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INDIA IN ENGLAND,

VOLUME II.



BEING

collection of speeches delivered and articles

WRITTEN ON THE

Indian National Congress,

IN ENGLAND IN 1889,

WITH

AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

BY

PANDIT BISHEN NARAYAN DAR,

(*Barrister-at-Law.*)

LUCKNOW:

G. P. VARMA & BROTHERS PRESS.

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## CONTENTS

<b>THE INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.—Some Historical Analogies to the National Congress</b> ... .. I—xxvii	1
Reuter's Telegrams on the Congress ... ..	1
Comments of the Press ... ..	4
Sir Edward Watkin Interviewed ... ..	13
Mr. A. O. Hume on Sir Edward Watkin's attack ... ..	14
Mr. Bradlaugh Libelled ... ..	16
Mr. William Digby on Sir Watkin's attack ... ..	17
Memorandum of Indian Political Agency on the Reform of Councils	18
Mr. Bradlaugh interviewed ... ..	25
Two letters of Mr. William Digby to the Secretary of State on the report of the Public Service Commission ... ..	28
Mr. William Digby's interview with Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone	61
Nottingham Liberals and Indian Reform ... ..	68
The Hull Radical Club and the Congress ... ..	69
Mr. J. Dacosta's Notes of the Assessment and Collection of the Land Revenue in India ... ..	97
Mr. C. W. Whish on the Congress ... ..	73
Mr. Fredrick Pincott on the Congress ... ..	99
Mr. Robert Brown on the Indian Financial Statement 1889-80 ... ..	110
The Queen Empress's Promises : how they are broken ... ..	116
Work of the Indian Political Agency ... ..	143
India Awake ... ..	150
Mr. Charles Bradlaugh at Newcastle ... ..	158
Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji at Loughborough ... ..	164
India neglected in Queen's speech ... ..	168
The "Congress Catechism" in Parliament ... ..	170
The "Indian National Congress" in Parliament ... ..	171
A Memo. by Sir William Wedderburn ... ..	172
Mr. C. Bradlaugh at Home ... ..	177
Mr. Bradlaugh's Good Services for India... ..	174
Mr. Bradlaugh on the Indian Uncovenanted Service ... ..	181
Mr. Bradlaugh on the Indian Budget ... ..	181
The Liverpool demonstration ... ..	190
Mr. W. S. B. McLaren at Crewe ... ..	196

of the reform Bill "that they had to consider whether there was not on the whole, a general representation of the people in that House, and whether the popular voice was not sufficiently heard. For himself he thought that it was." A still more remarkable declaration was made by the Duke of Wellington. "He was fully convinced that the country possessed, at the present moment, a legislature which answered all good purposes of legislation and to a greater degree than any legislature ever had answered, in any country whatever. He would go further and say that the legislature and system of representation possessed the full and entire confidence of the country."

While ministers were comforting themselves and Parliament with these declarations—while the wisdom of the wisecrack saw perfection in the existing order of things—a profound change was passing over the public opinion of the country, the influence of the Reformers was permeating every pore and fibre of the body politic, the national conscience was becoming sensitive to evils of long-standing, the value of political organisations was being recognised by the people, the hostility of Parliament to all measures of reform was gradually forcing itself upon the national mind which had hitherto been apathetic to its political fortunes, and a great flood of political enthusiasm was rising which was destined to destroy, ere long, the old fences of unjust privileges, and to sweep away for ever those evil and artificial barriers which the selfishness of the governing classes had built up to check and retard the progress of the just, lawful, and constitutional liberties of the English nation. The nation was at last awake, and its influence was soon felt upon the decisions of Parliament. The declaration of the Duke of Wellington against Reform, aroused the enthusiasm of the masses, and Brougham, with a very correct apprehension of the popular sentiment, gave notice of a motion on the subject of Parliamentary reforms. Within a fortnight, the Duke's Government fell, and Brougham's motion contributed, in a considerable measure, to its fall. Mr. Grey, who was now Earl Grey became the new Minister, and the first measure which he promised to introduce into Parliament was, of course, regarding the reform of the elective system. This was the first time when the Government pledged themselves to a measure of Parliamentary reform. While the ministers of the day had expoused the cause of the reform, the influence of the Reformers was spreading rapidly in every quarter of the country. Public meetings were held: large associations were formed, numerous petitions were signed, and the whole machinery of the press was directed in favour of Reform. Still there were great prejudices to be overcome, great obstacles of sectarian biases to be surmounted. The King was opposed to reform; the House of Lords was opposed to reform; and a majority of the House of Commons was opposed to reform. There still existed a strong Tory spirit in the country which was averse to

every kind of innovation in the existing political institutions. On the 1st March 1831, Lord John Russell introduced the measure in the House of Commons. After a long debate, the Bill was brought in ; its second reading was carried by a majority of one only in a house of 608, and in going into committee, the ministers found themselves in a minority of 8, which sealed the fate of the bill. The ministers were defeated on another side issue, and Parliament prorogued by the King in person "with a view to its immediate dissolution." The action of Parliament convulsed the country with a great agitation ; the ministers appealed to the nation, and the nation pronounced its verdict in a most emphatic manner in favour of Reform. A large body of Reformers was returned to Parliament, and after a long and heated debate, the Bill was passed in September, by a majority of 109. The Bill was sent up to the Lords who were as opposed to it as ever, and who in spite of popular excitement and the enthusiasm which prevailed in favour of reform, rejected it by a majority of 41. Ministers who were confident of their strength and who knew that the mind of the nation was with them, did not care much for the adverse vote of the House of Lords ; but brought in another Bill in October, which was passed by the Commons in March 1832, and was again before the Lords. The hostility of the Lords to reform had not abated ; but they saw that they were running a great risk in rejecting a measure which was supported by the unanimous verdict of the English people. Popular feeling was strung to the highest pitch of excitement ; the abuse of the system were felt to be intolerable, and the obstinate and defiant attitude of the House of Lords, endangered for a time the peace of the country, by inducing the people to resort to questionable means of violence and revolution. It was a great crisis in the history of England, and the Lords ranged themselves against reform, with a courage and obstinacy worthy of a better cause. They proposed to make certain material alterations in the Bill to which the Commons would not assent, and the time had come now when either the peers must yield to the national will, or the minister must resign, The King was asked to create peers in order to secure the success of the measure in the upper chamber, but the King refused to do so, whereupon the ministers resigned and their resignation was accepted. The confidence of the country in the reformers was unabated. The King saw that the tide of national feeling was running high in their favour, and that to stand against it would be to endanger the foundation of the constitution itself. With a keener insight into the state of public sentiment than the peers had yet shown, he changed his attitude, became an ardent reformer, and recalled Lord Grey to his Councils. The opposition of the Lords was gone, and the Great Charter of 1832, at length received the Royal Assent.

Thus ended in triumph a great struggle which had commenced in 1770, which for more than two generations seemed to be a hopeless

battle of the Titans against the Gods ; when in the beginning was carried on only by a very small band of wise and foreseeing men and was opposed by the bulk of the masses for whose good it was waged as well as the governing classes whose exclusive privileges it tried to curtail, which from very small beginnings grew into one of the greatest movements of the present century, and the influence of which, like freedom, ' broadened slowly down from precedent to precedent.' The history of this struggle teaches some very instructive lessons to the friends and advocates of the Congress movement. It teaches in the first place that the governing classes, even when they do not belong to an alien race, have always been opposed to every innovation which seemed in any way to ruffle the quiet surface of routine, and have stood against all measures of reform which were, in any degree, calculated to curtail their power. Not only the ruling classes, but even the masses have always been indifferent to their political amelioration and those who championed their cause fared on better at their hands than at the hands of those whose unjust monopolies they assailed. It teaches, in the second place, that the influence of the reformers has grown in Parliament in proportion to their influence in the country, that when the country was indifferent to their teachings, they were powerless and even unpopular in Parliament, and that when they had enlisted the forces of popular zeal and earnestness on their side, they succeeded in making their will prevail in the councils of the realm. There is another moral which we may draw from the Reform Bill agitation and it is this that in every just cause early defeats are the sure preludes of success ; that the trials, the difficulties, the dangers which beset the path of the pioneers of thought are but the stepping-stones to final victory that the qualities which have enabled mankind to rise above the rank steaming valleys of sense and to scale the Alpine height of knowledge and progress, have been moral rather than intellectual—Congress, perseverance, a single-minded devotion to truth, and an unquenchable zeal for the public good rather, than extensive knowledge, a strong reasoning faculty, and a keen mental vision. Besides, it is clear from the history of the Reform Bill that when a great question has once received the unanimous approval of the nation, when the will as well as the intelligence of the country has ranged itself on its side then the best considerations of policy require, as indeed the highest principles of justice dictate, that the Government should give a fair and sympathetic hearing to that question and whenever a Government, under the influence of evil councils fails to do so, then a reactionary effect is produced upon the minds of the people, who losing all faith in the wisdom and virtue of their rulers and in the efficacy of peaceful and ordinary constitutional means, are driven to resort to violent and revolutionary weapons. Lastly there is another moral which the Reform agitation teaches and which it will well for us to bear in mind and it

is this that no great Reform has succeeded in a day ; that fifty years of hard struggle had elapsed before the first step in the direction of Reform was taken by Parliament.

Connected, and almost contemporaneous with the Reform Bill agitation is the agitation for the liberty of opinion. Few of us by whom this liberty is enjoyed as one of the undisputed rights of man, are aware what bitter struggles it has cost those heroic men who have in far darker and rougher times wrested it from the hands of despotism and bequeathed it to all future generations. When the reform agitation had commenced, the necessity of moulding public opinion through the instrumentality of the press and public meetings was at once realised. A fresh life was infused into the press ; the publication of political tracts and pamphlets became very common ; and a number of political associations sprang up in different parts of country. The governing classes at once saw that the press and political associations were the chief enemies of the abuses upon which had rested for centuries the basis of the English constitution, and that the liberty of saying and publishing things meant the destruction of those abuses. But the idea of yielding one jot or tittle of their power or privilege in the interest of the common weal, the King and the nobles were not prepared to tolerate, and every effort was made to extinguish the lamp of liberty in the heart of the nation, and to keep it in a state of object survitute. The age of the licencer, the Star Chamber, the dungen, the pillory, and the stake had passed, but the spirit of persecution was still active and alive, and manifested itself in scarcely less cruel forms. The trials of Wilkes, Thorn, Paine, Horne, Tooke and others have become historical, and show in what light the publication of political opinions was looked upon by the people of England half-a-century ago.

Every opinion which was thought to make the people discontented with their political condition was branded as dangerous and seditious, and the whole machinery of Law was set against its author. A clever young lawyer, Thomas Muir who was charged with having taken an active part in the unpopular cause of parliamentary reform, was tried for sedition before the High Court at Edinburgh. The judges were the avowed enemies of Reform, and all the jurymen selected by the sheriff and picked by the presiding Judge, were members of an association which had erased Muir's name from its book as an enemy of the constitution. He objected to these Jurors on the ground that they had prejudged his case, but he was told that he might as well object to his judges, who had sworn to maintain the constitution. "The witnesses for the prosecution failed to prove any seditious speeches," while throughout the trial the Defendant was browbeaten and threatened by the judges. He was denounced by the Lord Advocate "as a demon of sedition and mischief." He

admitted that he had taken an active part in the promotion of Reform, and upon this charge, which the judges said was one of sedition and even high treason he was sentenced to fourteen year's transportation. Several legislative measures were passed with the object of stemming the tide of public opinion which was rising gradually in favour of the Reform movement. "Every justice of the peace could issue his warrant against a supposed libeller, and hold him to bail; the Secretary of State, armed with the extraordinary powers of the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act, could imprison him upon bare suspicion. Defendants were punished, if convicted, with fine and imprisonment and if even acquitted, with ruinous costs. Nor did the judges spare any exertion to secure conviction."

The fate of public meetings was not a whit happier or more secure. The Government feared the people and viewed large assemblages with dread and suspicions. All political meetings were looked upon as seditious, and a Proclamation was issued against them in 1819. A great meeting was held in Manchester with the object of presenting to Parliament a petition for the reform of the elective system. About 40,000 men assembled bearing flags, on which were inscribed "universal suffrage," "Equal representation or death" "No Corn Laws." The conduct of the meeting was perfectly orderly and peaceful; but as soon as the Chairman had commenced his speech the cavalry at the command of the Magistrates, advanced upon the people. All was riot and confusion; the meeting was dispersed, the leaders were arrested; many were cut down by the sabres or trampled upon by the horses; about 400 were wounded, and a few lives were lost. The Magistrates complimented the military, and the Government the Magistrates, upon their tact and promptitude in maintaining the public peace. But "The Manchester Massacre" as this riot was called, sent a thrill of indignation throughout the length and breadth of the country. In spite of the hard, despotic policy of the Government, influential meetings were held in the chief towns, condemning the conduct of the Magistrates, and expressing sympathy with the sufferers. A public inquiry was demanded, but in vain. Lord Fitz William was dismissed from his lieutenancy, because he spoke at a meeting which demanded inquiry into the Manchester affair. Parliament refused inquiry and introduced more stringent measures for the repression of free opinion. They were called, "The Six Acts." "This first deprived defendants in cases of misdemeanour of the right of traversing; by a second it was proposed to enable the court on the conviction of a publisher of a seditious libel, to order the seizure of all copies of the libel in his possession, and to punish him on a second conviction, with fine, imprisonment, banishment, or transportation; by a third, the newspaper stamp duty was imposed upon pamphlets and other papers, containing news, or observations on public affairs, by a fourth, no meeting of more

than fifty persons was permitted to be held without six days notice being given by seven householders to a resident justice of the peace; and all but freeholders, or inhabitants of the county, parish, or township, were prohibited from attending under penalty of fine and imprisonment. Lecture and debating rooms were to be licensed and open to inspection. By a fifth, the training of persons in the use of arms was prohibited; and by a sixth, the Magistrates, in the disturbed counties, were empowered to search for and seize arms."\*

But the coercive policy of the Government was not strong enough to crush down the expansive faculties of a progressive nation. Instead of checking the progress of free opinion, it accelerated its pace, by intensifying and stimulating the zeal and energies of the leaders of reform. The feeling of anger against the Government grew stronger day by day, the defiant attitude of Parliament inflamed the national conscience and lashed into fury the hitherto dormant passions of the masses. The influence of the press went on growing steadily, and the spirit of political organisation assumed larger proportions. When the Government thought that they had almost extirpated every opinion which was in any way adverse to their tendencies, and levelled to the dust all associations of a seditious character, a great organisation was formed which was destined to play a very important part in the political History of the country.

The political claims of the Roman Catholics were advocated by Burke in Parliament, but at that time, neither the Government nor the people were prepared to accord to them a fair and impartial hearing. The first association for the emancipation of the Catholics from Civil and Political disabilities was formed in 1809, and O'Connell, the great Irish patriot was a leading member. The work of the association was to prepare petitions, hold meetings, and otherwise encourage and stimulate discussion upon the subject of the Catholic disabilities, and to arouse the Catholics to a sense of the wrongs and injustices under which they suffered. For some years, the association did not excite much interest; but in 1823 it was formed on a wider basis, embracing Catholic nobles, gentry, priesthood, peasantry; and thus it became a sort of National Parliament, holding its Sessions in Dublin, appointing Committees, receiving petitions, and levying contributions in the form of a Catholic rent upon every Parish in Ireland. Its debates were published in the papers, and among its greatest orators were O'Connell and Shiel. The Government saw that they were face to face with a great power, and that they must either suppress it or concede its demand? They were not yet prepared to dissolve the chains of the Catholic disabilities, and consequently they resolved to suppress the association. A Bill was

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\*May's constitutions History, Vol. II., p. 199-200.

passed in 1825, to amend the laws relating to the unlawful Societies in Ireland. It prohibited the permanent sitting of Societies, the appointment of Committee beyond a certain time, the levying of money for the redress of grievances, the exclusion of persons on the ground of religion and the administration of oaths. This measure suppressed the Catholic association ; but a new association embracing the same object, but constituted so as to be beyond the grasp of the law, was formed. Its ostensible object was to promote education and other charitable works, but its real object was political. It appointed permanent Committees and through its Church wardens collected the Catholic rent in every Parish. The Government saw that in suppressing the first association they had only killed the body, while the spirit had transmigrated into another organisation; but they were powerless. The Acts under which the old Catholic association had been suppressed was to last only for three years, and after the expiration of that period, that association was again revived. The agitation in favour of the Catholic emancipation was spreading all over the country. The continued discussions of the association had awakened the mind of the English nation to the political grievances of the Catholics, and although Parliament was obstinate in its refusal of the Catholic demand, yet the country was willing to concede it. The transfer to their side of the public opinion of England strengthened the hands of the Irish patriots, and the agitation assumed such grave and portentous proportions that the Government once more resorted to the policy of repression and proclaimed all such meetings against the law. The Catholic leaders, strong in their faith in the justice of their demand, and confident of the support and approval of the entire body of English public opinion, quietly yielded to the Government. Public feeling was strung to such a pitch of excitement, the defiant and provoking attitude of Parliament became so intolerable, the inequities of the political servitude of large portion of the people became so palpable, and the agitation stirred the enthusiasm of the masses to such an extent, that the Catholic emancipation was at last accepted by a hostile king and reluctant Parliament as an alternative to civil war.

From the foregoing illustrations it is clear how even that freedom of opinion which is a most marked characteristic of the English people, was till the other day enjoyed only by the privileged classes and denied to the masses, and how many lives were wrecked, how much innocent blood was shed—before it was placed on a safe and secure footing. There was a time—not very far remote in the life of a nation—when even in free England, the champion of liberty was the object of public contempt and execration, when his voice in the cause of freedom was the voice of one crying in the wilderness, when the rulers dreaded free criticism, and adopted every means to put it down, when the law instead of being the instrument and handmaid of justice was the engine of oppression and persecution ; but as the

intelligence of the country advanced and the teachings of Reformers kindled the national conscience, the people awakened to the sense of moral bondage in which they had been held by their rulers ; by slow, but steady efforts they marshalled their forces, and when the right hour had struck they assaulted the citadel of unjust privileges and worn-out institutions, and after a sharp struggle which put to the severest test the courage, patience, and energy of reformers, planted the flag of victory upon the top of the Capitol. Thus has the cause of justice triumphed in every age and every clime.

There is another movement of a purely moral character, which has removed one of the foulest blots from the face of modern civilization, and the history of which affords a very striking and encouraging parallel to the National Congress. The change which has during the past fifty years, taken place in the moral sentiments of Europe is so great that the people can hardly realise now the state of feelings which sanctioned and kept alive for centuries the buying and selling, like ordinary goods, of human beings among the European nations. But there was a time when the slave trade was common in Europe and was considered one of the most lucrative sources of wealth. Millions of negro slaves were brought and sold like flocks of sheep, and it was estimated that not less than 97,000 negroes were taken from Africa in a single year. The rulers as well as the wealthy classes of every civilized country had a material interest in the trade, and it seemed at the time an impossible task to persuade them, on mere moral considerations, to give up one of the most coveted prizes of life.

But an imperceptible change was taking place in the moral feelings of the times and some great men who anticipated the higher ideal of a later age raised their voice against the abuses of Slavery. Wesley, the great Methodist preacher published in 1774 his "Thoughts on Slavery" in which he strongly denounced the system. David Hartley brought the question before Parliament by moving a resolution "that the slave trade was contrary to the laws of God and the rights of man." The motion was defeated without having excited any interest either in or out of Parliament. Meanwhile the Quakers had thrown themselves into the cause of the Abolition of the trade. They had passed resolutions condemning it in 1727 and in 1758. They even excluded from membership any Quaker who was concerned in the trade and branded it as an altogether criminal practice. They formed associations to discourage the introduction of slaves into their provinces, and to encourage their liberation, and in these philanthropic exertions they were supported by Benjamin Franklin. The agitation had as yet assumed no organised form, although here and there the signs that the conscience of England was awakening to the evils of slavery, were increasing.

In 1780, a small Quaker Society was formed with the object of moving public opinion in the direction of the abolition, and a petition for the same purpose was presented by it to Parliament in 1783. The minister of the day while sympathising with the object of the petition, was constrained to declare that the trade had become "in some measure necessary to almost every nation in Europe, and that it would be next to an impossibility to induce them to give it up and renounce it for ever." Although Parliament was deaf to these moral appeals, yet the mind of the nation was gradually becoming susceptible to them, and the cause was taken up by some great men who were the intellectual ornaments of their age, and who by their heroic endeavours for the moral regeneration of mankind, have left permanent foot-prints on the sands of time, for the guidance and encouragement of succeeding generations. Clarkson appeared on the scene, and Wilberforce, and Granville Sharp. Wilberforce concentrated his chief efforts in Parliament; Granville Sharp formed the "Society for the abolition of the Slave Trade," which was destined to become one of the most successful organizations in modern history. This society consisted, at first, of only twelve members, and its object was to abolish the slave trade and mitigate the condition of the slaves. Who could have imagined that this small society of 12 men would carry one of the greatest moral reforms of the present century; yet were the righteousness of their cause, and confident of that victory which crowns every just and noble effort, and against which even the stars, in their courses, fight in vain. The first thing that this Society did was to collect materials. Clarkson devoted himself to the arduous task of collecting facts and figures, and when the huge mass of materials was thus collected and placed before Parliament it revealed horrors and atrocities of the trade which shocked the conscience of England and aroused feelings of righteous indignation against the barbarous system, in the breast of every man and every woman.

The agitation which had hitherto been confined to a small band of philanthropists and religious teachers now passed on to the people and assumed national importance. In some parts of England, the people agreed to leave off the use of sugar, as being a product of slave labour; numerous associations for the abolition of the trade were established and affiliated to the parent Abolition Society in London; numerous public meetings denouncing slavery were held in different parts of the country, and in one year about 519 petitions were presented to Parliament for the abolition, while there were only four against it. The King and royal family were extremely hostile to this agitation, and all great assemblages of men were dreaded and discouraged. But Wilberforce was fighting the battle of the abolition within the precincts of Parliament, and Pitt was on his side. The former brought a motion for the immediate abolition; policy of the gradual abolition was proposed by Dundas and carried by 193 votes to 125.

The House decided that the Trade should cease in 1796; but the bill was sent up to the House of Lords, and there it was lost. The abolitionist, however, had no cause to despair; indeed, considering the great change they had produced in public opinion, within a short time, they had every reason to hope for an early triumph of their cause. Wilberforce again revived his exertion in Parliament, in the following year, and although he was again beaten on his motion for the abolition, yet he had succeeded so far that even his opponents felt the necessity of passing some measures for the mitigation of the enormities of the trade. "A Parliamentary address was carried to the governors of the colonies, calling on them to take means to promote the welfare of negroes, so that the trade should ultimately become unnecessary. An act of George II which authorised the sale of slaves at the suit of their masters creditors was repealed."\* In 1798 and 1799, Wilberforce was again defeated. Thornton, another great abolitionist leader, introduced a measure against the purchase of negro slaves. It passed the Commons in 1799, but was defeated by the Lords. For some years, the cause of the abolition did not seem to make much progress; and although Wilberforce brought in his motion every year in Parliament, yet he was each time defeated. He and his colleagues did not lose heart by these apparent defeats; but adhered to their cause with increased tenacity, firmness, and patience, and continued their unremitting exertions in instructing public opinion upon the subject and in winning over to their side the support, the sympathy, and the moral enthusiasm of the nation.

