will have any very great effect, but I do hope that the protest now made and concurred in, as it seemed to me at the beginning of the speech with which I have troubled the Committee, by members sitting on the Conservative benches—that the protest now made against the late period of the Session at which this subject is brought forward will not be without effect. The House is wearied with the labours of a long Session, and the bulk of the members have gone away. I do not make this protest from Party motives, as I acknowledge that the Party with whom I vote are as amenable to every kind of blame in the matter as the Party opposite. The right hon. gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer is now in his place, and I appeal to him, during the Recess, to give effect to words which I hope I have not wrongly understood—and I am only dealing with words uttered across the floor of this House—which have come from the Leader of the House, that it is only due to the vast mass of our Indian fellow-subjects that at some time they may be able to approach this House in a Constitutional way, with the Speaker in the Chair, and not be driven to bring forward their grievances at a time when a question of finance is under discussion, and they are not susceptible of radical and effective debate.



The Hon'ble Mr. VENKATRAO
President XVII National Social Conference.

REPORT
OF
THE THIRD PROVINCIAL SOCIAL CONFERENCE
HELD AT POONA


On 17th, 18th and 19th May 1914.

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Appendix A.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, SOCIAL SERVICE LEAGUE, BOMBAY.

The fifth annual general meeting of the members of the Social Service League, Bombay, was held in the hall of the Servants of India Society's Home at Girgaum on 31st January 1916. Sir Narayan Chandavarkar, the President of the League, occupied the Chair and a large gathering of the members showed the growing interest and keenness aroused among many educated persons in Bombay in the work of the League as well as the ideal for which it stands. The proceedings commenced with the reading, by Mr. N. M. Joshi, one of the Secretaries of the League, of the Fourth Annual Report.

Mr. K. Natarajan in moving the adoption of the Report referred with satisfaction to the hold which the idea of social service was obtaining over the educated classes as revealed in the increasing number of the members of the League. He also dwelt on the part which the social service movement plays, and can play in a larger measure in the immediate future, in building up a broad national life, offering as it does a common platform of service to all Indians without distinction of caste or creed. Mr. Krishnalal M. Javeri, who seconded the motion, emphasised the influence of the Social Service League in promoting social purity and made a special reference to the work done in connection with the Holika Sammelan.

After the adoption of the report, Mr. Palekar moved and Mr. Vishwanath P. Vaidya seconded the resolution appointing the following Managing Committee for the next two years:—

President:—Sir N. G. Chandavarkar, Kt. *Vice-Presidents*:—Sir Bhalchandra Krishna Kt., The Hon'ble Sir Jateshji Jeejibhoy Bart., Sir Henry E. Proctor Kt., The Hon'ble Sir Fazulbhoy Currimbhoy Kt., The Hon'ble Mr. G. K. Parekh, H. A. Wadia Esqr., Bar-at-law. *Secretaries*:—B. N. Motiwala Esqr B. A. LL. B., J. P., K. J. Dubhash Esqr. B. A. LL. B., Solicitor, Huseinbhoy A. Lalji Esqr., V. L. Mehta

Esq., B. A., T. A. Kulkarni Esq., B. A., C. B. Lalaye Esq., N. M. Joshi Esq., B. A., *Assistant Secretaries*.—J. M. Thakore Esq., S. J. Gaitonde Esq. *Auditors*.—Navroji Fakirjee Damania Esq., Karondas Madhavji Esq. *Treasurers*.—Ganesh Govind Gokhale Esq., A. S. Wagh Esq. *Managing Committee*.—Mr. K. M. Jhaveri, M. A. LL. B. Mr. K. Natarajan, Mr. Umer Sobhani, Mr. Hansraj Pragji, Mr. G. K. Devadhar M. A., Dr. Miss Nagubai Joshi L. M. (Dublin) M. B. C. S. (London), Mr. Janandas Dwaikadas, Mr. M. K. Azad, Mr. Ratanji Dharamsey, Mr. L. B. Nayak, Mr. V. P. Vaidya, Mr. K. R. Koreganekar M. A. LL. B., Mr. S. A. Brelvi M. A. LL. B., Mr. A. V. Thakkar L. C. B., Mr. M. W. Pradhan B. A. LL. B., Mr. S. K. Bole, Mr. Motilal Vallabhji, Rao Saheb A. K. Pai B. A., Dr. P. V. Rayakar, Mr. P. R. Green, Dr. J. K. Daji L. M. & S.