The death of Pitt placed the reins of Government in the hands of Fox who was a staunch abolitionist, and a new ray of hope fell upon those Reformers who had hitherto addressed their appeals to an apathetic Parliament. A measure forbidding British subjects from taking any part in supply foreign powers with slaves, was passed. This was but the precursor of the measure for the total abolition of the slave trade, to which Fox pledged Parliament. But Fox died and Lord Granville fulfilled the pledge, and in 1807, the slave trade had ceased to exist in the British Empire. The complete success of the abolition society was achieved in 1833, after which it was dissolved, having accomplished one of the noblest moral reforms of the nineteenth century.

The anti-slavery agitation is perhaps the most remarkable instance of a just but unpopular cause, overcoming appalling obstacle, conquering unyielding opposition, rising in public estimation, however, gradually and slowly, but always steadily and surely, not, by any bloody or violent means, nor by any of those revolutionary earthquakes which are so often caused by the folly, the insolence, and defiant conduct of the rulers, but by placing its reliance upon

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\* Lecky's History of England Vol. VI., p. 296.

the efficacy of moral suasion, by appealing to men's rational judgments and striking in their breasts the tenderest chords of sympathy and humanity. Although the clouds of temporary defeats darkened the course of the abolitionist, although, over and over again Parliament refused their prayers, and although, the representing as they did the higher morality of a later era they stood isolated from the rest of their fellow countrymen fighting for a cause against which were arrayed the forces of rank, and wealth, and privilege, and preaching a doctrine which ran counter to the prevailing sentiments of the age, yet, were they not disheartened, nor dismayed, nor discouraged, but nerved by difficulties and chastened by misfortunes, they stood firm like a rock amid the vicissitudes of social and political changes, and carried to its final victory a movement which has emancipated, redeemed, and regenerated the lowest of mankind.

These great historic movements—the reform agitation, the Catholic Emancipation, the Anti-slavery Association—present striking and instructive analogies to the Congress movement, wherein are centred, for the present, the hopes and aspirations of the most advanced and patriotic section of the Indian community. The National Congress, too, as it has been already stated originated with the cultured few, but as time rolled on, its influence filtered down to the less advanced classes, until it has nearly touched the very base of our social pyramid. The number of the delegates has been almost doubling itself every year, and even Mahomedan defection is now known to be the phantom of an old man's over-wrought brain. Just as in England the classes dependant upon the Crown and the Lords were the staunchest opponents of reform, so here those who depend upon the bounties of the Government—indeed who owe their position and even their existence to the Anglo-Indian ascendancy, such as the Taluqdars of Oudh, the Nawabs, and the title-hunters—have been opposed to every popular movement. The aristocracy in England did not in the day of its power view with favour the increasing liberties of the people, nor have we any reason to think that our aristocracy will hold any more favourable attitude towards us. The growing strength of the populace made the governing classes in England a little unscrupulous in their dealing with the people; and in this country the signs are not wanting which indicate that unless, kept down by the strong arm of Parliament, the official class will have no scruple or hesitation in crushing down our activities, as soon as it sees that they are likely to become successful. As during the Emancipation agitation Parliament suppressed public meetings, so Lord Lytton, at a time, when the discussion of a great question was most necessary, gagged the Indian press in order to keep the English nation utterly in the dark regarding the state of public feeling in this country, and so indeed some *Patriots* have suggested that the Congress should be “proclaimed” and its leaders

hung, drawn and quartered for their seditious and disloyal teachings. But, as in England so in India, every reform has proceeded from the cultured few; been opposed by the privileged classes, but as soon as accepted by the masses, been successful. In England the constant refusal of their demands, drove the people into rebellion, in India, it is to be hoped that the indifference, and even the unsympathetic attitude of our rulers will not lead to similar results, for such a course will be like inexpedient and morally wrong—inexpedient, because living under a foreign rule our motives and actions are apt to be easily misunderstood and our temporary fits of excitement may very easily be set down as the mutinous and disaffected traits of our national character; morally wrong, because the real culprits who ignore our interests and entreaties are the officials who are loth to part with one iota of power or privilege, and not the English nation and English Parliament, who, although our real rulers, are ignorant of our real state, and to whom we are bound by the strongest ties of affection and gratitude. In 1830, such a sagacious statesman as Peel, failed to read the signs of the times and pronounced against the Reform Bill which was to become law two years later, and who know if Lord Dufferin and Sir Auckland Colvin are not equally mistaken in their estimate of the political meteorology of India, when the style as “a big jump into the unknown” those proposals of reform which are as harmless as they are just, and ere long be taken up and dealt with by Parliament.

Indeed there are some very encouraging signs visible on the horizon, which indicate that a great change is taking place in the minds of our rulers in favour of the National Congress. It is no more lightly spoken of in political circles, nor are its leaders looked upon as a set of nonentities. The old wave of abuse and vituperation now seems to have spent itself; the cry of sedition is for the present silence; at the panic which was caused by the two famous “Parliaments” and when drove some of its critics beyond all bounds of propriety, has subsided; and we no more hear of petitions to Government for the suppression of the movement. The Report of the last Congress has met with a most favourable reception both in England and India. The entire body of the English Press, with the exception of a few papers, has expressed its approval of our political demands. There are a few papers which are still opposed to us, but we hope that when the light of facts dawns upon them, they will change their opinion. We are afraid not of the enlightenment of our critics, but of their ignorance which induces them to believe such absurd inventions as Sir Elward Watkin's that the Congress is carried on by Russian gold. However the drift of public opinion is very hopeful. Even the *Times* which is one of the most powerful supporters of the Anglo-Indian ascendancy, has come “to recognise with satisfaction the general moderation and propriety of tone in the speeches

delivered" at the Congress and sees no reason to quarrel with or criticise severely the Resolutions passed on such subjects as popular education, fiscal reform, appointments to the Civil Service," and says what indeed some of our Anglo-Indian critics have not yet had the charity to say that it has "never treated the promoters of the movement, as a set of dishonest and disloyal intriguers." The Liberal Press is enthusiastic for the Congress; and the general tone of the Conservative papers, too, is of approbation, if not of eulogy. There is not a single town of importance in Great Britain where the name of the Congress is not known; and events have occurred during the last two years which show that a considerable portion of the British public is beginning to take a deep and real interest in the progress of political thought in this country. Great public meetings are held in London and other places at which eminent politicians address the people on the Congress question. Mr. Bradlaugh—his name alone is sufficient to confer lustre upon any movement with which he allies himself—has delivered powerful speeches on our political demands, and we may be sure that he who has fought and won almost single handed, a great constitutional battle in Parliament, is not likely to fail in his noble and chivalrous exertions on behalf of the suffering millions of India. The Liverpool meeting at which Mr. Caine and Mr. Yule, spoke is another proof of an increasing interest in our political questions in the minds of the English people. Some English ladies lately held a meeting in aid of Indian political reform, in "Kidderpur house," the London residence of Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee. Every one remembers the "Blackman" episode; and whatever may be said by those whose chief occupation is to minimise the importance of everything which tends to denote, in any measure the success of our cause the dinner given to our illustrious countrymen, Dadabha Nowrojee by the National Liberal Club was one of the most remarkable demonstrations in favour of our political reform, the image and omen of the feelings of good-will and affection which the English people cherish towards the people of this country. Besides, some of our leading men, like Mr. Bonnerjee, go out to England every year to make direct appeals to the English nation on behalf of their country, and this plan has done much good by diffusing among them correct information regarding the aims and aspirations of the people of India.

But the most useful engine of our political reform is our London Agency under the wise superintendence of Mr. Digby. Mr. Digby has earned the lasting gratitude of all India for the invaluable services he has rendered to the Congress-movement. To his exertions we owe the keen interest which some eminent politicians have begun to take in our progress. It was he who obtained for us assurances of sympathy from the greatest statesman of the age. It was he who

agitated the Kashmere question ; who addressed two powerful letters to the Secretary of State on the Public Service question ; and who defended the Congress against the unjust and cowardly attacks of Sir E. Watkins and others. The diffusion in England of Congress-literature is due in a considerable degree, to him ; and if the Indian Agency has become a centre of political weight and influence in London, it is because his literary ability, his vast knowledge and experience of Indian politics, his overflowing, regard for our well-being, have combined together in the furtherance of our great National cause. Institutions, like the Indian Agency have played such a useful part in English history, the Colonies have profited by them so much, they have been such efficacious instruments for turning the currents of public opinions in favour of Reforms that we may, without any hesitation, impress upon our countrymen the extreme necessity, importance, and usefulness of keeping up in London, at all costs and hazards, an organisation, which has already done so much to popularise our political movement, and which may, in future, become the chief medium through which the national mind of India may commune with the national mind of England.

Thus much for the changes of opinion outside Parliament : it remains to be seen now how far our cause has progressed in Parliament. In the House of Commons it is championed by Messrs. Bradlaugh, Caine, Smith, Macferlane and other leading lights of the party. They have during the present year raised a host of questions in Parliament on Indian topics. To those whom the indifference of Parliament towards Indian matters had grown wearisome and painful, the change in its attitude and the interest which it has begun to take in our movements, is as remarkable as it is encouraging and hopeful. Although Indian questions occupy as yet a very insignificant place in the field of parliamentary discussion, although our Budget is even now disposed of in a few hours with a few speeches from some independent members addressed to empty benches, although there is not any party in Parliament which has made Indian Reform one of the chief articles of its political faith, although, otherwise independent but in Indian matters, Parliament allows itself to be guided entirely by the Secretary of State, who is swayed by the Indian Council composed of retired Anglo-Indians, who on Indian questions are at least a quarter of a century behind the aged and have little sympathy with the aspirations of a "New India;" while the Secretary of State's Council generally backs up the Viceroy's Executive Council, which consisting of members who are bound to support the Government, is influenced by the bias and opinions of the rank and file of the official classes ; yet there are certain signs of the times, which those who run may read and which indicate beyond all doubt, that the present system of governing India

has been weighed in the balance and found wanting, that the mind and conscience of England are awakening to her solemn Imperial responsibilities that some English statesmen, with that courage and perseverance which marked the pioneers of the Reform-Bill Agitation and the Catholic Emancipation, are coming to the front and willing to lay their lance in rest for a cause which is the cause of justice and freedom and the ultimate triumph of which would tend as much to the fame and glory of England as to the social and political elevation of a weak but aspiring people. The question put by Mr. Bradlaugh on Indian matters are the first beginnings of a great change. Their success may be judged by the degree of discomfiture they cause to the exponents of official views in this country. The Abkari Reform—one of the chief proposals of the National Congress, has been taken up by Messrs. Smith and Caine who have come off with flying colors from the first battle. The division on the Abkari question was a great event in the history of our political agitation. The debate took place in a House of about 500 members, and Liberals as well as Conservatives pronounced their emphatic condemnation of the excise policy of India. This is not a trifling victory; it has that within which passes show. It is a proof positive of the fact that however deep rooted political abuse may be, as soon as its nature is one realised by the British House of Commons, it is sure to be destroyed and the whole army of Anglo-Indians cannot save it from destruction.

The Draft Bill of Mr. Bradlaugh's is perhaps the greatest triumph of the Congress, cause. The aim and object of the bill, the spirit in which it is conceived, the circumstances to which it owes its birth, its place among our proposals of reform, its influence—direct and indirect, near and remote—upon our political destinies, the ability, the wide human sympathy, the fame, the courage, and the high statesman-like qualities of its author, invest it with an importance and significance which can scarcely be over-rated. The reform of the Legislative Council is admitted, by common consent, to be the foundation of all reforms; but the essence of that reform is the adoption by the Government of the principle of representation and election in the constitution of its Council. The Congress has always attached the greatest weight to this proposal, and yet this is the proposal which excited the most adverse criticisms. Lord Dufferin said that our object was to bring the executive into subjection to our will and to Sir Auckland Colvin the Reform of the council upon the lines suggested by the Congress will be as miraculous an event as the appearance of an elephant in a Scotch mist or a banyan tree in Parliament Street. A Raja, under an inspiration from high quarters, published an essay on "Democracy not suited to India," and another Raja whom years have failed to bring the philosophic mind, addressed a petition for the suppression of the Congress, to the Government. Sir Syed

Ahmed raised up the phantom of another mutiny if any representative element was going to be introduced into India, and in this mischievous attempt he was backed by the whole body of Anglo-Indian Officials. The Bureaucracy knows that the success of the demand for a modified form of representative system means the curtailment of its unjust powers, that the day the true voice of the nation finds an expression in the Supreme Council and is able to influence its decision, will ring the death-knell of that despotism which tempered by justice and benevolence as it is, is yet marked by many faults and failings, the most serious amongst which are its total ignorance of the real wants of the people and its utter disregard and want of sympathy for the new aspirations to which the growing intelligence of the country is giving birth; and it is because it is aware of this that it is straining every nerve to discredit the Congress movement in the eyes, of the British Public by giving false and perverted versions of its real aims and by impeaching, with a very slender regard for Truth, the motives of its leaders. In spite of all this opposition, Mr. Bradlaugh, realising the justice of our demand and that "the critical agency in political causation which men vaguely call the force of events,"\* has lifted up a great question, which even its most ardent advocates were prepared to see ignored for some years, into the regions of practical politics; and whatever may be the fate of his Bill, certain it is that its introduction into Parliament will, mean the introduction of the chief proposal of the Congress—the recognition, in a most empathic manner of the weight and influence of our great national movement, and will inaugurate a new era in the history of our political agitation. Whatever may be said of the wisdom or the unwisdom of our demand, whatever charges of unpracticalness, selfishness, ignorance, and political incapacity may be brought against our leaders, it will not be said now that there is any taint of sedition or disloyalty in the objects or the methods of the Congress when its cardinal principle is accepted by one who is one of the most distinguished members of the Liberal party and is going to form, in the shape of a Bill, a subject of parliamentary debate. Thus it appears that after all the banian-tree is going to grow up in Parliament Street and that the House of Commons, moved by a generous sympathy for the oppressed and guided by true Imperial instincts, is going to accord a fair and indulgent hearing to a question which has passed through the various phases of ridicule, abuse and mis-representation, and has been pooh-poohed by our Supreme and Local Governments.

The change which has occurred in English public opinion and in the attitude of Parliament with regard to the National Congress, has influenced in a decisive manner the policy of the Government of India, and instances may be cited which will show that even in this

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\* John Morley in the *Nineteenth Century*, January 1887.

country, the agitation has not failed to bear fruit. The first Congress had insisted upon establishing Provincial Councils for the N.-W. P. and the Punjab, and the Government gave a Council to the United Provinces. Lord Dufferin in his famous minute approved of the suggestions of the separation of Judicial from Executive functions, and of the reconstitution of the Councils on a wider basis. Lord Lansdowne has declared that the Budget will now be subjected to discussion in the Council, and that within certain limits, members will be allowed to exercise the right of interpellation. These were two important items in the demands of the Congress, and they have been granted. The great Public Services Question has been decided to a certain extent in our favour. The labours of Sir Charles Atchison, Sir Charles Turner and others have not been wholly resultless, for the age limit as demanded by us has been raised and the statutory restrictions which had hitherto obstructed our progress in the Public Service, have been somewhat relaxed.

This is a brief record of the successes which the Congress has achieved within a short time. They are due to the same causes to which the success of English political agitations is due. The Anti-Slavery Society was successful because the cause it had espoused was just because the means by which that cause was advocated in and out of Parliament were loyal and constitutional as they were the means of free and fair discussion because the intelligence and patriotism of the cultured classes were first enlisted and then the enthusiasm of the masses was appealed to ; and finally because even in the midst of reverses and defeat, the leaders of the movement did not lose heart, but with an unflinching faith in the ultimate triumph of truth, kept alive the torch of civilization amid the hurricanes of evil passions and ignorance. If the Congress has achieved certain successes, which are but the presages and forestalment of that which is in the womb of time, it is because its demands are national, and just and command the approbation of the English people ; for in these days of free discussion when upon almost every question, the democracy is the final court of appeal, no movement which is of a vicious nature or is based upon a mischievous principle, which lends its countenance to methods not sanctioned by the laws of morality, and which fails to strike the chords of national sympathy, can ever hope to maintain its position in public estimation.

Following in the wake of great English reformers, the chief organisers of the Congress movement, have relied more upon the strength of moral conviction and less upon the adventitious advantages of rank and wealth, have directed their efforts, by means of speeches, articles, pamphlets, tracts in English as well as in the various dialects of the country, to the elevation of the ignorant masses to a higher level of political intelligence, have organised centres of political activity in almost every important town, have made modera-

tion, the essential feature of their demand and loyalty and patriotism the watchword of their endeavours, have appealed by the open straight forward means of public discussion to the heart and mind of England, and have succeeded in winning over to their side, the sympathies and approbation of considerable section of the British nation. The active sympathy manifested by men like Mr. Bradlaugh and Mr. Caine, Sir W. Hunter and Sir Richard Garth, Sir Charles Turner and, Sir William Wedderburn, Sir Charles Atchison and Lord Ripon, the words of hope and encouragement which have fallen from Mr. Gladstone—that most distinguished friend of oppressed nationalities; the great support of Mr. Hume who has suffered, as no other has, for the Congress cause, but whose name will go down to posterity as that of the greatest Englishman whom Providence has sent to our succour at a great critical moment in our history—all this shows that the cause in which we are engaged is neither disloyal nor seditious, but is carried on by wise and constitutional means, and is conducive alike to the good of India, and the glory of England. The forces of the opposition have been scattered; the Patriotic Association which was started for the purpose of counter-acting the influence of the Congress, by distorting, perverting, falsifying its objects, is now dead and buried; and the great political movement of Modern India, supported by the whole force of the National party, and backed by the moral enthusiasm of the British public is rising gradually in public estimation, and is winning its way, by persuasion and by calm consideration into the rational minds of men. If there are some to whom the progress of the Congress does not appear rapid enough, let them reflect in their mind upon the courses of some other great historic movements which took generations to accomplish their ends: let them bear in mind that the reform agitation which succeeded in 1832 had been commenced in 1770, that 70, years of hard struggle were needed to achieve the Catholic emancipation; but also let them remember that as in England so in India, the principles of loyalty and patriotism, controlled and guided by the still higher dictates of justice and moral rectitude are the first conditions of success; that no sacrifice is too great which must be made, no hardship too severe which must be borne, in order to keep alive and burning in the national mind the flame of loyal and patriotic feelings: and that we, who are engaged in a great cause should in spite of the obstacles which may be thrown in our way by those who ‘nod and wink’ behind a slowly dying fire’ hold the banner of reform bravely aloft in weal and woe, over the stormy seas upon which our lot is cast, and we may rest assured that as certainly as the sun rises from the East, the cause of Justice will prevail; the buttresses of unjust authority, the fortresses of political abuses will fall before the moral force of a new and enlightened public opinion, as fell the walls of *Jericho* at the trumpet’s peal, and England, the august mother of free nations will confer upon us the boon

of those political rights and privileges which far from weakening and sapping, would strengthen and consolidate the mighty fabric of her world-wide Empire.

*December 15th, 1889.*

B. N. DAR.



## Reuter's Telegrams on the Congress.

[The following telegrams, despatched day by day to the British papers, appeared in all the leading journals, were widely commented upon, formed the subject of many leading articles, and gave to the movement a foremost position among imperial public affairs]

ALLAHABAD, 26th December.

After preliminary meetings at Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras, the National Congress assembled here to-day in a large park, where a hall to contain three thousand people had been specially erected for the occasion. Over one thousand delegates from every part of India, including a great number of Mohammedans, were present. At Lucknow an immense procession accompanied the delegates to the railway station, and demonstrations were also made at other places on the departure of the delegates for Allahabad. Raja Siva Prasad, hitherto the ally of Sir Syed Ahmed, was elected as representative of Benares. Mr. George Yule, a merchant of Calcutta, and ex-President of the Chamber of Commerce, was elected President of the Congress on the motion of Sirdar Dyal Singh, the premier Sikh noble of the Punjab, in the absence of the Maharajah Durbanga through illness.

The President's inaugural address complained of the present system of government and of the absence of free discussion or control over the Budget charges. The speaker dealt exhaustively with the proposed reconstruction of the Legislative Councils, declaring that as regarded an increase in the number of members perfect unanimity of opinion prevailed, the non-official Europeans agreeing with the Indians on this point. He reminded his hearers that the late Lord Beaconsfield in 1858 suggested the election of the members of the Indian Council as a safeguard for Indian interests. In the present position of affairs the Indian Council in London had no power, while the House of Commons possessed power, but neglected to exercise, it. He claimed that the concession asked was moderate, namely, that half of the members of the Legislative Councils should be elected and the remainder nominated by the Government, one-fourth being officials. The right of veto would remain with the Executive, but he desired the establishment of a right of interpellation. Such a system of government as was proposed was no more than parallel to that which prevailed in England six hundred years ago, when Edward I., the Barons and the Commons sat together, the King and the Barons holding sway. The Congress was willing to leave the settlement of the details to a committee of

Referring to the speech delivered by the Marquis of Dufferin at Calcutta on St. Andrew's Day, Mr. Yule, declared that his lordship spoke with an imperfect knowledge of the facts. The proposed reform, would have the effect of uniting England and India by the flexible and enduring ligaments of common interests, common duties, and common service. The speech was received with applause.

Great enthusiasm prevailed throughout the proceedings. Cheers were given for the Empress of India. Portraits of Her Majesty were displayed at the entrance to the park and in prominent places in the hall.

The discussion of the various matters before the Congress will commence to-day, and will last three days.

*27th December.*

Fourteen hundred delegates attended to-day's proceedings of the Native Congress. A committee of 100 was elected in the morning, the members of which carefully considered various draft resolutions. The sitting of the Congress was opened at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, when the Hon. Mr. Telang proposed "That the Congress do affirm the necessity for the expansion and reform of the Council of the Governor-General for making Laws and Ordinances, and also of the Provincial Legislative Councils as already set forth in Resolution 3 of the Congress of 1885-86, and in Resolution 2 of the Congress of 1887 as an experimental scheme, which expansion and reform were suggested in Resolution 2 of the Congress of 1886." The motion was seconded by Surendra Nath Bannerjee and supported by the Mohomedan, Rajpoot, and Hindoo delegates. The Rajah Siva Prasad then rose, and after commending the meeting of the Congress raised an objection to certain pamphlets and some vernacular papers, and submitted an amendment to the resolution under discussion, consenting to petition the Lieutenant-Governor of each province to intervene for the suppression of such pamphlets, etc. The Rajah was listened to quietly and was granted more than the customary time, but the amendment was ruled to be out of order and irrelevant. After some further speeches the proposal of the Hon. Mr. Telang was carried by acclamation. The majority of the speakers expressed fervently loyal sentiments, which were supported by the entire audience.

A number of the speeches were delivered in Hindustani.

A resolution in reference to the public service subsequently moved by Mr. Eardley Norton, and seconded by the Hon. Ferozeshah Mehta, affirmed the statement made at the Congress of 1886, to the effect that simultaneous examinations for the Indian Civil service in India and England, and the raising of the limit of the age of candidates to 23 in the statutory service, had retained in the uncovenanted service professional men of proved ability and merit.

The resolution concluded with the declaration that nothing short of the reforms suggested would satisfy the people of the country. The discussion was adjourned until to-morrow.

28th December.

A Conference of Social Reformers preceded the meeting of the Congress to-day. Reports were presented from all parts of India describing the advance made in the direction of social progress.

The Congress met at 11 o'clock, the attendance being about the same as on the previous days.

It was resolved to send a telegram expressing sorrow for the suffering which Mr. John Bright is undergoing, and sympathy with him and his family. The discussion on the public service was then continued. Various amendments were proposed, and eventually one was removed by Mr. Manomohun Ghose recognizing the value of the labours of the Civil Service Commission and praying for simultaneous examinations in India and England. This was accepted, and the original resolution was withdrawn.

A resolution in favour of the separation of executive and judicial functions, now vested in one officer, was moved by Mr. Howard, of Allahabad, and supported by the delegates from Berar, Sindh, and elsewhere, and was ultimately carried.

Resolution 3 of the previous Congress, asking for trial by jury and for various other reforms of the criminal procedure, was proposed by Mr. Kali Charn Banerjee and seconded by Mr. Chandavarkar. A long debate arose on this subject, the words of the present Chief Justice of Bengal being quoted in support of the resolution, which was in the end carried. A resolution was then agreed to condemning the police administration as unsatisfactory and oppressive, and calling for an immediate inquiry into the system.

Resolutions relating to Military Colleges, the education and training of young men for a military career, and the Indian army system, and demanding the adoption of volunteering under such restrictions as the Government might consider proper, were carried with enthusiasm.

A resolution disapproving the Abkari Excise Administration, as tending to encourage intemperance, and calling upon the Government to take preventive and remedial measures, was carried by acclamation.

Speeches were also made in favour of the reduction of the taxable minimum on the income-tax.

The majority of the speeches were delivered in the vernacular, and excited the greatest interest.

To-morrow resolutions will be proposed concerning education, general and technical, and asking for the early granting of reforms or the appointment of a

Parliamentary Committee to consider the subject, while recognizing the efforts already made to abolish the State regulation of public instruction.

29th December.

The final sitting of the Indian Native Congress was held to-day, the attendance being as numerous as at the previous meetings. Six resolutions were adopted.

The first declared that it was the duty of the Government to foster and encourage education : and, pointing out that the recent resolution on the subject of education was calculated to promote a tendency to reduce Imperial expenditure on education and withdraw it from Government control, urged the Government not to decrease its grants, and to continue to control educational institutions of all kinds.

The second begged the Government, having regard to the poverty of the people, the importance of encouraging indigenous manufactures, and the difficulty of introducing a system of technical education owing to the present imperfect information, to appoint a mixed commission to inquire into the present industrial condition of the country.

Resolution three suggested that the time had come for extending to the major portions of the Madras and Bombay Presidencies, the North-West Provinces, Oudh, and the Punjab a permanent settlement of land revenue.

The fourth called the attention of the Government to the hardship caused to the poor by the recent increase of the salt tax.

The fifth resolution declared that the preceding resolutions should be submitted to the favourable consideration of the Viceroy, and by him to the Imperial Government ; that it was the humble request of the Congress that the reforms suggested in the said resolutions, based, as most were, on Her Most Gracious Majesty's proclamation of 1858, might now be effected, and that should it be deemed necessary to institute an inquiry, a Parliamentary Committee might be appointed as speedily as possible.

The last of the resolutions stated that the Congress watched with interest and sympathy the abrogation of the laws relating to the State regulation of vice, and recognized with appreciation the desire of the services to co-operate in the attainment of that laudable end.

Mr. Hume was re-elected General Secretary, and the Congress then dissolved amid loud and repeated cheers for the Empress.

The next session will be held in the Bombay Presidency, either at Bombay or at Poona.

#### COMMENTS OF THE PRESS.

*(Daily Chronicle.)*

It is idle to ignore the importance of this assembly, or to deny that despite the contempt of a certain section of Englishmen for "black men," its delibera-

tion between widely-separated races, the profound peace and immunity from intestine feuds, even the railways, post-offices, and telegraphs, which make an assemblage of delegates from all parts of India possible—all these things are the results of English rule and English enterprise. The English Government—and to its credit be it said—has not behaved like many conquering Governments in similar positions. It has made no attempt to keep the natives of India in the condition most favourable to subjection. On the contrary, it has promoted education, and it has to no small extent imbued the natives with the ideas of Western civilisation. The proclamation of 1858 declared it to be the Queen's will that her "subjects, of whatever race or creed, be freely and impartially admitted to offices in her services," and in recent years the phrase has been more and more liberally interpreted. Through the instrumentality of Lord Ripon, local self-government has been effectively organised, and it has even been proposed that native judges should have a certain jurisdiction over English subjects. The National Congress is simply the logical outcome of all this, and whether its demands are safe or dangerous, no one who has followed the history of British rule in India has any right to be surprised that they are made.

*(Daily Chronicle.)*

It is not possible to disguise the importance of this imposing gathering of the delegates of two hundred millions of British subjects. To the mind of the ordinary Tory, a convention of Indians is a mere collection of persons whom Lord Salisbury, with the instinct of his class and party, described as black men, by fastening the stigma—or that which is to him a stigma—upon one of their best known representatives in this country. The fact seems to be unknown to a large proportion of this British people that our fellow-subjects of Hindostan have surviving amongst them an ancient civilisation upon which have been grafted our modern European civilisation, and that there is included in the population a vest aristocracy of birth and descent, of wealth and of learning. There are thousands of nobles and gentlemen in India who would do honour to any legislative assembly in the world, and there is education enough amongst the higher classes, apart from the priests and professors, to satisfy even so exacting an admirer of caste as Lord Salisbury himself. A thousand appointed delegates attended the conference yesterday, and we can hazard the assertion from experience that the full report of their transactions, when it appears, will at least approach in eloquence and loftiness of tone any current edition of Hansard. The President chosen was Mr. Yule, an Anglo-Indian merchant, ex-president of the Chamber of Commerce, and his selection was a significant indication of the state of feeling in the Peninsula with regard to the demands the natives are disposed to formulate.

before dissolving the Congress agreed to forward its resolutions to the Viceroy. Why should they not be presented to Parliament ?

(*Political World.*)

The Anglo-Indian officials are sure to raise the cry that India is in danger! But the danger is in the loss they would sustain if the valuable appointments of some of the covenanted servants were given to competent natives. It is to the official mind a rupee question. If the Government would make the Civil Service an absolutely close borough, and fortify it for ever against native attack, not a word would be said against the Indian Congress. But the officials are afraid that the Government may give way, and it will be with a view to prevent this by alarming the English mind that the cry will be raised that India is in danger! There would be danger if the native movement were suppressed, and the discontent of two hundred and fifty millions allowed to gather and grow under the surface. There would be another mutiny. Now, however, when discontent is drawn from under the surface and put into words temperately and loyally expressed at the meetings of the Congress, there can be no upheaval such as would be possible under other circumstances.

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Every European in India employs a barber, and it is said that, some twenty-five or thirty years ago, the barbers were bribed to cut the throats of their employers on a certain morning while shaving. The plot was discovered accidentally, and for some time shaving was dispensed with. But if no discovery had made, India would have been reconquered by the native barbers. Were such a plot entered into now, it would be impossible to carry it out, for natives of all castes, in all possible occupations, are in some way connected with the Congressional movement, and conspiracy against European lives would be speedily denounced.

(*Daily News.*)

The Congress, over which an English merchant from Calcutta is now presiding, has never shown the slightest disloyalty to the QUEEN or the faintest hostility to the population of this country. Some of the wisest and most experienced Anglo-Indians are in hearty sympathy with its principal aims, while its bitterest opponents belong to that feather-headed class which, after attaining temporary prominence under the grotesque rule of Lord LYTTON, has since been extinguished by the power of ridicule, and the growth of common sense. The Congress which assembled under the presidency of Mr. GEORGE YULE is, as we have said, the fourth of the series. The first was held in Bombay, the second in Calcutta, and the third in Madras. Lord DUFFERIN, when on the point of coming to Europe before his time, with the view of earning a diplomatic pension at Rome, thought fit to turn with lofty scorn upon the self-seeking natives of India. But as his remarks were based upon what, to put it

midly, may be called inaccurate information. they have injured no one except himself. His imputation of treachery was totally unfounded and was, indeed, so wildly misconceived, that it can hardly even embarrass his successor. Every one must regret that Lord DUFFERIN should have so abused, at the close of his term as Viceroy, what Lord WESTBURY described as the fatal gift of fluency. The man who evolved from his inner consciousness a spick and span constitution for Egypt which has never been heard of since might have had some patience with leaders of Aryan races who, having a thorough knowledge of their subject, are steadily working their way to reasonable and practical reforms. Up to the eve of his departure Lord DUFFERIN gave these gentlemen every encouragement, and unless he supposed himself to have received some personal affront, it is not easy to account for his sudden change of tone.

There is absolutely nothing dangerous in these Congresses, unless they should be ignored by the Indian Government in Calcutta and in London. Their demands are moderate, their arguments are reasonable, their procedure is loyal and respectful. It is sometime said in this country that they consist only of Bengali Baboos, and that the Bengalis, however intellectually precocious, are physically the feeblest folk in India. Even the Baboo represents not only his cultivated and Europeanised self, but the villagers from whom he came and to whom he returns. It is, however, wholly untrue that the delegates at these Congresses, are mainly Bengalis. Mahrattas come to them in large numbers, and Mahrattas are not people whom soldiers can afford to despise. Many Mohammedans are attending the present meeting, and it must be remembered that while some Mohammedans in India are intensely Conservative, preferring to be treated as a backward community, others are in full sympathy with the most advanced of their fellow subjects. MR. YULE was voted into the chair by a Sikh noble, SIRDAR DYAL SING, and it may be taken that the Congress, though not of course formally representing India, contains a fair admixture of every creed and nationality. The delegates are thoroughly convinced of the advantages which they derive from British rule, and do not hesitate to proclaim their conviction. They only ask for a larger share in the administration of their country, and we trust that they will not ask in vain. The foolish people who abuse the Congress as a set of treacherous agitators may be surprised to hear that cheers were given at Allahabad for the Empress of INDIA, and that portraits of the QUEEN were prominently displayed. These Indian gentlemen knew very well that HER MAJESTY cannot approve of gibes at "black men," such as the highly respectable official who, before contesting Holborn, and after sitting on the Legislative Council of Bombay, presided over the second annual assembly of the Congress. There is no real difference in principle between the Congress and the more enlightened members of the Indian Government. Perhaps the most throughgoing supporter of the native claims is Sir RICHARD

GARTH, who before he was appointed Chief Justice of Bengal sat in the House of Commons as a Conservative, and was distinguished for the vehemence of his attacks upon Mr. BRIGHT. The far higher authority of Sir WILLIAM HUNTER, who served under Lord MAYO, Lord NORTHBROOK, Lord RIPON, and Lord DUFFERIN has been cast, with some qualifications, upon the same side.

(Scotsman).

Mr. Gladstone recognises the political movement now going on in India as the beginning of "public life," and a proof that the people of India are awakening, and rising, and seeking to enter into the public life of their country. His words are at once accepted in India as an encouragement to continue the agitation and a guarantee of early success. Lord Ripon the other day, at the dinner to Mr. Naoroji, referred to the same movement, and while acknowledging the great difficulty of dealing with the questions it raises, expressed the opinion that they could be more easily dealt with now than they are likely to be if long postponed. Both Mr. Gladstone and Lord Ripon may be right; both were careful to commit themselves to nothing definite. Mr. Gladstone's statements are true, and Lord Ripon's remark is almost a truism. It is generally easier to deal with a political agitation in its early and weak stages than when it has grown formidable enough to compel the Government to take action. But while both Mr. Gladstone and Lord Ripon spoke vaguely, they said enough to give a great stimulus to the Congress movement, and there are many indications that the party to which they belong is preparing to give to that movement its ardent support. It cannot well withhold it. The principles on which it advocates Home Rule for Ireland are quite as applicable to India. The Indian reformers have been shrewd enough to see that if they put forward their demands while the Gladstonians are advocating Home Rule for Ireland, they are bound to secure the countenance of one British party. While its countenance, they are confident of success. They will probably find that in attaching themselves to one political party, and especially to a party rapidly driving on to the rocks, they have made a mistake. But they have at least succeeded in making the question of the future government of India a question of the day, and it is likely to prove a very serious one.

The chief ground for regarding the Indian question with anxiety is the general ignorance concerning it in this country. Suppose Mr. Gladstone, or the future Elisha of his party, were to go to the country with a proposal of representative government for India, and make his appeal, as in the case of Ireland, from the classes to the masses, are the classes qualified by knowledge to give judgment? They are not; yet if such an appeal were made, and based on the familiar ground of the right of every people to manage its own affairs, it is quite possible that a favorable judgment might be obtained. One of the great dangers of the future, and possibly of the near future, is that the method

of governing India may be dealt with in Parliament and in the country as a party question, and in the same spirit as is now seen with respect to Ireland. The least that can be done in preparing to meet the danger is to get as much sound information as possible as to the nature of the national movement in India, the extent of its demands, and the sort of government which it is seeking to reform. It would be folly to ignore the movement; it would be even more unwise to treat it with contempt. It may be right to encourage it, or it may be right to say distinctly that its demands cannot be listened to; but heedless encouragement may be at least as dangerous as rash refusal. It is doubtful if it was wise in Mr. Gladstone and Lord Ripon to give it the encouragement they have given, unless their minds are made up as to when and how to deal with it. Should it turn out on close examination, and after mature thought, that it is impossible to concede the principal demands of the Indian Congress, refusal will be much more difficult and dangerous than if such encouragement had never been given.

(*Sussex Daily News*),

LORD DUFFERIN will probably regret the farewell speech, in which he spoke in such slighting terms of the pretensions of the Natives of India to share in the government of their own country, when he reads the inaugural address of the President of the Congress which was delivered this week at Allahabad. Lord Dufferin went out to India a Liberal and an Earl; he has returned—so far as the administration of that Empire is concerned—a reactionary and a Marquis. The exchange is a dear one. More than a thousand delegates from different parts of India were present at the Congress, representing all sects, classes, and religions. Mahomedan and Buddhist sat side by side, their religious differences sunk in their patriotic aspirations. This circumstance is in itself enough to prove that Lord Dufferin was mistaken when he said that the fact of the people of India being divided into so many cults was in itself an insuperable barrier to national homogeneity. Lord Dufferin also asserted with much emphasis that the population at large took not the slightest interest in the questions raised by the Congress. This statement is strangely at variance with the account telegraphed over by Reuter's correspondent, in which he says: "At Lucknow an immense procession accompanied the delegates to the railway station, and demonstrations were also made at other places on the departure of the delegates for Allahabad." It is plain therefore that we are face to face with a national movement, and not merely with a knot of busybodies, as Lord Dufferin hinted, anxious to bring themselves into notice by airing a number of academic questions in which no interest is felt by the majority of the natives. The moderate nature of the demands put forward by Mr. Yule, the President of the Congress, must strike everybody. India is soaked with the spirit of Conservatism; her climate, her religions, her government, have all

combined to produce a patient and long-enduring frame of mind among her people. This is an excellent temper out of which to forge permanent results. It is evident that the agitation which is spreading among the natives for a voice in the control of their own affairs will be conducted slowly and quietly, and there is no occasion to fear that a clamour for impossible and crude measures will be raised. Of this Mr. Yule's speech was a striking proof.

(*Reynold*).

The Indian Congress, which has been sitting at Allahabad during the last three days, affords a curious and significant commentary on the recent utterances of the late Governor-General, the Marquis of Dufferin, and upon the astounding indiscretion of Sir Lepel Griffin, the Governor-General's late agent in Central India, when addressing a meeting in the capital of the Gwalior State, during the conference held in Madras last year. That responsible men could have permitted themselves to be led by the social influences of Anglo-Indian life into such language shows how powerful the forces in India are which are opposed to the natural development of the natives, and how firmly the passion for ruling is gripped on the English character. Sir Lepel Griffin was, perhaps, the worst offender; and as his offence met with no punishment, it must be assumed—The natives of India certainly assume—that his counsel was approved by the Home Government. The attempts of such men as Sir Lepel Griffin and Lord Dufferin to foster the race hatreds of the Indian people have been hopelessly failed; and the congresses, whose sole aim is to knit the people together and to remove the discontent that exists, have been successful beyond the utmost hopes of their projectors.

(*Weekly Times*).

Some day, surely, we may dare to recognize the right of the Commons in India to wield the power of the purse, so it is hardly decent to shriek hysterically at the prospect, as one Tory journal does. Nor is it well to sneer at the Hindoo's faith in the English at home, and his dislike of the English in India. We dislike some of the English in India ourselves. We have felt ashamed of some of the cads and place-hunters, who, going out from amongst us as much paupers as the poorest emigrant whose passage is paid to Australia or Canada, no sooner get among the people of an ancient and high caste civilization than they sink every creditable characteristic of an Englishman and a gentleman but it is a farce to pretend that all Englishmen are like them, or that all Hindoos are represented by the Congress. We cannot help recognizing a similarity to the language and style so familiar to us at home at the hands of the Tanners, and other models of Irish good breeding; and while inclined to let the pundits blow off steam to a judicious extent, we should watch them. A land League in India would be awkward, and boycotting difficult to put down, especially if aided by fanatics as unscrupulous as the Thugs.

(Age.)

It may be mentioned that Mr. George Yule is a Calcutta merchant, and was some years ago elected to the presidency of the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce, and as soon as elected he showed that his was a mind of no ordinary activity, and his opening address reviewed the trade of India, dealing with the causes of depression in the currency and other important questions in a way that had hardly been previously attempted. Although there is a very little opportunity for such a man to obtain a publicly recognised scope for his self imposed labors, Mr. Yule was at once recognised as a man of mark, and he has sat, we believe, in the council of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, if not in the vice-regal council. Even the mayoralty of Calcutta, or what corresponds to it, is filled by a paid official, so that the citizens of the metropolis as a body had no opportunity of obtaining Mr. Yule's services. However, his presiding at the Allahabad congress shows that his ability and devotion to the advancement of the people is recognised by the natives as well as by the European; indeed, we should not be surprised if his action in taking up the cause of the natives has led him to be regarded both by the Government and by the merchants as a dangerous man. That the natives have substantial grievances there is no room for doubt. That eight gentlemen, all appointed on enormous salaries (the Viceroy receives Rs. 250,000 per annum, the Lieutenant-Governor and the Commander-in-Chief Rs. 100,000 each, and the five ordinary members Rs. 80,000 each) can efficiently supervise the workings of every department in the Government of India, and watch the action of the local governments, no one can for a moment believe, and this difficulty is to a great extent enhanced by the fact that the Viceroy has no previous knowledge of the country (Lord Lawrence being the only one who ever had), and that two of the members of council are appointed from England to supervise the legislative and financial departments, and need never had set foot in India before.

### Sir Edward Watkins Interviewed.

ENGLISH RULE: THE FUNCTIONS OF JOHN BULL.

"You had ample opportunities of studying English rule in India. What is the sum of your impressions" asked the representative of the *Pall Mall Gazette*?

"Well," replied Sir Edward "I have followed Indian affairs pretty closely for many years, and my view of our position as rulers of 240,000,000 people is that England is the arbitrator between the superstitious Hindoo and the cunning Mohamedan and the only possible arbitrator. Once remove us and the hundred and one native races, with their hundred and one religions, would fall to and cut each other's throats pretty quickly. I never was one of those who fear that in a hundred years hence England will have to walk out. And after a personal inspection my views are put tersely: Here we are and here we intend to remain."

RUSSIAN GOLD AND THE NATIVE POLITICIAN.

"And Russia. Did you notice any alarming symptoms of Russian intrigue?"

"I was much struck by the numerous portraits of Tzar and the Tzarina, which are to be found in private dwellings in many of the places I visited, and I am strongly of opinion that Russian gold is being circulated, perhaps not in very large quantities, among these native agitators of whom you hear so much. You may compare it to the circulation of American dollars in Ireland."

"You speak of agitators. Do you refer to congressionists? Who are they?"

"I do. The State educates some 3,000,000 natives out of 240,000,000, of whom say one per cent. become professional agitators of politicians, or whatever you like to call them."

SIR EDWARD PUTS HIS FOOT DOWN.

"You don't seem to like them, Sir Edward. Surely you would not stop native progress?"

"Certainly not. But I should put my foot down and say, 'Now look here, my good friend, we're not going to give you all these advantages, and allow you, a handful of pushing agitators, who pretend to represent the wishes and the feelings of native races, to hold these congresses and conduct your agitations. Hold your meetings, as many as you choose, but we are not going to allow treasonable language. We don't do it at home, and you shan't do it here.'"

"Then on the whole, what do you think of our system of government?"

"Most benevolent rule—a most benevolent rule."

"What is your opinion about native industries there? Are they progressing?"

"I was greatly struck by the very remarkable vigour and go-aheadness of India in agriculture, in manufacture, in stock raising. The textile industries struck me as being particularly flourishing and prosperous, with a fine future."

"Will the competition, say, of the Bombay cotton mills be serious to Manchester?"

"I cannot give an opinion off hand, but you must not forget that in India the hours of labour are not restricted, and labour is cheap."

Mr. A. O. Hume on Sir Edward Watkins attack.

To the EDITOR of the PALL MALL GAZETTE.

SIR,—I see by the mail just arrived that Sir Edward Watkins, at an interview with one of your representatives, stated that "Russian gold was being employed for the agitation now going on in India in the same way that American gold was for Irish agitation," and that when asked if he meant that the

gold was being circulated among the Congressionists, he replied, "I do." As the general secretary of the Congress movement, through whose hands pass every paper and account connected with the twenty standing, two hundred odd divisional, and innumerable sub-divisional Congress committees, allow me to inform Sir Edward Watkins and the public that there is not one particle, and even that faintest lingering perfume of truth in these statements. One does not expect rigid accuracy from Sir E. Watkin, but it is amazing that even he (for he does not want to be looked up as a lunatic, I suppose) should make such thoroughly ridiculous and idiotic assertions. The success of the Congress movement means the destruction for ever of Russia's hopes (if she really entertains such) of (I will not say invading India, but) of giving England trouble by stirring up riots and risings in India, when England has, as she may any day have, her hands full elsewhere. It means the removal of all those causes of dissatisfaction which tend to alienate India from England, and the perfect consolidation of the union between the two countries. Taking India as a whole, there is but an insignificant percentage of disaffected persons, but in the Punjab the proportion is larger than elsewhere. Some of these are Sikhs, chiefly in the Jhung, Montgomery, and northern portions of the Mooltan district, who, ridiculous as it may seem, do secretly hope for the return of Dhuleep Sing. Some of these are Wahabis, avowed, or such in their hearts, who hate our rule, and dream of a future Wahabi ascendancy. Both these classes do keep up, through wandering fakirs, some sort of correspondence with persons supposed to be Russian agents, and the latter class from time to time send money contributions to certain rebel fanatics that live just outside our border. If any Russian gold is now coming to India, it is coming to these classes; but both of them are bitterly opposed to the Congress movement, and constitute in fact our only opponents in the Punjab. As Sheikh Mahbub Alum of the Punjab put it at the late Congress, "They do not want the causes of disaffection removed; they do not want the grievances of the people redressed. They want them to continue to vex and irritate the people, till these grow at last as disaffected as themselves." No, Sir, be sure of this, Russian gold may be employed to oppose the Congress, but never will one grain of it be given to support it.