Sir Narayan Chandavarkar in his closing speech stated that the League had every reason to congratulate itself on the good and substantial work it had so far been able to do, especially as it had been the means of enlisting the voluntary services of many an eager young man in its cause. Referring to the Social Service Quarterly, he said that it was particularly gratifying that the journal had proved a success within the very brief period of its existence and that ample testimony to this was afforded by the reception it had received in the press and the letters which he himself had received from many prominent men from all parts of the country. But while satisfactory results had been achieved, much, he added, still remained to be done by the Social Service League which had the duty laid on it to labour, day in and day out, in removing the impression under which the so-called "lower classes" had hitherto been brought up that they were born merely with "duties" to perform, and to instil into their minds instead the idea that they possessed "rights" which must be respected and enforced. And this could only be done if it were brought home to the "higher classes" that they had certain "duties" to perform by the "lower classes," duties which could not be lightly shirked or ignored.

Appendix B.
LIST OF MEMBERS
 OF
The Social Service League, Bombay.

President :—

Sir Narayanrao Ganesh Chandavarkar, Kt.

Vice Presidents :—

| | |
|--|--|
| Sir Bhalchandra Krishna, Kt. Sir Jamsetji Jeejeebhoy, Bart. Sir Henry E. Proctor, Kt. | The Hon. Sir. Fazalbhoy Currim- bhoy, Kt The Hon. Mr. G. K. Parekh. H. A. Wadia, Esqr., Bar-at-law. |
|--|--|

Patrons :—

| | |
|--|--|
| H. E. Lord Willingdon G. C. I. E. Her Excellency Lady Willingdon. H. H. The Agakhan G. C. S. I. &c. Sir Dorab J. Tata. Sir Ratan Tata. | Miss. Hamabai F. Petit, Mr. Narottam Morarji Gokuldas. „ Motilal Dahyabhai Shroff. „ Pestonji D. Khan. Sir Shapurji B. Bharucha. |
|--|--|

Fellows .—

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Sir P. D. Pattani. | H. A. Wadia Esq. Bar-at-Law. |
|--------------------|------------------------------|

Life Members :—

| | |
|--|--|
| The Hon. Justice Sir John Heaton. Sir Jamshetji Jeejeebhai, Bart. Lady Dorab J. Tata. The Hon. Mr. Justice L. A. Shuh. Sir Henry E. Proctor. The Hon. Mr. C. V. Mehta. Mr. T. N. Malvi. „ M. B. Jayakar. „ Jehangir Bomanji Petit. Dr. K. E. Dadachanji. The Hon. Mr. Purshottamdas Thakurdas. Mr. R. B. Lotewalla. „ Baban Gokhale. Dr. Anandrao Laxman Nair. Mr. Moreswar V. Pradhan. | Mr. D. L. Vaidya. „ C. M. Sheth. „ Shantides A. Shah. „ Dwarkadas Jaikisandas. „ VasANJI Mulji. „ Manubhai Rangildas. „ Natverlal Maganlal. Mr. M. V. Rajadhyaksha. „ V. C. Sheth. „ S. R. Bomanji. „ Umar Sobhani. „ Fazulbhoy Jumabhoj Lalji. „ Abdulabbhoj Lalji. „ Nanabhai Talakchand. „ Mulji Haridas. |
|--|--|

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 „ Gulabchand Devchand.
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 Mr. Damodar Bapuji Padwal.
 „ Khamji Hirji Kayani.
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 „ Moghji VasANJI Tricamji.
 „ Devji Raisi Zaveri.
 „ Hussen Bhai A. Lallji.

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 „ Gangaram R. Rele.
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 „ Manilal C. Baxi.
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 „ Khushaldas K. Parekh.
 Rao Sahab Hari Vitthal Kamat
 Mr. Jagjivandas C. Sanghvi.
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 Mr. Tricumdas Girdhar Parekh.
 „ Pardhubhai V. Sharma.
 „ Ambalal B. Jani.
 „ Narayan R. Gandhi.
 „ Dulerali C. Anjaria.
 Prof. Mukundrai B. Desai.
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 „ S. F. Sutaria.
 „ Chandulal J. Bhatt.
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