No doubt the expenditure is large. I daresay last year that the real expenditure was fully £20,000. but not half of this was cash expenditure. Hundreds of thousands of pamphlets were printed gratuitously, for thousands of meetings rooms and lights and chairs were provided without charge; hundreds of men travelled about the country, one or two even going to England, all at their own cost, preaching the gospel of the Congress, which is Christ's gospel of love, and peace and goodwill among men. Of the cash expenditure every farthing of receipt and expenditure can be accounted for

There is nothing secret in Congress arrangements; every farthing is booked and any one may know how and where every rupee spent was raised. Every man interested in the cause gives something. Our people are poor; in one case 20,000 subscribers made up Rs. 7,000, but our numbers are vast, and as our organization perfects itself all necessary funds will be forthcoming.

I may add with reference to certain remarks in the *Spectator*, also to hand this morning, to the effect that the late Congress was under "paid European guidance." First, that practically the Congress is guided entirely by the natives; second, that the only European, who by any stretch of language could be said to have any share even in the guidance is myself—and that, so far from being paid, I last year spent in England and India (taking the rupee at an average of 1s. 4½d.) just £1,472 out of my own pocket on the cause.—

Yours truly,—A. O. HUME.

### Mr. Bradlaugh Libelled.

The latest issue of the *Homeward Mail* waxes excited about the activity of the "Political Agency" of the National Congress at Craven-street. It notes with alarm the circulation of its "sensational literature," and makes the charge that "Mr. Bradlaugh and others" are being "paid to the lecture and write on its behalf."

This morning a representative of the *Pall Mall Gazette* had two minutes' conversation with Mr. Bradlaugh at St. John's-wood just as he was preparing to rush out after having got through his morning correspondence. He promptly and unreservedly declared the statement in regard to him to be absolutely false and suggested that our representative should question Mr. Digby at Craven Street.

"When Parliament is not sitting," Mr. Digby explained, "Mr. Bradlaugh is accustomed to deliver in the provinces several lectures every Sunday. In the course of each day he gives an address on the Indian question. He does this entirely disinterestedly. We do not even pay his travelling expenses. He meets these himself. If, however, there be any loss not covered by collections or door payments, that is for hall hire, &c., we have pleasure in meeting the deficiency; and this is the full explanation of our financial relations with Mr. Bradlaugh."

"He works for us" continued Mr. Digby, "with remarkable disinterestedness. Henry Fawcett was not in his advocacy more disinterested. He neither receives a penny from us, nor is there any engagement that he shall receive a penny. Indeed, when there was once a suggestion of some remuneration, Mr. Bradlaugh remarked, 'It is well that such a thing was not suggested when I began to help you, or it would have then and there put an end to our negotiations.'"

"The *Mall* is quite right in declaring that 'Nothing is being done to oppose the mischievous action of the mixed band of too good-natured sentimentalists, Radical mischief-makers or visionaries, offensive Bibbys and paid agitators which is bustling and intriguing for rash and premature changes in the form of Indian Government.' It is a very singular thing that though the great class in India that opposes our movement is largely composed of men of the very highest position, Princes and so on, this party is yet unable to get enough money with which even to distribute literature in this country. At Christmas, while the National Congress was being held in India, they did distribute a thousand or so pamphlets, but this is about their best bit of enterprise. Of course, where we can raise a rupee they ought to be able to get a thousand rupees."

"It is, perhaps, worth stating," continued Mr. Digby, "that all our work and our accounts are perfectly open. I even supply our opponent's representative in this country with all our publications."

"As to your issuing 'sensational literature'?"

"Very well; here, in this document in parallel columns, are the Congress proposals and Lord Dufferin's alleged recommendations. Surely the remarkable agreement between the two answers for the moderation and fairness of our demands. I yesterday showed this paper to Mr. Gladstone."

"What did Mr. Gladstone say?"

"He was remarkably struck and interested by this verifications of our moderation, and eagerly asked me to leave a copy with him."

### Mr. Digby on Sir Watkin's attack.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Pall Mall Gazette*.

SIR,—In the "interview" which Sir Edward Watkin, Bart, M. P., had with one of your representatives shortly after his return from India, he declared that the agitation being carried on in India—~~an~~ agitation, be it remembered for moderate constitutional change conducted on a constitutional manner—was so carried on by the aid of Russian gold. Your representative, as well he might be, was amazed at the assertion; he asked Sir Edward if he referred to the Congressionists and Sir Edward replied, "I do."

As the agent of the Congress in this country, I wrote, most courteously to Sir Edward, asking him to favour me with the names of the Congressionists who received Russian gold, and the circumstances under which the gold was paid, telling him also why I presumed to call him to account. I waited a long time for a reply: none came. I sent a reminder; Sir Edward's Secretary informed me that Sir Edward was on the Continent. A fortnight passed, I wrote again. This evening I received a statement from Mr. Seath, of London Bridge Station, S. E. to the effect that Sir Edward declines to say anything in reply to my letters, alleging that he has not the honor of my acquaintance. The alle-

gation may be correct but neither did Sir Edward possessed the honor of acquittance of my friends whom he slandered.

Lord John Russell, when, in 1853, he chucked "N. Popery" on the walls of Parliament and ran away, was a brave man compared to this Baronet and M. P., who cherish such strange notions of what is fair that he can slander a number of his fellow subjects in a far off land, and, when asked for proof, decline to give an answer.

I also was in India at the same time as Sir Edward Watkin. Unlike Sir Edward, I attended Congress meetings, and mixed with Congress men. He, so far as I have heard, did neither. I challenge him to prove his assertion. More than that, I declare, from what I saw, and heard while in India last year, as well as from my nearly twenty years' experience of India and the Indian people, that a more atrocious libel was never uttered than that to which Sir Edward Watkin gave expression when he said that the Congress was supported by Russian gold. Lord Dufferin would not talk of the Congress in this silly way. The ex-Viceroy has ever been ready to assert that is much in the Congress movement which deserves sympathetic consideration at the hands of the authorities; this too while he takes exception to certain matters respecting which I believe, he is misinformed. Mr. Gladstone supplies a fitting term in which to describe Sir Edward Watkin's charge; the charge is a "fabrication of iniquity."

The matter will not be allowed to rest where Sir Edward Watkin would like to leave it.

I am, Sir your obedient servant,

WM. DIGBY.

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### Memorandum of Indian Political Agency on the Reform of Councils.

"East India (Grievances of the people).—To call attention to certain grievances of the Native population of India; and to move, that, in the opinion of this House, the time has come for another step to be taken in the policy of extending self-government in India, whereby natives of India of capacity, of influence, of education shall be able to take a still wider share in the administration of the public affairs of their own country. That to secure this end it is desirable that the Supreme and Provincial Legislative Councils should be enlarged in number and reformed as to produce: That a moiety of the members of each Councils should be elected by constituencies which shall include Indians of positions, of specified educational attainments, of members of municipal and other bodies, of European and Indian Chambers of Commerce, and the like; That to the enlarged Councils be given the right of questioning the authorities

a matters of public interest, the discussion of the respective Budgets, and the initiation of such legislation as shall not, first, deal with the foreign policy, or second, affect the finances of the Empire: And, there being a general agreement among Europeans, both official and non-official, and Indians, of all classes as to the reforms which should be granted, that the Secretary of State should take such steps as will enable the House to consider a measure embodying these opinions."

*In the event of the Government not being prepared to accept the motion it will be pressed to a division.*

In view of the above motion I crave permission to invite your attention to what, I suppose, cannot fail to be an important element in the debate,—the proposals put forward by the Indian National Congress for Supreme and Provincial Legislative Council expansion and reform, and in other respects. As addenda to this Memorandum, I quote the Resolutions of the Congress passed at the Session held at Allahabad in December last, and the tentative scheme of reform put forward in 1886. I ask you, as an act of justice to the people of India, whose interests are in your hands, who can obtain what they ask for and what their country needs through no other channel than the honourable House of which you are a Member, to consider these Resolutions and to take such action in regard to them as may seem to you best.

I visited India last winter, primarily, to attend the Congress meetings and to see for myself the reality and strength of the movement. I may, perhaps, be pardoned for laying before you certain facts which will serve to show what the Congress movement is and what are its aims and objects.

I shall send you in a few days a verbatim report of the proceedings at Allahabad from December 26th to December 29th, and beg that those proceedings may receive your careful study. (It will be observed that the report sent is a part only of a publication to be hereafter circulated, a portion of which has not yet been received from India.)

I. *The extent of the hold which the Congress has upon the educated (non-English speaking as well as the English-speaking) people of India.*

It is believed that thirty millions of the Indian people are more or less acquainted with the aims of the Congress and are in sympathy with those aims, and were represented at Allahabad in December last. As an instance of the way in which the country is being organised, note should be taken of what has already been done in Southern India (see quotation from Madras Standing Committee's Report, given at the end of this Memorandum). In the Central Provinces, in the North-West Provinces, and in Bengal, like work has been done. Bombay and the Punjab are comparatively backward, but are being similarly organised, particularly the Punjab. An English M. P. thus speaks of what he heard and saw in the Punjab in December of last year:—

"The Indian National Congress consist of a large number of educated native who meet every year. It professes to be representative of the Indian people, and invites cities, districts, or collectorates, to elect, in public meeting, leading native citizens who are able to discuss in the English language, as their representatives at the Congress. These meetings are generally convened at the instance of provincial associations. Here, in the Punjab, the movement is in the hands of the 'Indian Association,' whose headquarters are at Lahore. Its president is a sikh Sirdar, its secretaries a Christian native barrister and a Brahmin, and its members include the great majority of the educated Indians of the city.

"The meeting to elect representatives from Lahore was held a few days ago, in the open air, and was attended by 1,500 persons. The meeting elected twenty-three representatives to the Congress, all of whom were nominated by the Indian Association, and included, as far as I can gather, everyone, no matter, whom, who was willing to go. Amongst them are three barristers, several pleaders, two Sirdars a college professor, a Hindoo and a Parsee merchant, and some newspaper editors, but no Mahomedan. In Jullundur, another important, district of the Punjab, a public meeting of 800 elected eight representatives, two of whom were Mahomedans; and at Amritsar, the largest city in the Punjab, 2,000 people elected ten representatives, two of whom were Mahomedans."

"I conversed, while in India in December last, with men of all races and creeds, with those opposed to, as well as those in favour of, the Congress programme. I was amazed at the consensus of opinion in support: even those who opposed moderated their opposition when the reasonable demands of the Congress were explained. The Hon. Mr. Amir Ali, C. I. E., the leader of the younger Mahomedans in Bengal, on behalf of the Mahomedans in that Province, told me he was seeking *modus vivendi* with the leaders of the Congress, so that his co-religionists could join. He has since, at Hooghly (on January 10, I think), declared that Resolution XII, passed at Allahabad, provides the *modus vivendi*. I know Mr. Amir Ali is anxious himself to become associated with the movement, and that his co-religionists should likewise join the Congress. Of Mahomedan opposition, it is alleged by those who have had good opportunity of judging, that there is no 'body' in it. It is wholly an organization of prominent Mahomedans; and reckoned only a comparatively few of these. "Sir Ahmed," leader of the Mahomedan opposition, (says the Member of Parliament I have already quoted.) "has entirely failed to carry with him his educated co-religionists, and his 'Patriotic Association, though undoubtedly influential, is not numerically powerful."

The growth of the Congress is phenomenal. The following figures are interesting :—

Year	Place	No. of Delegates.
1885	Bombay	72
1886	Calcutta	400
1887	Madras	607
1888	Allahabad	(say) 1,300 (1,500 elected).

Unless its claims are conceded, and its *raison d'être* removed, the Congress promises to increase year by year to a remarkable degree. Probably, however, never again will so many delegates meet as met last year. The number may be reduced to 1,000, but the electoral qualification will be increased, and the respective constituencies enlarged. The Congress will then be even more strikingly representative of the Empire.

2. *The loyalty of Congressmen and the mode of action of the Congress.*

No step has been taken which is not strictly constitutional. None other than constitutional steps will be taken or sanctioned in the remotest degree by the present leaders of the movement. An hon. member of your House has made assertions about Russian gold contributing to the Congress success, but, when challenged to prove his assertion, he was dumb. His statement was wholly inaccurate. Such Russian gold as reaches India for disloyal purposes is circulated amongst those opposed to the Congress, amongst men who dislike the moderate and constitutional procedure of the Congress.

No desire exists to weaken British supremacy. Quite the contrary. Upon nothing were the Congressmen with whom I talked so emphatic as in their assertions that all they desired was to strengthen the British administration of India, and to associate themselves in such a way with their rulers that the connection could never be broken. They saw in what was put forward, by themselves and in their behalf, that which would render impossible their ever taking up a hostile attitude to British supremacy. Concession of the extremely reasonable and modest proposals put forward would strengthen the loyalty now cherished, would bind the people to the British and ease those (in England and in India) responsible for the government of India of half their anxieties. Those anxieties at present, are too heavy to be borne—if justice is to be done.

No means are adopted as propaganda save those open to the eye of all,—viz, public meetings, the Press, the distribution of literature and conversations whenever men assemble and have leisure to talk of the affairs of their country.

As to the Press there is no sedition or malice aforethought in the papers which support the Congress. Certainly I have seen none. Not because I have shut my eyes to it. Contrariwise, I have looked diligently, with both eyes earnestly, and have not found it. And when as I am told happens in the vernacular press occasionally, unfair criticism is indulged in, it is condemned by

Congressmen, who unfortunately, in certain English papers published in India find the worst remarks of the most inexperienced of Indian editors put out of mind by the violence and virulence of comments and criticisms frequently published. To any one who knows India it is not necessary I should name names. Generally, what is called sedition is merely fair and reasonable criticism.

As to pamphlets, much has been said concerning the "Catechism" and the "Conversation" published with the Report of the Madras Congress Proceedings and not fairly said. Of these publications I may say that the author of the Catechism so little considers that he was uttering sedition that in his preface to a republication in Tamil he says that he was induced to prepare his Catechism in order that the people of Madras might throw aside their differences and jealousies and learned their duties as citizens of the British Empire. Of the Conversation I may say that so anxious was the author of it that nothing of a seditious character should appear in its pages, that, before publication, it was submitted to six of the most eminent publicists in India, all of whom are judges of one or other of the High Courts or members of one or other of the Legislative Councils, and also to two leading statesmen in England. No one of these persons considered there was anything of a seditious character in it. It was in circulation for more than twelve months, was read by many thousands of people in India and in England, was commented upon (in a favourable sense) by English journals: not one of the readers or the critics say anything seditious in it. Even now we deny there is anything which can be fairly termed seditious in any one of its passages.

To show the spirit of loyalty to the authorities which marks the conduct of the leaders of the Congress, the following fact, of which I had personal cognizance, may be cited. The place of meeting for the next Congress was under discussion. On the principle already acted upon the Panjab would have been chosen as the Province and Lahore selected as the place of assembly. The Panjabi delegates were anxious the Congress of 1889 should sit in their Province. They guaranteed, on the spot, a sum of money towards the expenses. The Congress leaders, however, decided not to go northwards. They are aware of the anxiety which the authorities are experiencing respecting that part of the Empire, and, rather than cause the Administration the slightest embarrassment, they determined the session of the Congress should be held at Bombay or Poona, and not at Lahore. This incident, I may add, is simply illustrative to the spirit in which everything is done; no one among the leaders of the Congress would say or would do anything which would add to the anxieties and responsibilities of the Government of India.

3. *If the aims of the Congress were realised what would happen?*

What are the aims of the Congress? The objects are, nearly, a dozen in number. (See appendix A.) Practically, all are embodied in the first resolution.

Give expansion of and enlarged powers to the Councils, and all or nearly all the other objects contended for could be urged in the Councils themselves, where the Government would be able to meet and overcome all opposition of a factious character, and, at the same time, ascertain, from elected members, what the people really wanted, and wherein existing arrangements needed reform.

The Maharajah of———at the beginning of December last, after having carefully read the Congress programme and considered one by one the resolutions submitted, said to a gentleman with whom I conversed while in India. "If these things are granted the British Government of India will last for ever." This exactly expresses our opinion, and this is the end for which both Europeans and Indians in the Congress are working. The Congress is really shifting the basis of our rule. It is changing (or will change, if only the authorities recognise and act upon the efforts of Congress-men.) India from a despotism to constitutional rule; it will take India from the shadow of the sword and range the people on the side of the Government, making them parties to our continued over-rule of the Empire.

The Government would greatly gain by the counsel at their command in the enlarged and reformed Chambers. The success which has already attended local self-Government in very part of the Empire would be repeated on a much larger scale.

Further, in the eyes of the world the British rule of India would be splendidly justified.

Proof is to be found as to the moderation of the movement and of the Congress programme in Lord Dufferin's attitude towards it. Lord Dufferin is generally believed, in consequence of his speech in Calcutta on November 30th last, to be hostile to the Congress. This it is said, is altogether a mistake. Lord Dufferin did not intend his observations to be so understood. He did not, there is reason for believing, speak against the Congress as such, or allude to its members in anything but respectful terms. His censures, so far as they can be called censures related to pamphlets I have already referred to, pamphlets which I cannot help thinking, Lord Dufferin wholly misunderstood, and which, I am compelled to submit, do not deserve his strictures. What the ex-Viceroy said amounted, so it is alleged, to no more than a kind and friendly warning that the programme of some members of the Congress was more ambitious than was compatible with the peculiar conditions of India. Lord Dufferin has, from the first, been so good a friend to the Congress, that I am anxious to believe this. Some colour is given to such an interpretation of a speech which was certainly not understood in this sense either in India or in England at the time of its delivery, by the publication in some Indian papers, and in the *Daily News* of the 16th instant, of what purports to be the views of Lord Dufferin regarding

Indian legislative reforms as embodied in the despatch which, the ex-Viceroy said on St. Andrew's Day, he had forwarded to the Secretary of State. I take these alleged recommendations and the Congress programme and place them side by side thus:

### THE CONGRESS PROPOSALS.

#### SUPREME COUNCIL.

1. Larger number of Members.
2. To be partially elective.
3. Members to have the right of interpellation.
4. The Budget every year to be submitted for discussion.
5. Veto in the hands of the Viceroy, subject to appeal to the House of Commons.

#### PROVINCIAL COUNCIL.

1. Larger number of members.
2. Moiety of members to be elected.
3. Members to have the right of interpellation.
4. All financial proposals to be submitted.
5. Veto, with right to appeal to Viceroy or House of Commons.

### LORD DUFFERIN'S ALLEGED RECOMMENDATIONS.

#### SUPREME COUNCIL.

1. ....
2. No election; nomination to remain.
3. Interpellation on current domestic matters, as distinguished from imperial.
4. Budget to be submitted every year, whether new taxation is imposed or not.
5. Veto, without qualification, save as at present.

#### PROVINCIAL COUNCIL.

1. Councils to be enlarged.
2. Nominated members to outnumber elected—by how many not stated.
3. Right of questioning to be granted.
4. Financial proposals of all kinds to be discussed.
5. Governor to be empowered to over-rule Council, subject to what restrictions does not appear.

If the information concerning Lord Dufferin's view is as trustworthy as there is reason to believe it is; the moderation and fairness of the Congress, its aims and its objects, stand self-confessed. If the Congress is justified out of the mouth of the ex-Viceroy of India there can, one would think be little doubt of Mr. Bradlaugh's motion receiving the emphatic approval of the House of Commons.

On one point I am bound to speak without reserve. Any proposal of reform which did not involve proportion of elected members for the *Supreme*, as well as for the *Provincial*, Councils, would not give satisfaction. The elected members of the Supreme Council might be elected by the Provincial Councils, but election there must be.

4.—*Progress, along the line indicated by the Congress, is inevitable.*

What the Congress asks for is not the first step in a course whereby the people of India should become associated with their British rulers in the administration of the affairs of their country. If it were, a pause and an examination of the possible issue would be justifiable. The first step was taken nearly fifty years ago, when the policy of education in India was decided upon. A still more important step forward was marked by the Queen's Proclamation of 1858.

Further steps were taken in Lord Mayo's time by the decentralisation of Provincial Finance, earlier in the establishment of Legislative Councils, again in the admission of Indian to the Covenanted Civil Service, in the selection of Indian judges for the High Courts, in the establishment of local Self-Government, in the enactment of the Penal Code which helped to make India one

country, in many of Sir John Strachey's reforms—notably his abolition of the Customs lines, etc., etc.

All these and many other things have made continued progress inevitable. The tide is flowing and cannot be stopped. It would be worse than mischievous to stop it, or to act upon the advice given by certain Indian newspapers, *e. g.* (1) the *Times of India*, which suggests the Congress meetings should be prohibited (2) the *Englishman*, which desires the Resolution of 1818 should be revived, and Mr. Caine, M. P., deported from India, and (3) the *Pioneer*, which wishes Mr. Hume, the General Secretary, to be deported, besides urging that other drastic measures should be adopted adverse to the agitation now being carried on. Such measure could do not good; they would only do harm,—that is to say, harm in the opinion of those who deprecate that movement. So far as the Congress itself is concerned, such action would tend to its greater influence and importance. For instance, if the *Times of India's* proposal were carried out, one consequence would be that one at least of the Congress sessions would be held in London; hither, probably, five hundred leading Indians would come. To say nothing of the exasperation which prohibition would cause, the movement would certainly not be weakened by such a charge of vanue.

The other day one of the leading men in the House of Commons—a Front Bench man—while discussing the matters referred to in this Memorandum, asked whether, if the Congress programme were adopted by the authorities, the Congress, following the example of the Anti-Corn Law League, when Sir Robert Peel carried his measure, to cite a familiar instance, would be immediately dissolved. No one has authority to speak on behalf of the Congress, or to state what its leaders, under given circumstances, would or would not do, but I may express my belief that there is no desire on the part of any one to make it a permanent institution; further the best of the Congressmen would be the new legislators, and would find their time fully occupied in legislative work. It is, at least, probable that its programme accepted, the Congress as a permanent institution would not continue. But that is only my opinion. I am not authorised to make any statement on this point; as the question has never been raised before the Congress.

W. DIGBY.

#### Mr. Bradlaugh interviewed.

Mr. Bradlaugh has for many years directed public attention, chiefly by means of lectures and public addresses, to the affairs of our great Eastern dependency. Since the death of Mr. Henry Fawcett there has been in the House of Commons no "member for India;" but it is understood that Mr. Bradlaugh intends to devote a considerable share of his time and energy in Parliament to the promotion of the political interests of the natives of India. In view of the

discussion of this most important subject by the House, on April 16, a representative of the *Pall Mall Gazette* called upon Mr. Bradlaugh at his apartments in St. John'swood, and found him, at 10 A.M., fresh and genial, with his heavy morning correspondence finally disposed of, although he had been engaged at St. Stephen's until nearly two o'clock. The following conversation—or rather monologue, with reportorial interjections—took place:—

“What is the state of affairs, Mr. Bradlaugh, with regard to your resolution?”

“Well, I am rather glad that you have called this morning, because I made a considerable modification in the notice I placed on the order-book about India. I obtained the other day first place in the ballot for Tuesday, April 16, and gave notice, in the terms of my motion of last session, for an inquiry; but after consultation with the friends of India in London, it has been deemed advisable to present to the House some clear issues which, we think, it may fairly decide without waiting for an inquiry, which would, of course, have delayed the matter for a year, at any rate. My motion, therefore, stands as follows:—”

“But is not the 16th of April dangerously close Easter, Mr. Bradlaugh?”

“Your observation is a fair one, and the night is awkward, as the House usually adjourns for the Easter holidays on Tuesday: but even with my luck it is not easy to choose first places; and if the advocates of women Suffrage are accurate in their supposition that Mr. Smith will not adjourn until the second reading of the Parliamentary Franchise (Extension to Women) Bill, which stands first for second reading on the following day, has been discussed, then the Indian motion is perfectly safe.”

“Why have you adopted the particular propositions contained in your motion?”

“I have,” replied Mr. Bradlaugh, with a twinkling eye which suggested that he knew more than he cared to say, “I have every reason to believe that in the first and second paragraphs of my resolution there is practically a concurrence of the highest opinion in its favour. Sir W. W. Hunter, and Sir Richard Garth have distinctly expressed themselves in print to this effect. Judging from the public utterances of the Marquis of Ripon, he is likely to strongly support it. The authorized report of Lord Dufferin's speech at Calcutta—I don't mean the mangled version of it which was telegraphed to the *Times*—shows that the late Viceroy must have submitted some such scheme to Lord Cross. There will be more difficulty probably on the question of whether a moiety of the members of the Council shall be elected? but no reform would be satisfactory which did not concede this to the natives of India.”

“What is meant, Mr. Bradlaugh, by ‘Supreme and Provincial Legislature Councils.’”

\*The Supreme Legislative Council would man t'e Legislative Council of the Governor-General of India, and there are now five Provincial Legislative Councils—the last one which was created"—here Mr. Bradlaugh sought and referred to a Blue-book—"in January, 1887, being for the North-western Provinces and Oudh."

"Do you move in this matter with any authority from the natives of India?"

"On that I can give you the easiest answer by referring you to the speech of Mr. Bonerjee, one of the most eminent amongst Indian reformers, who, speaking at the great Indian National Congress at Allahabad, made the following reference to myself: I know I speak the sense of this vast assembly when I say that we are unfeignedly grateful to Mr. Bradlaugh for his masterly and able advocacy of our cause (cheers), and we hope that he will be pleased to help us in the future in the investigation of the resolution which I have submitted to you. (Cheers.) That is from the *Hindu* of January 9, 1889; and in November last Mr. Eardley Norton, speaking at a public meeting over which Raja Rama Row presided, said: I am proud of Mr. Bradlaugh's co-operation, because I am proud to be associated with an honest and fearless man. (Loud cheers.) I am proud to work, no matter how humbly, with one who has never swerved a hair's breath from allegiance to the people's cause. (Cheers.)"

"Does the cause of reform in India arouse much public interest in this country?"

"Well I can assure you that very strong feeling is manifested in the country on the Indian question, as is fairly shown by the great meeting at Newcastle-on-Tyne, where, without any attraction of great names, I addressed the largest meeting which has yet gathered in the Tyneside Theatre, every person paying for admission. The subject was, 'Our Empire in India; how we govern the natives, and how we ought to govern them.' I may add that Indians are excessively fortunate in their present agency in this country, Mr. William Digby, C. I.E., being thoroughly earnest and remarkably well-informed."

At this point the handmaiden entered and intimated that a distinguished military officer sought audience of Mr. Bradlaugh, and our representative retired, while expressing thanks for the courteous reception given to him.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

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Two letters of Mr. William Digby to the Secretary of State  
on the report of the Public Service Commission.

INDIAN POLITICAL AGENCY,

25 CRAVEN STREET, CHARING CROSS, LONDON.

March 19, 1889.

I.

MY LORD,

I crave leave to bring to your lordship's notice the grievous ill which it is certain will be done to the people of India if the recommendations of the Public Service Commission are accepted by you and a measure framed on those recommendations is placed before Parliament.

If I require any justification in addressing your lordship, such justification is to be found in the words used by the Secretary of State when calling upon the Government of India to appoint a Commission of enquiry into the Public Service of India, and in the departure from the instructions given, which, I consider, the Report discloses. The object of the Commission was, "broadly speaking," "to devise a scheme which may reasonably be hoped to possess the necessary elements of finality, and to do full justice to the claims of the Natives of India to higher and more extensive employment in the Public Service." With the object, as stated by the Secretary of State, the Governor-General in Council fully and cordially agreed. So far from this object having been attained, I submit to your lordship that the recommendations of the Commission, if they are adopted, will leave the Natives of India in a considerably worse position than they were before the enquiry began. Such a condition of things I am satisfied no one would so much deprecate as would your lordship. If I am able by reference to the Report itself, to show that I have correctly described what is proposed, I am satisfied your lordship will not consider that the duty imposed upon the Commission has been rightly carried out, and will hesitate to approve the recommendations laid before you.

The Commission recommends, briefly:

- a. That the present open competitive system be maintained;
- b. That simultaneous examinations in India and in England be not approved;
- c. That the minimum and maximum limits of age for Indian candidates competing in England for the Covenanted Service be 19 and 23 years respectively;
- d. That the Statutory Service be abolished; and
- e. That a new nomenclature of service and re-arrangement of Offices be made, whereby the present Covenanted Service would be replaced by an Imperial Service consisting of 832 persons, and a Provincial Service created in which would be included 108 appointments now

belonging to the Covenanted Service; that Statutory Civilians should be employed in the Provincial, and not in the Imperial, Service, and that the vacancies in the latter service be filled up partly by promotion from the Subordinate Services and partly by recruitment, all subjects of the Queen-Empress residing in India being eligible for this service on giving proof of the possession of the necessary qualifications. ("That Europeans resident in India be eligible, equally with Natives, for the Provincial Service".) In passing, it may be remarked that one probable effect of this change will, if silver remains depreciated, be to induce European officials to educate their sons in India instead of in England, with a view to their obtaining appointments in the Provincial Service. Such a state of things would still further tend to the disadvantage of the Natives of India. They cannot, in like manner, compete for English appointments.

The "grave political danger" referred to in paragraph 84, page 66, might be brought about under such circumstances.

The Commissioners further indicate that, if their recommendations are carried out, the full force of the advantages which they declare will accrue to the people of India will not be felt until all the men now eligible for office shall have passed away and at least half of the next generation are too old to receive any benefit. "If accepted," say the Commissioners of their proposal, "they cannot be completely carried into effect for nearly a generation of official life" (see concluding paragraph of Report)—that is to say, thirty years.

Even if the recommendations of the Commission were, as is claimed for them, a boon to the Indian people, the last statement should be a sufficient bar to their acceptance as they stand, seeing they would afford no benefit to the men of to-day and very little to those now commencing their education.

So far, however, from the Report providing for that reasonable finality your lordship's predecessor desired, and giving increased opportunities to the Natives of India, except in two respects, the exact contrary will follow.

Perhaps I cannot put the points of the Commissioners' recommendations better than by contrasting, in parallel columns, the slight gains with the many and grievous losses.

#### GAINS.

1. Raising of age to 23.
2. Opportunity given to men in the Subordinate Service of being pro-

#### LOSSES.

1. Retention of all examinations for open competitive service in London and consequent refusal of simultaneous examinations.
2. The abolition of the Statutory Civil Service, *whereby there is,*

## GAINS.

moted to the Provincial Service on exhibition of exceptional merit and ability.) Although I put this as a gain, I do not forget that this privilege is already secured by the Rules of the Statutory portion of the Covenanted Service).

## LOSSES.

*to the Natives of India a distinct loss of 117 appointments in the Covenanted Civil Service for all time.*

3. The establishment of an Imperial and provincial service, the former with its only door of entrance situated in England, and the latter which is open to all subjects of the Queen-Empress whatever their race.

4. The "killing slow" rate at which the proposals will be carried into effect, considerably less than half the rate at which appointments should be made under the present Statutory Rule.

5. Putting the 46 Statutory Members of the Covenanted Service into the Provincials Service, and thereby providing 62 new offices only for the people of India (Natives and non-Natives), and these sixty-two offices cannot be filled in less than thirty years.

The sum of these losses is that the Commission which was to find *more* offices recommends a great reduction in the *number* of offices, a deterioration in *quality* with increased difficulty of attainment, and slower operation of proposed changes.

Your Lordship will, perhaps, bear with me while I give some of the reasons for what I call in the right-hand column above, losses; and, while I prove from the Report itself, that what I have stated is the real outcome of the recommendations made.

I. The retention of examinations in England and refusal of simultaneous examinations. In Clause V, pp.—39-49, of the Report the Commissioners deal at length with this question, but in view of the instructions of the Secretary of State that the scheme was to possess an element of finality, the deliberations are insufficient and the conclusion of limited application. The

people of India are so severely handicapped by the conditions which force those desiring their sons to enter the Service to send them to England for education, before it has been ascertained whether they are likely to pass the examinations, that no scheme which fails to provide for the earlier examinations in the competitive course taking place simultaneously in England and in India can be accepted as satisfactory. The late Lord Derby, in 1853, expressed this objection in unexaggerated terms, when he said: "Let them suppose, for instance, that, instead of holding these examinations here in London, that they were to be held in Calcutta. Well, how many Englishmen would go out there, or how many would send out their sons, perhaps to spend two or three years in the country, on the chance of obtaining an appointment? Nevertheless, that was exactly the course proposed to be adopted towards the natives of India." The Special Committee of the India Office on Civil Salaries, reporting in January, 1860, dwell (paragraphs 4 and 5, p. 1) fully and frankly with this point. They declare that, though the law stated natives of India were eligible for Offices, practically they were excluded; "it is almost impossible", they said, "for a native successfully to compete at the periodical examinations in England." The fact that since 1853, out of 200 millions of people, only fourteen have entered the Service by competition, is a proof of the serious difficulties referred to by the Committee. During that period over one thousand Englishmen have joined the Service. The Committee proceeded to indicate that there were two modes by which the object could be attained. (1) Alloting a number of appointments yearly, and (2) "to hold, simultaneously, two examinations—one in England and one in India—both being, as far as practicable, identical in their nature, and those who compete in both countries being finally classified in one list, according to merit, by the Civil Service Commissioners." The Committee had no hesitation in giving the preference to the second scheme as being the fairest.

Had the Public Service Commissioners refrained from creating a new Service, had they allowed matters in this respect to remain as they were, and reported in favour of simultaneous examinations in India and in England, limiting (if need be) the number of appointments which could be obtained by successful Indians to, say a moiety, there would then have been that element of finality in the proposals which they now conspicuously lack. As it is, by cutting down the number of members of the higher service, and by recommending the abolition of the Statutory Service, they wholly fail to carry out the instructions of the Secretary of State, which instructions were that they should "do full justice to the claims of the Natives of India to higher and more extensive employment in the Public Service." In fact they seem to have read their instructions backwards, and have taken away not a few of the positions which had already been secured to the people of India by statute.

2. The remark just made will find abundant proof in the pages of the Report itself. The abolition of the Statutory Civil Service takes away from the people of India 227 appointments in the Covenanted Service, and gives them in place thereof such offices as they may obtain, in competition with other subjects of the Queen Empress residing in India, in the Provincial Service which Provincial Service is the present Uncovenanted Service plus 108 appointments taken from the Covenanted Service. I do not for a moment suppose that this was what the Commissioners *intended*. The phraseology of the Report is too generous and fair to allow of such an opinion. Nevertheless, such is the only possible result of their proposals.

“The number of appointments to be made each year under the Statutory Rules must not exceed one-fifth of the total number of Civilians appointed by Her Majesty’s Secretary of State to the Covenanted Civil Service in that year. The practical effect of this limit, when calculated upon the regular annual recruitment of Covenanted Civilians fixed as appropriate for each Province, is to give 756 as the total yearly number of Statutory appointments for the whole of British India, distributed over the several Provinces thus :—

Madras	...	...	...	...	...	1.17
Bombay	...	...	...	...	...	1.05
Sind	...	...	...	...	...	.16
Bengal	....	...	...	...	...	1.72
North-Western Provinces and Oudh	...	...	...	...	...	1.67
Punjab	...	...	...	...	...	.78
Central Provinces	...	...	...	...	...	.43
British Burma	...	...	...	...	...	.34
Assam	...	...	...	...	...	.24
Total						7.56

“The number of appointments up to and including the year 1886 made under the Rules, full details of which are given in Appendix I to this Report, has been 48, or an average of six a year, distributed thus :—

	Hindus.	Mahomedans.	Parsis.	Sikhs.	Burmans.	Total.
Madras	6	2	...	...	...	8
Bombay	5	2	2	...	...	9
Bengal	9	2	...	...	...	11
N-W Provinces and Oudh	6	5	...	...	...	11
Punjab	...	3	...	2	...	5
Central Provinces	1	1	...	...	...	2
British Burma	...	...	...	...	2	2

"The total number of Hindus appointed under the Statutory Rules of 1879 has therefore been 27, of Mahommedans 15, of Parsis 2, and of Sikhs 2, to whom must be added 2 Burmans" (Paragraph 45, pp. 20—21).

The effect of these remarks (which effect the Commissioners do not seem to have considered) is, in the course of a generation, to give to Statutory Natives 227 appointments in the Convenanted Service. I arrive at this number, thus :  
756 appointments per annum for 30 years = 22680 (say 227).

This being so, it is impossible to understand by what process of reasoning the following passage in chapter v z paragraph 77 has found its way into the Report :

"The effect of these proposals is to remove about 108 appointments from the list of appointments at present reserved in the Schedule and by the orders of the Secretary of State, a number in excess of the proportion of one-sixth of the same appointments thrown open under the Statutory Rules."

I do not quarrel with the remark in the first clause of the sentence, but I am wholly at a loss to understand how 108 "reserved appointments" can "provide for the *more extensive employment* of Natives of India in Offices hitherto reserved for the Convenanted Civil Service." (paragraph 77, lines 5 and 6), when paragraph 72 distinctly abolishes a system whereby 227 appointments in the Convenanted Civil Service would, according to law, and due course of time, be given to Natives of India.

There are relevancy and logic in the passage cited only if it be understood that Parliament, having made a particular provision in the Services of India for the people of that country, in redemption of solemn pledges frequently repeated, can abrogate that provision without granting something of, at least, equal value to take its place. Of course Parliament *can* if it wills, do this. It is omnipotent in Indian affairs. But I am satisfied your Lordship would not desire for a moment to place a measure containing such a suggestion before either House, particularly as your Lordship's wish, I cannot for a moment doubt, is the same as that of your predecessor by whom the Commission was appointed, namely, "*to do FULL justice to the claims of the Natives of India to higher and more extensive employment in the public service*". In a matter of this kind, I respectfully submit, there can be no retreat from any position once occupied.

I am aware that the Commissioners (pp. 50-51) consider the effect of the Statute of 1870 was to admit persons to specific appointments only, and not to membership in an organized Service. (As to that, I hope to be permitted shortly to address your Lordship at length on behalf of the aggrieved persons and, therefore, will make no observations upon it now.) Even if that contention be correct, the question affected is one of promotion only; the number of appointments, 756 per annum, remains untouched. It would seem as if the Commissioners, having recommended the abolition of the Statutory Service,

proceeded to make further recommendations as if the Service had never existed and as if its abolition was of no importance, carrying with it no responsibility towards those in whose behalf it had been created.

The corollary of the abolition of the Statutory Service, I submit, is the establishment of simultaneous examinations in India and in England, and the throwing of all Indian services open to all British subjects, thereby indicating the inclusion of India within the ranks of the Empire as one of many countries ruled by one and the same Sovereign, on, practically, an identical principle. If they are admitted to perfect equality the people of India will make no complaint. All they ask is a fair field; they neither seek for, nor require, a favour.

If I am correct in my citations from the Report and in the conclusions I have based upon those citations, it is clear (what I have several times already said in other words, said in this letter) that the recommendations of the Report are of a retrograde, and not of a progressive character, and that they wholly fail to meet the first condition required of them by the terms of the Commission.

Should they be accepted, they will cause keen disappointment, they will be the occasion of much agitation and trouble, to the Indian people, who would feel, and most persons would think rightly feel, they had been trifled with. In the words of the Report of the India Office Committee on Civil Salaries, 1860 (para. 4) the Secretary of State and Parliament would be "exposed to the charge of keeping promise to the land and breaking it to the hope". Nay, it is more than that: it would be deliberately taking away 117 appointments which, otherwise would, in the course of years, become theirs.

I have not, in the remarks I have ventured to address to your lordship, expressed any opinion upon the question from a race point of view: nor have I alluded to the pledges and promises of her Majesty herself, of her successive Secretaries of State, of many statesmen, and of others alike in Parliament and the Legislative Councils of India. Such a course would, doubtless, be in order if I were not addressing one who is fully acquainted with all that his predecessors have said and written upon the claims which the Indian people have for consideration in respect to service in their own country. I may add that, so far as I can learn, there would be no objection to Europeans and others in India competing side by side with Indians themselves, if only the same principle were adopted upon throughout, if simultaneous examinations were provided for, if the rights of the whole people as represented in the appointments preserved by statute were safe-guarded and if the vested interests of the Statutory Civilian themselves were respected.

Your lordship is aware of the keen interest which the people of India take in this question. It is not to them one of the emoluments of office mere this consideration, I can confidently assert, is not the foremost one in th

minds. They are, in the National Congress and by other means, asking for a larger share in the administration of the affairs of their country in enlarged and reformed Councils. In so doing they are conscious that their representation cannot adequately and fruitfully discuss the questions which may come before them unless the knowledge and experience to be gained only by familiarity, not merely with the modes of Government but also, with the detail of administrative positions, both low and high, is made possible of attainment. The Report, understood in the sense I have ventured to express to your lordship, has caused keen disappointment in India. The disappointment has as yet found only partial expression, because it is felt that until the recommendations have received your lordship's approval they are simply matter for discussion and criticism.

I trust I may not be misunderstood as arguing that the Report does not contain some good points as affecting the Natives of India, but these points are few in number and are greatly overborne by the loss of valuable rights and privileges conferred by the Imperial Legislature.

If your lordship finds I have correctly stated the outcome of the Commissioners' recommendations, I venture to express with much confidence the hope that those recommendations will not receive your lordship's sanction, and that they will not be submitted to Parliament to form the basis of an enactment which, if passed, could not fail to be disastrous to the Indian people, and to be in flagrant contradiction to the objects for which the Commission of enquiry was formed.

I have the honor to be,

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

WM. DIGBY.

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II.

May 8th, 1889.

MY LORD,

I thank you for your letter, in which you inform me that my letter to you of the 19th of March had been laid before your lordship's Council. May I be permitted, in continuation of that letter, to mention certain matters other than those I have referred to, which prevent the recommendations of the Commission, if they are accepted, ensuring that element of finality which the Commission was instructed to endeavour to obtain? Those recommendations, on the contrary, will produce dissatisfaction and great disappointment.

*I.—Simultaneous Examinations in India in England.*

In asking for the examinations for the Covenanted Civil Service to be held simultaneously in India and in England, solely on the grounds of equal justice to the Indian and English subjects of the Queen-Empress, the people of India are simply taking up the position provided for them by the Special Committee of the India Office which sat and reported in 1860. That Committee recom-

mended, as being only fair, the holding, "simultaneously, two examinations, one in England and one in India, both being, as far as practicable, identical in their nature." They further recommended that those who compete in both countries should be "finally classified in one list, according to merit, by the Civil Service Commissioners." "Were this inequality removed," added the Committee, "we should no longer be exposed to the charge of keeping promise to the ear and breaking it to the hope." The proposal for simultaneous examinations had its genesis in your lordship's office, those who proposed it were English officials, and, in asking for its adoption, Indians are merely acting upon the sense of justice of Englishmen highly experienced in Indian affairs.\* It will be obvious, therefore, that such a claim as is put forward is compatible with perfect loyalty to the maintenance of the connection between England and India. The Committee, as will be seen on reference to their Report, were not unanimous in all their conclusions, but on the point I have referred to there was perfect unanimity.

On the question of simultaneous examinations, the Public Service Commission reported, in brief, as follows: "That it is inexpedient to hold an examination in India for the Covenanted Civil Service simultaneously with the examination in London" (*Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations Para. 128, p. 140*). I refer, in this letter, to the summary rather than to the detailed statements in the Report, as I do not at present wish to contest each statement in Paragraph 60. Should, however, such an examination become necessary, a criticism in detail of the observations made by the Commissioners cannot, in view of what follows, be less condemnatory than the remarks to be made upon the summary.

The recommendation of the Commissioners, my lord, on the question of simultaneous examinations is against the weight of evidence taken by them. An analysis of the opinions expressed by the witnesses and of the witnesses themselves reveals the most startling results. Evidently the Commission has not examined the evidence, or taken it into due consideration. There are too certain grave incidents in connection with the manner in which this portion of the evidence was obtained, and the foregone conclusion to which at least on highly placed Member of the Commission had committed himself, as render it more than ever improbable that the Report of the Commission can be held to be deserving of your lordship's confidence or commendation, and which wholly militate against legislation being undertaken to give the recommendations, or some of them, the force of law.

I will take the witnesses examined Presidency by Presidency and Province by Province, and show in what direction the balance of testimony lies.

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\* The members of the Committee were: Mr. J. P. Willoughby, Sir Erskine Perry, Sir W. H. Arbuthnot, Mr. Ross D. Mangles, and Sir E. Macnaghten.

## 1.—BENGAL.

Total number of witnesses examined	...	...	195
For simultaneous examinations	...	143	
Against " "	...	35	
Majority for	...	101	...
Neutral or doubtful	...	17	—195

## 2.—MADRAS.

Total number of witnesses examined	...	...	100
For simultaneous examinations	...	63	
Against " "	...	25	
Majority for	...	38	...
Neutral or doubtful	...	12	—100

## 3.—BOMBAY.

Total number of witnesses examined	...	...	112
For simultaneous examinations	...	64	
Against " "	...	38	
Majority for	...	26	...
Neutral or doubtful	...	10	—112

## 4.—NORTH-WEST PROVINCES AND OUDH.

Total number of witnesses examined	...	...	68
For simultaneous examinations	...	31	
Against " "	...	29	
Majority for	...	2	...
Neutral or doubtful	...	8	—68

## 5.—THE PANJAB.

Total number of witnesses examined	...	...	80
For simultaneous examinations	...	36	
Against " "	...	26	
Majority for	...	10	...
Neutral or doubtful	...	18	—80

## 6.—CENTRAL PROVINCES.

Total number of witnesses examined	...	...	42
For simultaneous examinations	...	24	
Against " "	...	10	
Majority for	...	14	...
Neutral or doubtful	...	8	—42

## SUMMARY.

Provinces.	For.	Against.	Doubtful.
Bengal	143	35	17
Madras	63	25	12
Bombay	64	38	10

Provinces.	For.	Against.	Doubtful.
4. North-West Provinces and Oudh	31	29	8
5. The Panjab ...	36	26	18
6. Central Provinces ...	24	10	8
<b>TOTAL...</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>73</b>

Majority for ... 198, or 68.8 per cent.

„ over Against and Doubtful 125, or 60.4 per cent.

Of the 361 in favour it may be remarked, 59 or 13.5 per cent. were Europeans not from any one part of the Empire, but from all parts of India.

In their Report the Commissioners have not published any statistical information of the kind given above. To obtain it the evidence of every witness, whether his evidence were oral or written, has been examined.

The case against the Report, however is only imperfectly shown even in the statement submitted in the above tabulated particulars. A closer analysis reveals much of great interest and of the highest value. What is revealed increases one's wonder that, in face of the evidence they took, and in view of the instructions they received, the Commissioners could have reported in the sense they adopted. An examination of the following figures will well repay any time bestowed upon them :—

#### 1.—BENGAL

Class of Witness.	EUROPEANS.			INDIANS.		
	For.	Against.	Doubtful.	For.	Against.	Doubtful.
1. Covenanted Civilians ...	6	14	2	4	—	—
2. Statutory „ ...	—	—	—	3	—	1
3. Uncovenanted Service :—						
a.—Judicial and Executive...—	—	2	1	22	5	1
b.—Educational Department, 3	3	3	—	9	—	2
c.—Others ...—	—	3	—	1	1	1
4. General Public :—						
a.—Barristers, Vakils and Solicitors ...	1	2	1	39	1	1
b.—Zemindars ...—	—	—	—	20	1	—
c.—Merchants ...—	—	—	3	2	—	—
d.—Others ...	1	2	2	8	1	—
5. English Newspapers ...	2	—	—	5	—	—
6. Vernacular „ ...—	—	—	—	10	—	—
7. Associations and Societies ...—	—	—	—	6	—	—
8. Secretary, Government of India, & High Court Judges—	—	—	2	1	—	—
<b>TOTALS ...</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>

An examination in detail of the facts summarised above shows that

- (1) among Europeans the Hon. H. J. Reynolds, C.S.I., Mr. H. J. S. Cotton, Mr. H. M. Kisch, Mr. H. Beveridge, and Mr. C. B. Garret, all civilians of high position, Mr. A. O. Hume, C.B., a retired official of great experience, long service, and almost unequalled knowledge of the country and the people, and
- (2) Sir A. W. Croft, K.C.I.E., Director of Public Instruction for Bengal, and Mr. C. H. Tawney, M.A., Principal of the Presidency College, Calcutta, among Educationalists,

were in favour of simultaneous examinations. Of the Indian figures it may be stated that in Class 3*a* against the proposal two of the witnesses were Mahomedans, in Class 4*d* the solitary individual was a Mahomedan, and in Class 4*d* the same thing is true, with this difference, that the witness was a gentleman holding a high position in a Native-Indian State, being Secretary to the Council of His Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad. As much is made of Mahomedan opposition to simultaneous examinations, it may be added here that the principal Moslem officials of Hyderabad were examined—one at Calcutta, one at Madras, others at Bombay. I think it is due that I should state in detail the Indian witnesses in Bengal who gave evidence in favor of simultaneous examinations: a scrutiny of their names and the positions they hold will unmistakably show that the leading men of wealth, attainments and position—alike in the professions, in commerce and in society, are heartily in favour of their countrymen being permitted, by a first examination in India, to compete for the highest places in the gift of the Government of India. They, who have most to lose, are not afraid of ill consequences following. Nearly all that is eminent, learned, energetic, and loyal in Bengal is to be found represented in the following list. A more remarkable consensus of opinion than is afforded in this list could not be obtained in regard to any matter of high importance in any country. I lay the more stress upon the testimony of Bengal for this, probably sufficient reason. In the Lower Provinces alone in the Empire is there, on any large scale, private property in land. Lord Cornwallis's Permanent Settlement and the creation of a large body of Zemindars have, in Bengal, called a wealthy class into existence. If anywhere in India it is in Bengal that men are most interested in the maintenance of a strong, efficient, and stable administration. Elsewhere in the Empire the ryotwari system of land tenure does not admit of the growth, on any extensive scale, of a wealthy and cultured class connected with the land. Yet it is in Bengal, where, as I have already said, men have most to lose, that there is the heartiest support, from Hindus and Mohomedans alike, of the proposal for holding simultaneous examinations in England and in India. To anyone acquainted with the personnel of Indian Society

in Bengal, the names of the Maharaja Jotendro Mohun Tagore, K.C.S.I., the Maharaja of Durbhunga, Babu Joykishen Mukerji, Kumar Nil Krishna Deb, Nawab Willayat Ali Khan Bahadur, among Zemindars; Rajah Durga Churn Laha among Merchants, himself the Prince of Indian Merchants; the Hon. C. M. Ghose, High Court, Calcutta, the Hon. Dr. Mohendro Lal Sircar, C.I.E., Nawab Abdul Latif Bahadur, C.I.E., (whose weight and influence with a large section of his community it is impossible to over-rate), among Judicial officers; the thirty-nine barristers, vakils, and solicitors mentioned in Class IVa., and the gentlemen whose names are given in all the other classes, will be held to represent the flower of wealth, culture influence, and weighty good sense among seventy millions of people. Of one hundred and forty-four witnesses examined in Bengal,—

129 were for Simultaneous Examinations,  
 9 „ against,  
 6 „ doubtful.

That the British Indian Association should have given evidence in favour of the change is, from the point of view of security, of great importance. Its action is as if the Carlton, the Junior Carlton, the St. Stephen's, and the constitutional Clubs of London were to make a deliverance to the Government of the day on some important matter. Whatever might be said of such a deliverance it could not be called revolutionary. Considering that Bengal has a third of the whole of the inhabitants of British India within its borders, that Hindu witnesses were ten to one in favour, that nearly one-half of Indian Mahomedans live in this Presidency and that of fourteen witnesses of this faith examined,

10 were for Simultaneous Examinations, and only  
 4 „ against,

the testimony is of so remarkable and so weighty a character as to unprejudiced minds, I submit, irresistible. To scorn, or set aside on insufficient grounds, such a representation is to invite discontent.

Of Europeans who were examined in Bengal, it is true, there were forty-three against to fourteen in favour. It would be invidious for me to set names on either side against one another, but if this were permissible the force of experience and authority would clearly tell in favour of the smaller numbers.

The list of Indians is as follows:—

\* \* \* \* \*

The authorities who would lightly set aside such an expression of opinion would incur a most serious risk. The very significant fact is elicited by this examination of evidence that, as I have already remarked, there are actually ten Mahomedan witnesses in favor of simultaneous examinations against four

who object to them; or are neutral. Thus, in the largest province in the Empire, where nearly half the Mahomedans in British India are located, there are twice as many Mahomedan witnesses in favour than there are against! This circumstance robs the following sentence from the Report of much of its value:—"Under the second [i.e., evidence 'given by others who feel that, in the present circumstances of the country, important classes of the community are practically debarred from success in examinations designed mainly as tests of educational fitness'] may be included the majority of the witnesses belonging to the Mahomedan community," (Paragraph 60 of Commissioner's Report.) The statement is technically correct, but in its essentials is strangely misleading. As I shall shortly have occasion to show the evidence of Mahomedan witnesses was taken in a manner which causes grave suspicion as to perfect fairness. For example, fifteen Mahomedan gentlemen were considered sufficient to express the opinions and views of twenty-three millions of Bengal Mahomedans; fifteen (the same number) were thought necessary to perform a similar duty for six millions in the Punjab, while sixteen were called in the North-Western Provinces, where there are less than twelve millions of Moslems. Fairly dealt with, and all the considerations taken into account, the utterance of the Commissioners respecting Mahomedan evidence which I have quoted, is scarcely fair, inasmuch as it deals with a set of facts differing, in important particulars, in each Presidency or Province. The mere enumeration of figures in such a case would be gravely misleading. Yet this is what the Commission appears to have done.

The tables in regard to the other Presidencies and Provinces I give without comment. The details, however, at your lordship's service should they be desired. Those details are omitted solely from a wish not to make this communication too long. An examination of them shows me that what I have said of Bengal might be said of the other parts of the Empire.

## 2.—MADRAS.

Class of Witness.	For	Agt.	Neutral.	INDIANS.	
				For	Against. Neutral
1. Covenanted Civil Service ...	3	2	3	—	—
1a. Military Officers in Civil Employ, ...	1	—	—	—	—
2. Statutory Civil Service ...	—	—	—	1	1
3. Uncovenanted Service:					
a—Judicial and Executive ...	1	1	—	13	—
b—Educational Department ...	1	5	2	3	1
c—Unclassified ...	2	1	—	4	5
4. General Public:					
a—Barristers, Vakils, and Solicitors ...	—	—	5	10	—

Summary of above Tables.

EUROPEANS.

Presidency or Province.	1. Covenantant Civil Service.		1a. Special Officers.		2. Statutory.		3a. Uncov. Service. Judicial and Executive		3b. Educational.		3c. Uncov. Service Unclassified.		4a. General Public. Barristers etc.		4b. Zemindars.		4c. Merchants.		4d. General Public. Unclassified.		5. English Newspapers		6. Vernacular Newspapers.		7. Associations and Societies.		8. Members of Council and High Court Judges.	
	For.	Ag.	For.	Ag.	For.	Ag.	For.	Ag.	For.	Ag.	For.	Ag.	For.	Ag.	For.	Ag.	For.	Ag.	For.	Ag.	For.	Ag.	For.	Ag.	For.	Ag.	For.	Ag.
1. Bengal ...	6	14	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	3	0	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2. Madras ...	3	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	1	5	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
3. Bombay ...	5	16	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
5. N.-W. Provs. and Oudh...	1	8	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
5. The Panjab...	1	9	0	2	0	0	2	3	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Central Provinces ...	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals ...	17	51	1	2	0	0	4	9	10	15	2	4	6	4	0	0	0	0	2	3	4	0	0	0	3	0	0	2

Europeans : For ... .. 49  
 " Against ... .. 90

INDIANS.

PRESIDENCY OF PROVINCE.	1. Governed Civil Service.		2. Statutory.		3a. Unconv. Service. Judicial and Executive.		3b. Educational Department.		3c. Unconv. Service. Unclassified.		4a. General Public. Barristers Vakils, etc.		4b. Zemindars.		4c. Merchants.		4d. General Public. Unclassified.		5. English Newspapers.		6. Vernacular Newspapers.		7. Associations and Societies.		8. Members of Council and High Court Judges.			
	For	Ag.	For	Ag.	For	Ag.	For	Ag.	For	Ag.	For	Ag.	For	Ag.	For	Ag.	For	Ag.	For	Ag.	For	Ag.	For	Ag.	For	Ag.	For	Ag.
1. Bengal ...	4	0	0	0	3	0	22	5	9	0	1	1	39	1	20	1	2	0	8	1	4	0	10	0	6	0	1	0
2. Madras ...	0	0	0	0	1	1	13	0	3	0	4	5	10	0	0	0	1	0	8	5	2	0	2	0	7	2	3	0
3. Bombay ...	2	0	0	0	2	1	9	4	5	2	1	0	7	1	0	0	0	1	11	8	8	0	5	0	6	2	2	1
4. N.-W.P. & Oudh.	0	1	0	0	1	1	4	7	0	0	0	4	1	9	3	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	5	2	1	0	
5. The Punjab ...	0	0	0	0	4	2	10	2	1	2	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	3	1	7	4	0	0
6. Central P. ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	1	0	0	4	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	2	0	8	1	0	0	
Total ...	6	1	0	0	11	9	63	23	19	4	6	6	67	3	31	4	3	1	23	12	10	0	22	2	34	11	7	1

European Witnesses. For, 49 ; Against, 90 Total, 139

Indian do. " 312 " 73 " 385  
 " " 361 163 524

evidence [otherwise, why trouble about taking evidence ?] makes recommendations in a contrary sense, declaring there was no consensus of opinion. A Report built upon such shifting sand cannot possibly stand.

Among those, in the above enumeration, designated Neutral or Doubtful, it is only fair to the cause I am urging that I should state are some who make suggestions which, if acted upon, would find place in the Covenanted Service for a large proportion of Indians. For example :—

Mr. Larmine, Commissioner, Dacca Division, "Some posts, should be reserved exclusively for Europeans—the rest for Indians;"

Mr. Elliott, Public Prosecutor, Cuddapah, would give one fourth of appointments to Indians ;

Hon. M Melvill, C.S.I., Member of Council, Bombay, would give one-fourth of appointments to Indians.

A. Ewbank, Esq., Principal of the Patna College, proposes the Statutory Service should be enlarged and recruited by nomination followed by real examination till it reaches a third of the Civil Service ;

F. Wyer, Esq, Civil Service, Collector and Magistrate, Dacca, objects on account of practical difficulties in the examination, advocates equal apportionment of appointments on political grounds, the Indian appointments again divided according to the religions of India ;

Honourable P. O'Sullivan, Barrister-at-Law, Advocate-General, Madras—  
"If it is found to be practicable, this [simultaneous examinations] might be done ;"

W. M. Elliot, Esq., Pleader and Public Prosecutor, Cuddapah, Madras—  
If an apportionment of appointments be made, he has no objection to a simultaneous examination ; he would give one-fourth of the apportionment.

Rev. D. Mackenzie, M.A., D.D., Principal, Free General Assembly's Institution, Bombay, wants the service to be recruited considerably by graduates.

It may, further, be remarked that the majority of the objections expressed to simultaneous examinations was owing to what is called the present insufficient educational advantages in India. No attempt seems to have been made by Sir Charles Aitchison or by Sir Charles Turner (they took the lead in examining on this point) to bring out the undoubted fact that—given the examinations in India the teaching standard would, in time, necessarily be raised to the requisite height and fulness. All the consequential benefits were likewise ignored. That advancement all along the line, in every walk of life, advancement in which the backward classes would share, must result, and every profession in India incidentally gain, were wholly ignored. Equally was it ignored that an immense impetus would be given to provision of educational facilities by Indians themselves, the Government thereby, in a measure, being relieved of a portion of the burden of higher education. Again, when it was so frequently

tacitly assumed that Indians were not fitted for high administrative and executive posts, no one asked the obvious question how this could be known or how the difficulties in the way of overcoming it, if it existed, could be conquered until a trial was made. As a matter of fact so far as trial has been made and Indians have been appointed to positions of responsibility, it is freely acknowledged that they have satisfied all expectations and have discharged their duties with ability and integrity. What the Duke of Argyll has called the still more important point than that of efficiency even, namely, how the pledges of the British monarch and Legislature and British statesmen as to equality of treatment could be fulfilled, was completely ignored. No more valuable branch of enquiry than this can be imagined, if equity, is to mark our rule in India. The loss to Europeans of some places in the Covenanted Service is as nothing compared to our reputation for good faith. "I would sacrifice Gwalior, or any frontier of India, ten times over," said the Duke of Wellington in 1802, "in order to preserve our character for scrupulous good faith." Very little, if anything, was done by the Commissioners in the putting of questions, calculated to elicit favourable observations on this branch of the inquiry, while it is not going too far to say that the tendency, of the examinations was to elicit objections.

How to some extent, this came about, and how it was that the clear and emphatic preponderance of evidence in favour of simultaneous examinations seems never to have struck the Commissioners, would be hard of understanding were it not that the Proceedings of the Commission itself afford an answer, to which answer it is with no little regret I now find myself compelled to ask your lordship's attention.

12.—*The Main Recommendations of the Report a Foregone Conclusion before any Witnesses were Examined.*

The Recommendations, in brief, are these :—

- a. The present competitive system to be maintained and simultaneous examinations refused;
- b. Age to be raised to 23;
- c. The Statutory Service to be abolished; and
- d. A new nomenclature of service and a rearrangement of offices made.

The Commission was appointed by a Resolution of the Government of India on the 4th of October, 1886. Sir Charles Aitchison, K. C. S. I., Lieut-Governor of the Panjab, was appointed President. On the 7th of July, 1884, exactly two years and four months previous to the appointment of the Commission, Sir Charles Aitchison, in a Minute [India (Civil Service Candidates), House of Commons Paper, c. 4580, 1885] on Raising of Age of Candidates, expressed opinions which, inferentially, committed him against simultaneous examinations.

seeing that he set forth certain objects as sufficient to meet the claims of Indians to fair and just treatment. Simultaneous examinations were no among the objects set forth. He expressed himself then as being in favour of raising the age of candidates, and most strongly denounced the Statutory Service. (Sir Charles condemned the Statutory Service in terms so inaccurate as to necessitate later a disproof of his statements.) Later, on the 14th of November, 1885, eleven months before the Commission was appointed, Sir Charles reiterated his formerly-expressed views and recommended such a rearrangement of the Services as was finally adopted by the Commission itself (Proceedings of the Public Service Commission, vol. i., p. 40). Practically, the Report could have been written by the President in 1886, before ever a single witness was examined. It is, to say as little on the point as possible a startling coincidence that the views of the gentleman who became President of the Commission, those views being placed on record long before the Commission was appointed, should be identical, in all essential features, with the recommendations eventually made. The holding of decided views, such as he enumerated, would make the Lieut.-Governor of the Panjab an admirable, probably an essential, witness, but so biassed a mind as they clearly indicate, made him unfit for the judicial position he was called upon to occupy. It is unnecessary I should illustrate the point by incidents from contemporary history the mere statement of the fact suffices. Regarded in the light of the President's prepossessions what before was occasion for surprise and wonder in the Report vanishes, and the curiously inconsequential proceedings of the Commission can be understood.

As if the possession, by the Commission, of its President's previously expressed matured views on the subject-matter of the enquiry were not enough, before ever an independent witness was called the views of the various subordinate Governments were obtained by interlocutory proceedings. The opinions of the Government of the Panjab meant the opinions of Sir Charles Aitchinson. The opinions asked for were given. No emphasis wanting in the expression of the views held. Two extracts from the "Answers by the Panjab Government" (Vol. I of the Commission's Proceedings pp. 19 and 25), will prove this:—

*Simultaneous Examinations  
Suggested Changes,*

"Q. 351.—Do you advocate a competition in India for the Civil Service simultaneously with the competition in England, the same question papers being used at both examinations?—  
No; the system would be impracticable."

"Q. 239.—How would the Native Community regard the following —

"(1) The Covenanted Civil Service to be reduced to a fixed number of appointments to be filled by competition in England, to which Natives and Europeans alike would be admitted

"(2) The appointments taken from the Covenanted Civil Service to be filled by appointment in India, both Natives and Europeans being eligible?—Uncertain, but would probably be looked upon with favour.

" Q. 240—How would you regard such a scheme?—The Lieutenant Governor is strongly in favour of it."

Possessing the views thus expressed with much sincerity and conviction. Sir Charles was clearly unfitted for that calm and judicial investigation and the weighing of rival statements which, it goes without saying, is anticipated when the Government of India appoints a Commission of this character. It is astonishing that a gentleman of Sir Charles Aitchinson's sensitiveness of character did not perceive this, and that the Lieutenant-Governor of the Panjab did not refuse to occupy a judicial position in respect to a matter to which it was possible for him to bring an unbiassed mind.

Added to the other objections to which Sir Charles Aitchinson (in the Commission's Proceedings) compels attention is the bias he, without any concealment or circumlocution, exhibits against the adoption of what was the fundamental object in the mind of your lordship's predecessor in determining to institute the Enquiry. That object was "to do *full justice* to the claims of the Natives of India to *higher and more extensive* employment in the Public Service." Sir Charles's utter want of real sympathy with the object is shown in two expressions he uses in a letter dated 7th November, 1885 (p. 40, vol. i., Proceedings P. S. Commission) :—

"The raising of the age would, in his opinion, enable "the Natives to compete on fair and equal terms" with Englishman. That is to say, Englishmen and Indians competing together in London are, in Sir Charles Aitchinson's view, on an equality. Equality! And yet the Indians have had to travel six thousand miles to reach London reside in a strange country, are examined in a foreign tongue, are separated from kindred and friends during the most impressionable years of life, when friendly, not to say paternal, countenance counts for most, and when success or failure in examination may depend upon encouragement in the home circle! All this, too, to be done at the risk of failure. Such "fairness" and such "equality" meted out to Englishmen would have denied to India many of her ablest Civil Servants. Would even Sir Charles Aitchinson, himself have competed for the Indian Civil Service if the examination wherein he did so brilliantly had been held in Calcutta and were carried on in an Indian tongue?

b. The Statutory Service is thus described:—"It was an ill-considered provision adopted at the eleventh hour of discussion of a Bill introduced for a totally different object, and suddenly tacked on at the far end of it." Such is Sir Charles Aitchinson's statement. The facts it professes to summarise, but with which it has no connection whatsoever, must be stated here in some detail owing to the bearing they have on the whole question of the admission

of the people of India to high office in their own country. Sir Charles was apparently, unacquainted with the circumstances I am about to narrate. Otherwise it is impossible he could have expressed himself in the terms I have quoted.

In 1833, by Parliamentary enactment, all disabilities under which Natives of India had hitherto suffered were removed. In 1858, a Conservative Government being in office, (Lord Stanley (now the Earl of Derby) Secretary of State for India) the Queen's Proclamation, a document of singular beauty and royal breath, affirmed that "our subjects, of whatever race or creed," shall "be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified, by their education ability, and integrity, duly to discharge." In 1862 a measure passed through Parliament giving to the Government of India certain powers of appointment of Natives of India. One appointment only was made; it was made in the same year the Act was passed, and Bombay was the scene. That appointment was, I believe, soon after cancelled. Nine years passed in which nothing was done to give effect to the Queen-Empress's gracious words. On August 21st, 1867, the East India Association memorialized Sir Stafford Northcote, then Secretary of State for India, asking that the competitive examination for a portion of the appointments to the India Civil Service should be held in India under such rules and arrangements as he might think proper, and expressing an opinion that, after the selection had been made in India by the first examination, it was essential that the selected candidates should be required to come to England to pass their further examinations with the selected candidates for this country. Sir Stafford Northcote introduced a clause in the Bill he submitted to Parliament; the Bill was entitled "The Government of India Act Amendment Bill" In introducing the measure the Secretary of State made some most important remarks. They are as follows:—

"The impression of myself and the Council is that the Uncovenanted Service should be, as far as possible, a Native Service, though no doubt certain appointments should be given to Englishmen. In explanation of the large proportion of Europeans in the Uncovenanted Services, I may mention that appointments were given to many Europeans who rendered services during the Mutiny, and other appointments were given to the sons and relatives of old officers. Still, I feel that the Uncovenanted Service is a dangerous service for Europeans, as it affords a scope for jobbing, and we ought to confine it more to Natives than to Europeans. In addition to this, I think it desirable that we should provide some mode by which Natives should be admitted into the Covenanted Service; and I therefore propose to introduce into the Bill a clause to open to a certain extent a door for that purpose. At present there is an Act by which a certain number of choice appointments are reserved to members of the Covenanted Civil Service, which can only be entered by competitive examination in this country, but there is also by a section of that Act power

given to the authorities to appoint other persons, provided they have resided in India a certain number of years, and have passed certain language tests. This latter provision, however, not being thoroughly effective, I propose to introduce a clause declaring that nothing in that Act shall prevent the authorities from appointing any Native of India to any post in the Covenanted Service, subject to such regulations as may appear expedient to the Governor-General, and as shall be approved by the Secretary for India and the majority of his Council. Such a provision will afford a safeguard against the powers being abused to the detriment of the Covenanted Civil Service. I propose also to define a Native India as being a person born of parents habitually resident in India, and not of persons merely established there for a temporary purpose."

The Bill was brought forward and read the first time on April 23rd. Mr. Fawcett, according to the notice given by him previous to this date, on the 5th of May submitted a motion, which was in the following terms:—

"That this House, whilst cordially approving of the system of open competition for appointments in the East India Civil Service, is of opinion that the people of India have not a fair chance of competing for these appointments as long as the examinations are held nowhere but in London; this House would therefore deem it desirable that simultaneously with the examination in London the same examination should be held in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras."

A long debate followed the proposing of this motion. Mr. Fawcett, at the end of the debate, said that "after the speech of the right hon. gentleman, he would not divide the House on his motion. The right hon. gentleman did not seem to impugn his motion, but simply wished to try something else first. He should be doing an injustice to the questions by now dividing, and he would have the opportunity of expressing his opinion when the Bill to which the Secretary of State to India had referred was before the House. He should support a scheme to enable the Natives to take a part in the Government of their country." Owing to a change of administration the Bill was not proceeded with. The object it had in view, however, was not permitted to drop.

On March 11th, 1869, the Duke of Argyll moved the 2nd reading of the 'East India (Laws and Regulations) Act,' 'Clause 6 of that measure empowered the Governor-General, under such restrictions and regulations as might be agreed to by the Government at home, to select, for the Covenanted Service of India, natives of India, although they might not have gone through the competitive examination in England. Speaking upon this clause, which he described as "one of very great importance," "involving some modification in our practice, and in the principles of our legislation as regards the Civil Service of India," his Grace made the following significant observations: "It may be asked how far this provision is consistent with the measures adopted by Parliament for securing efficiency in that service; but there is a provision, and in my opinion, a much more important, question which I trust will be considered—

HOW FAR THIS PROVISION IS ESSENTIAL TO ENABLE US TO PERFORM OUR DUTIES AND FULFIL OUR PLEDGES AND PROFESSIONS TOWARDS THE PEOPLE

OF INDIA . . . . With regard, however, to the employment of natives in the government of their country, in the Covenanted Service formerly of the Company and now of the Crown, I must say that *we have not fulfilled our duty, or the promises and engagements which we have made.*”\* There can be no doubt as to the noble Duke’s meaning ; later, in the same speech, he said : “ I believe that, by competitive examinations conducted at Calcutta, or even by pure selection, it will be quite possible for the Indian Government to secure able, excellent, and efficient administrators.” The Act did not become law until the 25th of March, 1870.

Thus the clause to which Sir Charles Aitchison referred in misleading terms, terms which evidently owe their use to his unacquaintance with the subject on which he expressed himself, was under the consideration of Parliament for two years before it became law.

It is a leading clause in a measure introduced with so much dignity, considered with so much patience and commented upon with such fulness at the second reading, that Sir Charles Aitchison says : “ It was an ill-considered provision, adopted at the eleventh hour of discussion of a Bill introduced for a totally different object, and suddenly tacked on at the fag end of it ” ! The public have a right to expect better treatment of an historical matter by an officer of Sir Charles Aitchison’s standing and ability. The Duke of Argyll has occasion for unbounded wonder at his alleged “ ill-considered ” action, and his Grace may ask how this particular provision could have been “ adopted at the eleventh hour of discussion ”, and “ suddenly tacked on the fag end ” of a Bill, when it was before Parliament for three years, and, further, was discussed at the second reading of the measure more than twelve months before that measure received the Royal sanction ! Considering what the question is which was thus strangely described by the Lieut.-Governor of Punjab, it is clear that the conduct of so important an enquiry as that into the reform of the Public Services should not have been placed in the hands of Sir Charles Aitchison.

In respect to the Act of 1870 it may be remarked that five years passed before the Government of India found time to submit rules for consideration by the Secretary of State, and *nine years* before a single appointment was made ! The provisions of the Act, even then, were carried out in a halting fashion. The letter of the law has not been followed; the spirit of the Act has been ignored. At the rate fixed under the Rules there should have been, when the Committee reported, sixty statutory civilians; there were only forty-eight (paragraph 45, pp. 20, 21, Report). This, alas ! is only symptomatic of the way in which we deal with affairs in India where the people of the country alone are concerned. The steps leading to the recognition and partial performance of our

duty to the Indian people in this matter are—

1833—

1858—

1862—

1867—

1870—

1879—

Forty-six years, more than a generation and a half of men, between giving a pledge and partially redeeming it! Four years before her Gracious Majesty ascended the Throne, the promise was made: she was within a few years of her jubilee as a monarch before the pledge was only partially redeemed! And the Indian people remained patient through all these years of disappointment. Such progress is surely slow enough for the most cautious of Indian statesmen. A quicker pace could now do no harm—nay, rather, is absolutely necessary. What, however, even though it were merely a small instalment, it took forty-six years to obtain, and, when initiated, was set in operation under ill-considered rules which carried failure on their face, as they left out the most important element of all—tested educational requirements Sir Charles Aitchison, with a light heart, would wholly thrust aside after less than seven years' trial, and add one more, and this the most glaring and most indefensible of all, to the unfulfilled duty and promises and engagements" of which the Duke of Argyll complained! It almost passes comprehension that so strong a partisan should have been selected to preside over and guide the deliberations of the Public Service Commission, which, it should never be forgotten, was appointed for a two-fold purpose:—

"to devise a scheme which may be reasonably hoped to possess the necessary elements of finality"; and

"to do full justice to the claims of the Natives of India to higher and more extensive employment in the Public Service."

Neither of these purposes has been achieved, or even remotely approached, or fairly attempted.

### III.—*Summary of the Points Raised.*

In bringing these matters to your lordship's notice I trust I may be acquitted of any feeling but one of a sincere desire to serve our fellow-subjects in India, I have referred to the President of the Commission only in his position as such. For Sir Charles Aitchison personally and for his services to India through a long and honorable period of administrative work I have much admiration and entertain the highest respect. It has been painful to me to write of any act of his in the strain I have been compelled to adopt. But I have remembered that the issues involved are of such importance, the legacy of "unfulfilled duty and promises and engagements," is so great, that no consideration for an officer, how,

ever eminent, whose acts go to swell that legacy, could be allowed to prevail with me in the discharge of a simple but most urgent duty

Although it will, to some slight extent, be travelling over ground already traversed in my letter to your lordship of March 16th, I hope I may be permitted to set forth in parallel columns how grievously the Commissioners have failed to carry out the instructions they have received, and how, so far from making the slight improvement in the position of the Indian people as regards the Public Service,, how instead of providing for "*higher and more extensive employment*", and *doing full justice*, they have really made proposals which will leave her Majesty's often-disappointed Indian subjects much worse off than they already were.

### THE POSITION OF AFFAIRS BEFORE THE COMMISSION REPORTED.

*First.*—The Indian People, under the Rules framed in accordance with the Act of 1870, are entitled (Para. 40 of the Report) to 756 appointments every year. Before the first year's batch retires on pension, after 30 years of service, 227 appointments in the *Covenanted Service* would be occupied by Indians.

*Second.*—These 227 appointments are not, in any sense, restricted. If the holders are found to be qualified the Government has the power to appoint them to any office to which *Covenanted* Civilians are entitled, or for any higher employment. In other words, the whole *Covenanted Service* or any higher employment is open to them, even to the Lieutenant-Governorship of a Province, or some of the seats on the Viceroy's Council. The Resolution appointing the Committee, in clear language, put this beyond all doubt. "It may be observed," it is stated, "that the statute of 1870 is one of remarkable breadth and liberality, and it empowers the Government of India and the Secretary of State acting together to frame rules under which natives of India may be admitted to any of the offices hitherto reserved for the *Covenanted Civil Service*; and that it would appear that there is practically no method of selecting natives for higher employment in India, which its provisions would not allow to be attempted." The Commission was instructed to improve on a condition of things thus described and already existing. To improve! And, behold, more than the half of what is already possessed is taken away!

### THE POSITION OF AFFAIRS IF THE COMMISSION'S REPORT IS ACCEPTED.

*First.*—108 appointments in the *Covenanted Service* added to the *Provincial Service*, and the 756 annual appointments abolished. That is, 108 inferior positions are offered in place of 227 with the best possibilities of promotion, already secured by Act of Parliaments.

*Second.*—Instead of the whole *Covenanted Service* or higher employment being legally open for promotion (according as the Government is satisfied) to ability displayed and character sustained, the 108 appointments are confined to certain posts only. That is, it is now proposed to deprive the people of India of what they already possess by Act of Parliament, by nullifying an Act of "remarkable breadth and liberality", "providing for admission to any of the office hitherto reserved for the *Covenanted Civil Service*; and" in which "it would appear that there is practically no method of selecting natives for higher employment in India which its provisions would not allow to be attempted"

### ASSUMING THE REPORT LOSS TO THE IN

### ACCEPTED, THE PEOPLE.

*First.*—119 appointments, which Indians are now entitled by an Act of the imperial Parliament, in the *Covenanted Civil Service*, are taken from the Indian people. Instead of more places being secured, as was intended when the Commission was appointed, many now open to them are taken away. "From him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away."

*Second.*—The quality, the liberality, and the scope of the appointments already reserved by law greatly and sadly reduced.

(Continued.)

*Third.*—These 227 appointments were reserved for natives only (as defined in the Act of 1870), as a small instalment of the pledges given by the Queen, the British Parliament, and successive Secretaries of State and leading statesmen in England. In words already quoted, the Duke of Argyll distinctly stated that our duty had not been fulfilled, our promises and engagements had not been kept. This provision was made in partial redemption of the many unfulfilled pledges.

*Fourth.*—The right to compete in England by the side of Englishmen to the age of nineteen.

*Third.*—It is proposed to meet the legislation of 1870 as naught, and the solemn statement of the Duke of Argyll as though it had never been made. It is intended to take from the children of the soil rights and privileges conferred by Parliament, and to divide them with Europeans. If a strict system of examination is not adopted (the Report makes too scant provision for this) the probability is—judging from recent experience in India—that out of the 108 even the Indians will secure a small portion only owing to the pressure of influence which will be exerted on behalf of English youths.

*Fourth.*—Age raised to 23.

*Third.*—The 108 to be shared with Europeans, when even the 227 secured by Act of Parliament were allotted to Indians alone, as a partial fulfilment of long-neglected pledges and forgotten solemn obligations.

**GAIN.**

*Fourth.*—Age raised to 23. [Although I record this a gain, as a matter of fact in recommending it the Commissioners are only reverting to a former arrangement which was injudiciously disturbed.]

It is clear from this comparison that if the recommendations of the Commission are accepted by your lordship, and legislation in which they are embodied follows, the loss to the Indian people will, in every way, be serious. That branch of the two-fold object which was to provide "*higher and more extensive employment*" for Indians has not been regarded. There is no gain. There is serious loss. As for the other branch of the two-fold object, a reasonable hope of finality in the recommendations made, that is farther off than ever. Gross injustice will have been done, and grievous disappointment and dissatisfaction will be felt.

As I ventured to remark in my former letter to your lordship, the matter under discussion is one in which there can be no going backwards. Regarded from the view of English interests in India only the legislation of 1870 cannot be revoked. It is a principle of English political procedure, with which your lordship is familiar, that when one Government displaces another, in all affairs of what I may term high politics, continuity is maintained. The Act of 1870, proposed by so honoured a member of the Conservative Administration of the day as the late Lord Iddesleigh, and carried into effect by a Liberal Secretary of State, the Duke of Argyll, honestly administered, is to the people of India what many Acts of Reform in all Departments of our Public life are to the English people. Rights which have been brought into being by Act of Parliament in the United Kingdom are always respected. In the case of India there are not only Parliamentary rights to be safe-guarded, there are solemn pledges also to be fulfilled. Faith is kept with the people of these realms. I am fully satisfied your lordship will not, for a moment, willingly become a party to any legislation which would treat the people of other races and in distant realms, specially committed to your care, differently from your own people, whom in so many ways and for so many years you have served. It is practicable to change the form in which the rights and privileges granted to India in 1870 may be made available to those in whose behalf that measure of "*remarkable breadth and liberality*" was passed. It is not practicable, it is not honourable, it may not be attempted, that one jot or tittle of what is even now only a partial fulfilment of solemn pledges should be withdrawn. The whole object of the Commission was to give something *more*, to do *full justice* to the claims of Indians, and to bring about a *reasonable finality*.

The people of India are not exclusive or selfish in their claims. They are most patient and eminently reasonable. If the rights of existing incumbents are saved they agree to the abolition of the Statutory Service (which, if it has failed, through no fault of theirs, but owing to the defective rules which were made without their co-operation in framing those rules having been sought) *on condition* that Simultaneous Examinations are held in England and in India, open to all British subjects. They only ask, as I stated in my former letter, a

fair field; they seek no favour. They do not beg for special concessions. They plead simply for that equality which is their due, which has been pledged to them over and over again. The Indian people wish to be recognised as standing on the same footing, in all matters of this kind, with their fellow-subjects in other parts of Her Majesty's Dominions. They ask nothing for themselves which they are not prepared to share with others on an equal footing. Simultaneous Examinations alone provide an element of finality. All else is quagmire and quicksand. Whether the exact mode of working out the change be the adoption of a single list and all candidates placed in the order of merit, or whether, as the next best plan half the appointments be competed for in each country, is a matter which, though of much importance, may not, under present circumstances, be too jealously considered by the Indian people. By Simultaneous Examinations, and by these alone, can satisfaction be given to our Indian fellow-subjects, England's honour be maintained, England's plighted word be kept, and "full justice" be rendered to their claims.

The observations I have addressed to your Lordship have, of necessity, applied to the Covenanted Civil Service only. Similarly, to reach reasonable hope of finality, the same plan will be needed for the other Covenanted Services also—that is to say, for the Public Works, the Telegraphs, Forests, Medical and other Departments for which examinations are held in England.

The patience with which delays prolonged over many years have been borne by the Indian people may no longer be expected in the same degree. Patient they will always be, but, with the spread of education, the largely-increasing and more influential Press, and the exercise of constitutional agitation, our Indian fellow-subjects will more frequently knock at the doors of Parliament. In the second Resolution passed at the National Congress held at Allahabad in the last week of December, 1883, the Congress felt "it necessary to put distinctly on record its opinion that full justice will never be done to the people of this country until the open competitive examination for the Civil Service of India is held simultaneously in England and in India." While never going outside the law in making their appeal the Indian people will not rest satisfied with a proposed settlement of a great question—a question of supreme importance to them, both as a matter of sentiment and of public duty, and bearing most importantly on the economic and material condition of India—so obviously unfair to them as that proposed in the Report of the Public Service Commission. Nothing but the equality so frequently promised to them equality ensured in the shape of simultaneous examinations, can give satisfaction.

I have the honour to remain,

Your lordship's obedient servant,

WM. DIGBY

Mr. William Digby's interview with Right Hon.  
W. E., Gladstone

[The following is a report of an interview between the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone, M. P. in his room at the back of the Speaker's Chair, House of Commons, on April 8th, and Mr. William Digby, C. I. E., the Agent in England of the Indian National Congress.]

After a cordial greeting to his visitor, and after compliments Mr. Gladstone said: you have come Mr. Digby to tell me about the Indian National Congress.

MR. DIGBY—Yes, sir. And first I wish to tell you of the great enthusiasm which marked the Congress on the 29th December when it was proposed to send a congratulatory telegram to you on your birthday. The whole audience rose as one man to acclaim the proposal, every one added his benediction.

MR. GLADSTONE—It was very good of the Congress, and I greatly appreciate their kindness. I have always had good will towards the Indian people and have done for them, from time to time, all that has seemed to me possible.

MR. DIGBY—I wish at the outset to say that while the people of India are anxious you should become acquainted with their great organisation, they also are aware of the many claims upon your attention. They would shrink from burdening you overmuch. Nevertheless, they wish you to know what it is they are striving for. As for the Congress itself, I want, if possible, Mr. Gladstone, to make it clear to you that if ever there was any organisation in the British Empire which deserved the hearty support of all English Liberals, it is this of the Congress. From the first day of its establishment until now nothing of violence, of intimidation, of sedition, has marked any part of its proceedings. It has asked for moderate reforms, it has asked for them in moderate language, it has acted in a peaceable and constitutional manner. The Congress wants a measure of representation of varied interests, through election by qualified persons. It has been perfectly loyal. Indeed, I am speaking sober truth when I say there is no loyalty in the British dominions more sincere than that of the Indian reformers. They do not want to drive the British out of India. They see the need of an over-lord in the land to direct the affairs of the many peoples in the Empire; they have never had an over-lord who on the whole has done so much real good to the Empire as has Britain. Our over-lordship has, it is to be regretfully stated, been accompanied with economic conditions of a most unsatisfactory character. Conditions which to describe now would take up more time than you can spare me, and upon which, therefore, I will not enlarge. Side by side with this drawback, however, England has one great thing to be placed to its credit, it has made or at least is making of a congeries of nations in India—one nation. What Sir John Strachey and others have said and are still saying of India as an agglomeration of States without-cohesion is no longer true. The Supreme Council for making Laws for all India, the Penal-Code, the system of education, to mention some things only, have all had a marvellous effect in this respect, and none are so ready to recognise this as the people of India themselves.

MR. GLADSTONE—Is it really the case, Mr. Digby, that there is a sentiment of nationality such as you describe? I am most glad to hear it. What else is conducing to this nationality? Is there any army for all India?

MR. DIGBY—No, sir. The presidency army system still continues, but I think it is in its last days. I had the pleasure of travelling last autumn to India in the same ship with Lord Lansdowne. One of the matters on which he did me the honour of conversing with me was this very question of one army for India. It happened to be one of the subjects in which I had taken an interest while in India. I expressed some of the objections to the presidency system and gathered that one of the reforms Lord Lansdowne hoped to carry out while in India was the abolition of the divided armies and the creation of one military force for the whole Empire.

MR. GLADSTONE—I hope Lord Lansdowne will carry out this reform. I have been struck, during my visits to Italy, with the wonderful unity which exists there. Italy, is now as much one country as is France, and more so than is Germany. I attribute this largely to formation of an army for Italy as a whole. This has broken down provincialism and has had marvellous results in making Italy the united nation it is now.

MR. DIGBY—Here, Sir, an instance in support of what I say about the feeling of nationality in India. I mixed freely with the members of the Congress Hall. You would have been surprised at the combination exhibited in our military encampment and our democratic manners at Allahabad. In race the people differed from one another as much as the Spaniard differs from the Norwegian. The Sikh and the Madras have scarcely anything in common. [Here Mr. Gladstone interpose a question about the religion professed by the Sikhs, and having received a reply, gracefully apologized for the interruption] Certainly nothing more in common than have Russian and the Belgium, yet they were all content to be called Indians, to assemble as citizens of one Empire, and to call themselves by the generic term of Indians. A real Indian nationality has sprung into existence in India, thanks, chiefly to the one head of British authority and to the principles of rule carried out. The people are, too, loyal, sincerely loyal, and all charges of sedition are untrue. The Congress also has done its part in bringing about what has already been achieved.

MR. GLADSTONE—I am pleased to know all this. Much of it is what I should have expected. I am glad to hear—I should have expected to hear—of a certain loyalty to the Administration, not exactly the loyalty which would develop feelings of confidence in our rule. Has it not been a distinct advantage to India, her being brought under the direct rule of the Crown? There cannot now be annexation of the native States which, at one time caused so much trouble. I refer particularly to that.

MR. DIGBY—There has, in many ways, been great gain to India in being brought under the direct rule of the Crown. Lord Dalhousie's policy, for example, is impossible now-a-days. You will remember, sir, the debates in the House of Commons more than twenty years ago regarding Mysore and the rendition of the Province, which was brought about solely because appeal could be made on behalf of the native princes to the House of Commons. In that respect there has been gain.

MR. GLADSTONE—Referring again to what you say about the loyalty of the Congress, there must, of course, among such a number of people as live in India, be some who are disloyal and disaffected. Now I should suppose that such an organisation as the Congress would naturally absorb these men: they want opportunity to express themselves, here is such an opportunity. I should not think any the worse of the Congress if it were so, so long as these men did not dominate its policy, so long as they were kept in their place.

MR. DIGBY—I can assure you, sir, that such men as you refer to have not been members of any of the Congresses. There are disaffected persons in India, not very many, I think, and they are confined to one part of the Empire, the Punjab. They are not with us. As Mr. Hume, in a letter to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, has recently pointed out, they are not in favour of the constitutional course which alone the Congress follows.

MR. GLADSTONE.—But they could attend the Congress meetings if they chose, and take part in the proceedings, could they not?

MR. DIGBY—No sir. Certainly not. No one attends the Congress as delegate who is not elected by some association—or organisation in sympathy with reform, or at some public meeting. A delegate has to produce his credentials before he is admitted, and contribute Rs. 10 to the Congress funds.

MR. GLADSTONE.—I did not understand that the Congress was representative in this respect.

MR. DIGBY.—That is the very essence of its existence. It is that or it is nothing. Each year that passes, the organisation is improved in this respect. One point I have not pressed so much as I could have wished, though I think I mentioned, it incidentally at starting. That is the strong, even over-powering objection which is felt against the system of nominating members to the various councils. Lord Dufferin would give up nomination and establish election for the provincial councils, but not for the Supreme Council. As a fact it is needed, if anything, more at the top than elsewhere. Lord Ripon, when he was Viceroy, exercised as much care as any man could in selecting members of his Council, but he told me in November last, just before I started for India, that on looking back he was conscious he had made mistakes owing to want of exact knowledge. A remarkable instance of the need of elected members, fully acquainted with the country in the Viceroy's Council, has just occurred. During one of the years when Lord Ripon had a good surplus and could remit

taxation, be abolished, what, is known as the patwari cess in the North-

Western Provinces and Oudh. Within the past two months the cess has been re-imposed, not because the finances of Empire were in such straits that it was necessary to reimpose this particular tax, but because it was found a mistake had been made in the object sought to be achieved had not been achieved. Had there in 1882 or 1883—I am not certain in which year the tax was remitted—been two or three elected members for the North-Western Provinces and Oudh in the Viceroy's Council, the local knowledge required would have been available and the mistake could no have occurred. You referred just, now sir to the possibility of some extreme men attending the Congress meetings, saying injurious things and doing harm. But that, if it happened, you further said, would not necessarily make you think ill of the Congress as a whole. As a matter of fact, nothing of the kind has happened. The proceedings of the Congress from the first meetings in Bombay in 1885 to the last in Allahabad in 1888, may be scrutinized with ever so much keenness and nothing found in them of a violent or seditious character. Indeed, they have been so scrutinized first by Sir Auckland Colvin and next by Lord Dufferin. Sir Auckland went so far as to say that he approved of what was done at Bombay and Calcutta, but changed his opinion after the Madras meeting was held. That however, was not because of seditious speeches or unwise resolutions in the Congress itself for he cited no speeches which were objectionable, and the resolutions were with a few unimportant exceptions, merely reaffirmation of previous years' conclusions. He founded his objections upon certain pamphlets published with the report of the Madras Congress. So, also, I have reason to believe, did Lord Dufferin complain of the pamphlets and not of the Congress proceedings. Lord Dufferin, by the way, I am compelled with all respect to him to say, acted very wrongly in making his strictures upon the Congress at the place where he did, namely, at a Scotch dinner on St. Andrew's Day when no native of India could possibly be present to hear his remarks upon their great representative organisation. Now, as to those pamphlets, all deny there is anything seditious in them. The writer of the Catechism, Mr. Vira Raghava Chariar of Madras, in the preface to a Tamil edition, declared that his object in writing it was to persuade his countrymen in Madras to lay aside all their jealousies and bickerings and to learn their duties as citizens of the British Empire, not an Indian Government disassociated from Britain, but the British Empire.

MR. GLADSTONE—Surely Lord Dufferin could not object to such a statement as that.

MR. DIGBY—I am not sure that Lord Dufferin has seen this preface. But the spirit of the observations is manifest in all the pages of Mr. Vira Raghava Chariar's pamphlet. Then in regard to the other pamphlet, a conversation

between certain Indians on the affairs of the country, it was written by Mr. A. O. Hume, whom you will remember as the son of the late Joseph Hume.

MR. GLADSTONE—Oh, yes; I know.

MR. DIGBY—Well, Mr. Hume was so anxious that nothing of a seditious nature should appear in his pamphlet that, prior to publication, he submitted it to most experienced men in India and in England, and only published it after it had passed through their hands.

MR. GLADSTONE—And they found nothing seditious in its pages?

MR. DIGBY—Nothing whatever! More than that, the conversation had been in circulation more than twelve months before anybody thought there was sedition in it. To revert, sir, with your permission, to point I mentioned a little time ago, I should like to ask your kind consideration of this fact. My point was that the Congress movement was essentially a moderate one, that there was nothing wild or violent about it. Note this, sir, (producing a printed document). It proves that Congress consisting of the most advanced men throughout India has so fine a sense of what is possible as well as what is desirable that when the proposals in regard to the greatest of all the reforms advocated—the enlargement of the councils and the extension of their powers—are placed side by side, they are found to be only slightly in advance of those which Lord Dufferin from quite a different stand-point, has urged upon the Secretary of State for India.

MR. GLADSTONE, (surprised): Eh, what is that?

MR. DIGBY—You see here, sir, in paralleled columns the Congress demands on this particular matter and Lord Dufferin's alleged recommendations. I say "alleged," because the despatch in which they appear has not yet been published. But I have good reasons for stating the recommendations authentic.

MR. GLADSTONE—This is most interesting. Can you leave this document with me?

MR. DIGBY.—With pleasure, I gladly leave it. I press this point, sir, because it is a fair sample of the whole doings of the Congress men. Their doings are wholly reasonable. Indeed, they might be expected to be such. The Congress is, practically, to the whole of India what the National Liberal Federation is to the Liberal party. The opposition to it is chiefly from Mahomedans, and only a portion of them.

MR. GLADSTONE.—Yes I have seen it stated that there were three hundred Mahomedans at the last Congress.

MR. DIGBY.—That report is not quite exact. The corrected delegates lists are not yet published; when they are, I think it will be found that the number of Mahomedans was between; 200 and 250.

MR. GLADSTONE.—Is it not a fact that some of the principal men concerned with the Congress are dismissed officials ?

MR. DIGBY.—I am not aware of any such instance. But if there be an isolated case, it does not affect the loyalty and good sense of the Congress as a whole.

MR. GLADSTONE.—I am told the Native Press is seditious and often contains writings of a disloyal character. What do you say to that ?

MR. DIGBY (smiling).—If you will excuse my using a remark you frequently have to make to correspondents respecting absurd charges made by Conservatives concerning your character, I would reply by remarking that when any body makes a statement of this kind he should be called upon to produce the proof. With the proof in one's possession, one could judge as to the correctness of the statement. I know of no such instances, and I probably see as many Indian newspapers as almost any man in England. But as a matter of fact District officials in India are such irresponsible despots that they resent all comment on their actions however mild, and call that sedition what probably any unprejudiced person would say fair criticism.

MR. GLADSTONE.—I can well believe that, but as to the Native Press as a whole, do you think it has improved ? When Lord Salisbury passed his Gagging Act I, from what I saw of the evidence adduced which was held to justify its passing, was not satisfied that the Act was needed. I did not think there was occasion for it. Has the Press at all improved since then ?

MR. DIGBY.—I am afraid my answer to your question will be a little long. Adopting a remark of Sir John Strachey's, I should say the Indian-conducted papers now bear the same relation to the crude efforts of Indian journalists thirty years ago that the English journalism of to-day does to the journalism which you will remember as represented by the *John Bull* of fifty years ago.

MR. GLADSTONE.—Really, is that the case ?

MR. DIGBY.—That sir, is my honest opinion, an opinion based upon an unprejudiced examination of their circumstances. We deny there is any sedition in the Indian papers. At the same time none are so desirous of stopping seditious writing if there be any than are the Congress men themselves. On my return from the Congress to Bombay I travelled a part of the way with several delegates from Madras, including the Editor and Assistant Editor of the *Hindu*, the only Indian daily paper in Southern India. We discussed this very point. It was suggested that the standing Congress Committee should for six months, make an abstract of the contents of the native journals published within their respective localities, and at the end of that period report the result. The Indian gentlemen I have referred to were so satisfied as to the result of the inquiry that they were ready to undertake the duty and be judged by what the reports might reveal.

Mr. GLADSTONE—What was it they proposed to do?

Mr. DIGBY repeated the incident and Mr. Gladstone nodded approval.

Mr. GLADSTONE—You mentioned Lord Lansdowne's name a little while ago. I hope he will be successful during his stay in India.

Mr. DIGBY—So far as I could judge from what I saw of His Excellency on the voyage, and from what I have seen and heard since, I have great hopes of his doing usually well.

Mr. GLADSTONE—here intimated that he had an engagement, and he and Mr. Digby rose from their seats. While they were standing.

Mr. DIGBY said—You are aware, Sir, that Mr. Bradlaugh has a motion on the paper regarding Indian reform which unfortunately cannot be taken up on the 16th as we had hoped. Could not the Opposition Front Bench take up the question?

Mr. GLADSTONE—In the present stage of the question, I think you cannot do better than let it remain in the hands of an independent member. It is in very good hands now.

Mr. DIGBY—I thank you for that observation, but what I wish further to say is this.—Mr. Bradlaugh's motion calls for immediate action. But we also remember that the English people understand very little about India and they might think some inquiry was needed. Could it not be proposed from the Opposition Front Bench, when Mr. Bradlaugh's motion is before the House, that a Parliamentary Committee be appointed to inquire into this matter.

Mr. GLADSTONE—I remember when we were last in office, we were considering the appointment of a Commission to inquire into the whole administration of India. You now only suggest inquiring on one point?

Mr. DIGBY—We make that suggestion only because we think that English people generally might wish to see in the shape of evidence placed before a committee, what arguments could be urged in favour of reform as well as the objections, if any, to action being taken. We think the case is clear as it stands, that we should be quite ready to fall in with a committee. I have already spoken on this point with Mr. John Morley.

Mr. GLADSTONE—Yes, yes. Such a committee would certainly be desirable.

Mr. DIGBY—May I hope that such a committee will be moved for from the Opposition Front Bench when the motion of which notice has been given, comes on?

Mr. GLADSTONE—As I have said, I think for the present your cause is better in an independent member's hand and you are well off in this respect. I am glad to have had this talk with you and am pleased to have heard all the information you have laid before me.

Mr. DIGBY thanked Mr. Gladstone for his kindness in granting the interview, and retired.

### Nottingham Liberals and Indian Reform.

A well-attended and influential meeting of the committee of the Mapperley Ward Liberal Association was held at Sycamore-road Board Schools on Wednesday night, the 10th April 1888, when Councillor Bennett, the president, occupied the chair.—After the usual formal business of the committee had been transacted, Mr. Atkey, in introducing the question of "Indian Reform," pointed out the responsibility of every Englishman in the government of India. He first dealt with the question historically, showing how in 1833, when the country took over the government of India, the English statesmen of that day did not shut their eyes to the responsibilities which they were incurring. This was proved by the clause which provided for the same treatment of native Indians as any other British subjects. After the mutiny this was in no way repealed. Nay more, the Queen in her proclamation of 1858 emphatically endorsed that clause. Mr. Atkey then went on to point out the grievance against which the National Congress is a protest. He said that, although there was no law to prevent natives from entering the Civil Service, yet the conditions of their entry were such as to practically exclude them. They had to come to England to pass an examination, and that was a proceeding which few could or would adopt. The government of India, by legislative councils, on which the natives had practically no voice, was in reality a government by officials. The viceroys were changed every five years, and that was just when they began to get an insight into the government of the country. The taxation of the country too, was most arbitrary, unjust, and oppressive. The minimum of income tax, being fixed at £34 per annum, fell upon certain small traders, &c., and often just swallowed up the margin of profit which made decent living possible. The administration of the law by magistrates, who were judicial functionaries as well, was a grievance which caused endless disaffection, in consequence of the repeated and gross miscarriage of justice. Then, too, in addition to these "negative" grievances, there was one which in his opinion was a standing disgrace to Englishmen. That was the establishment of shops for the sale of intoxicating liquors on purpose to obtain the revenue derived therefrom. It could be proved that whereas the native Indians are an extremely temperate people, and naturally averse to drink, they become, when tempted to excess by the establishment of these grogshops, more like madmen. This was a rough sketch of the present government of India, and Mr. Atkey then proceeded to describe the National Congress and its aims, showing how it consisted of practically all the enlightened and educated native Indians, whose only object was to agitate for reforms which should tend to strengthen rather than loosen the bonds between that country and England. He contended that the present government was absolutely a despotism. The policy of England at the present time

was draining India of her wealth. She was the poorest country in the world, so poor that at the slightest breath of famine millions perished of hunger. He concluded by saying that it was a disgrace that when, as last year, the business of India was discussed in the House of Commons, and the destitute of 200 million British subjects were in the balance, only some 26 members out of 670 were present. As politicians and as Liberals it should be the duty of every one to see this state of things altered. He moved:—"That this meeting of Mapperley Ward Liberal Association hereby expresses its hearty approval of Mr. Bradlaugh's Indian motion, and trusts the House of Commons may accept the same." Copies to be sent to the three local members of Parliament, Mr. W. H. Smith and Mr. Bradlaugh.—This was seconded by Mr. J. M. Proctor, supported by Messrs. Burton and Simons, and carried unanimously.

### The Hull Radical Club and the Congress.

On the 28th March, the following resolution was passed at a meeting of the Hull Radical Club, on the motion of Mr. N. B. Billany, seconded by Mr. T. Turner: "That, in the opinion of this meeting, the motion of which Charles Bradlaugh M. P., has given notice that he will move on the 16th of April next to secure for the natives of India, of influence; of education a wider share in the public affairs of their own country for enlarging the provincial legislative councils, feeling satisfied the greater the freedom enjoyed by the subject politically the safer the empire, and this meeting urges upon the members for the three divisions to be in their places on that date, and support the junior member for the Northampton by voting for the motion, and this resolution be sent to our M. P.'s and W. H. Smith."

The following reply was subsequently received from Mr. H. S. King, M. P.:—

[Private.]

"65, Cornhill, London, 4th April, 1889.

MR. C. J. GILL, 63, Blake-street, Hull.

"DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter of March 30, conveying copy of a resolution of the Hull Radical Club with reference to Mr. Bradlaugh's motion relating to the admission of natives of India to a large share in the Government of their own country, and the enlargement of the Legislative Councils.

"I am not aware that Mr. Bradlaugh has ever been in India, or is competent to pronounce any judgment on the manner of its government, and should, therefore, hesitate to pledge myself to support any proposals he may advance. Even Mr. Gladstone has expressed himself with reserve on the advisability of making any serious change in the form of a Government adapted to the peculiar conditions of India, and my own impression is that, inasmuch as only a small percentage of the natives have even the rudiments of education, and since out

of 200 millions probably not one million have any idea whatever of the forms or principles of Western self-government, it is premature to talk about conferring on them such political rights as are enjoyed by educated communities. I agree however, that our aim should be to prepare them for larger liberties.

I am, yours faithfully,

"H. S. KING."

The following letter was then forwarded to Mr. King by the Secretary :—

"63, Blake-street, Hull, April 6th, 1889.

"Dear Sir,—I duly received your letter of the 4th inst., and I regret that your letter is marked 'Private.' The resolution of the H. R. C. distinctly named those natives of India of capacity, of influence of education; and if you look at the motion of which Mr. Bradlaugh has given notice, a moiety of Indians of position, of specified educational attainments, can only be eligible for election on supreme and provincial legislative councils; therefore, there can be no danger of any swamping by natives of those councils monopolised by Europeans; that on matters of foreign policy, and the finances of the Empire, is carefully guarded. We shall esteem such reply from you as may be published in the local press a favour.—Yours, &c.

C. J. GILL."

The following letter was received on Saturday by Mr. Gill :—

"65, Cornhill, London, 13th April, 1889.

"Mr. C. J. Gill, 63, Blake-street, Hull.

"Dear Sir,—The marking of my reply to your letter of the 30th March 'Private' was a mistake of my secretary. I have no objection to your making it public along with the present one.

"It is manifest from your second letter, of the 6th inst., that the Hull Radical Club neither appreciates the magnitude and difficulty of the problem of Indian Government nor the meaning of my reply. Before writing to you, I had carefully considered Mr. Bradlaugh's motion, and observed that it was proposed to have 'a moiety' of the Legislative Council, composed of 'natives of capacity, influence, and education,' or if you please, 'Indians of position,' &c.

"Many men are now going about seeking to destroy institutions of which they have no knowledge, and I dare say many of the members of your club, who are now addressing me on a question to which, as deeply concerned in the welfare of India, I have given much attention, are not aware that at the present moment 'native Indians of position,' as well as 'of capacity and education,' are to be found on the Legislative Councils of the Indian Empire, and of the various provinces. On the Legislative Council of the Viceroy of India, out of 12 members, six are eminent natives; there are four natives of the Council of Bengal, four on the Council of the North-West Provinces; four on the Council of Madras; and seven out of 12 on the Council of Bombay. These men are selec-

ted by the Government as representatives of Indian interests to assist in the work of legislation.

"Mr. Bradlaugh's resolution, which drawn up for him by a paid agency in London of the Congress agitation in India, asks that "a moiety" of members of enlarged councils should be elected by "constituencies," which constituencies in defiance of the Radical ideas of popular government are to consist, not of the people of India, who are admitted to be totally unfit for the exercise of the franchise, but of that small fraction of the classes who have had some English education, *e. g.*, members of municipal bodies and of Chambers of Commerce, &c. In other words, it is proposed to give a large share of political power to a proportionately small privileged class—a principle against which the Liberal and Radical parties in all countries protest. That is to say, you propose to have certain class interests represented, whereas at present the Government of India is administered on the whole with much skill and honesty for the general benefit of two hundred millions of people.

"I am, naturally, not prepared for any scheme so unprincipled, and, if you think it over, you will find that your reiteration in your second letter of the terms of Mr. Bradlaugh's resolution, has no cogency in answer to my reply to your first communication.

I am, yours faithfully,

"H. S. KING."

MR. N. H. BILLANTY the mover of the resolution in his defence addressed the following letter to the *Hull News*.

Sir,—In the Hull Radical Club on the 28th of March last I moved a resolution in favour of the extension of the franchise to the natives of India, and asking the members for the three divisions of Hull to support the motion of the hon. member for Northampton, in support of the expressed wishes of the Indian Congress. Mr. H. S. King, M. P., replied to our resolution questioning the competency of Mr. Bradlaugh to pronounce any judgment on the question, seeing that he had not been in India. If not having visited a country is to bar judgment, then not a single member of the Government which settled the Afghanistan frontier were competent, neither is Mr. King competent to pronounce judgment regarding Burmah or South Africa. The *Daily Mail* favoured the Hull Radicals with a little wholesome reproof and advice. In a brief leaderette he told us it is easy to meddle with a thing with which we are imperfectly acquainted. The *Mail* supplies frequently examples of the fact, and we hope he will put in practice the advice he offers to us. We have the advantage of knowing that Mr. H. S. King is deeply interested in Indian affairs in more senses than one; and, relying upon his very extensive knowledge of Indian matters, nothing more fitting than he should instruct his constituents. The Radicals are always ready to learn and have their imperfect understanding

enlightened, though we may have to requisition the services of our M. P. for Central Hull, Mr. King's reasoning and remarks about Mr. Bradlaugh's resolution being drawn by a paid agency in London is unworthy of the member for Central Hull, and if we desired to attribute motives for Mr. King's antagonism to the Indian Congress we could find many spacious reasons for the proprietor of the *Overland Mail* and his (Mr. H. S. King's) advocacy of Anglo-Indian interests. If the Hull Radical Club has erred by passing the resolution in question, I am the chief sinner, and while admitting Mr. King's competency to pronounce judgment, I may venture to have confidence in the equal ability and competence of authorities as Lord Northbrook, Lord Lytton, Lord Ripon, Lord Dufferin, who have recommended that the councils be enlarged; that a system of election be adopted. Mr. King is correct in the statement that at the present moment there are native Indians of position as well as capacity and education, to be found on the legislative councils of India, but his statement "that on the Legislative Council of the Viceroy of India, out of twelve members, *six are eminent natives*," is misleading, for they are six to fourteen. The twelve members he mentions are in addition to eight Europeans, who are the *ex-officio*, and of the other Europeans nominated, all are officials excepting two, thus it happens that in the Supreme Councils of the Empire, with two hundred million of British subjects, *there are only six* Indians, and they not elected by their countrymen, but are nominated by the Viceroy, whose knowledge of the country and the people is necessarily imperfect, and so badly is this system of nomination conducted, that men have been put in the councils that did not know a word of the language (English) in which the business was carried on. Rajah Rampal Singh, of Allahabad puts the matter thus, "We the people of India are permitted *nominally*, to send a certain limited number of our countrymen, who are elected by the Viceroy and the Lieutenant-Governors, to these existing Councils. It is very kind of them to take this trouble off our shoulders, but with their permission we would rather do it ourselves. The defect which lies in the present system is this, the natives who sit in the Council are chosen by the Governors, and Lieutenant-Governor, whom they look to as their constituents, and not are likely therefore, to bring forward the views of the people, whom they in no way represent and whose suffrages they are in no way dependent. Necessarily those men who are mostly the favourites of Governors and Lieutenant-Governors think of nothing but pleasing their patrons. He relates, talking to *native* member of the Council of the Governor-General for making laws, but who knew not a single syllable of English, he was a Maharajah of north-west-provinces. Asked how he managed to vote he said it was difficult at first not being allowed to take any one with me to explain what went on in the council, but as I received it through the favour of the Viceroy, I raise my hand when-

ever the Viceroy raises his, and I hold down mine whenever the Viceroy holds down his hand. Is not that just what Mr. King practically does in the House of Commons! When did he vote against his chief? and what are the proposals of the Indian Congress to which Mr. King so strongly objects? 1st. Larger number of members. 2nd. To be partially elective. 3rd. Members to have the right of interpellation. 4th. The Budget every year to be submitted for discussion. 5th. Veto in hands of the Viceroy subject to appeal to the House of Commons. These are the reforms asked for in the supreme council. In the provincial councils.—1st. Larger number of members. 2nd. Moiety of members to be elected. 3rd. Members to have the right of interpellation. 4th. All financial proposals to be submitted. 5th. Veto, with right of appeal to Viceroy or House of Commons. Is there anything unreasonable in those demands? The insinuation that the people of India will not elect but Chambers of Commerce and Municipal Councils, will elect members for Supreme and Provincial Councils. Even Radicals consider that it is more just and reasonable for even a corrupt corporation to elect a Mayor than that a Mayor, however trusted, should appoint the Council. We believe that if the tentative reforms be given that the India we hold by force will be a source of strength instead of weakness to the Empire that the infusion of the best qualified to aid by council, based upon intimate knowledge of the people, will be the most reliable guarantee of stability.

### Mr. C. W. Whish on the Congress.

At a well-attended meeting of the members of the East India Association, was held on 25th March at the Westminster Town-hall, under the presidency of Sir Roper Lethbridge, M. P., Mr. C. W. WHISH read a paper on "The Indian National Congress and the Indian Patriotic Association." He remarked that the Indian National Congress might perhaps be described as the first attempt on the part of British India to demand a constitution and to aspire to representative self-government. Its members, among whom might be found representatives of nearly all the various races and creeds of Hindustan, claimed that they formed an Indian national party. Certain definite demands for reform in administration had already been formulated, including an examination for the Indian Civil Service in India itself, the practical abolition of the Arms Act, separation of judicial and executive services, facilities for the attainment of commissions in the Army by natives in India, and the permission of native volunteering and representation through elected members in the council of the Empire. Some of the methods employed by the reforms in furthering their views appeared particularly objectionable. The Government must do one of three things—either oppose, encourage, or compromise the congress. The contingency existed and must be faced. The English Government in India was peculiarly in need of some agency by which it could be brought into touch

with the people. It was to be feared that far too wide a gulf separated the rulers from the ruled for the former to be able rightly to understand the feelings, needs, and aspirations of the latter without some intermediary. However, there was much in the Nationalist programme which no Government ought to permit to continue, and it was the deliberate opinion of many by no means extreme politicians that the political propagandism of the congress must put a stop to, if a catastrophe was to be averted. Whichever way one turned a difficulty came to view, leading to the conclusion that a compromise was inevitable. This might take the form of a voluntary abandonment by the Nationalists of the objectionable items of their programme, in return for the concession of such as were reasonable. It would certainly seem that the powers of the congress for evil were much enhanced by moderate men standing aloof from it, and it could hardly be doubted that if moderate men would join and direct the movement, over-eager reformers might be induced to abandon the most untenable of their views and the most objectionable of their methods. Thus guided, the movement might become a source of support, instead of danger, to the Government. Early action, however, was desirable in the matter if any good was to be done. Not only was public attention directed at the present time to India, but if the question was made, as it certainly would be made, a party one, its merits might become so obscured as to produce the most disastrous consequences. (Cheers.)

The CHAIRMAN remarked upon the paramount importance of the subject which, he said, had attracted the attention of all persons interested in India for years past. The Government of India had never been placed in a more difficult position than it was now, and up to the present it had behaved very wisely. The time, however, had come when the movement which had been described that day could no longer be ignored. It was the natural outcome of the educational system which had been introduced by Europeans, and there could be no possible doubt as to the loyalty and good sense of the originators of the movement. He urged that the Government should take up these moderate demands. The circulation of pernicious pamphlets was, however, a disgrace to the movement, and it was time that some distinct line was taken on the entire question by the Government. The movement should certainly not be suppressed, but a compromise should be arranged, and, as the reader of the paper had suggested, there should be a full and impartial inquiry—possibly in the form of a Royal Commission.

GENERAL MACDONALD, MR. MARTIN WOOD, and several other speakers joined in the discussion, which was eventually adjourned.

Another meeting of the Association was held on 20th May at which Sir Roper Lethbridge, C. I. E., M. P., presided who having opened the meeting.

Mr. J. N. BANNERJEA spoke strongly on behalf of the Indian Congress.

Mr. Whish's paper, he considered, whilst thoughtful and creditable, would have been more to the point fifty years ago than it was to-day. Referring to the claims of the Congress party, he touched upon the necessity for the separation of the judicial from the executive offices, the alliance of which would not be tolerated in England. The Congress was, he maintained, anything but seditious in its tendencies; and, as to the suggestion that it should devote itself to the discussion of social matters, it was not at all idle or neglectful in this direction. It was headed by men qualified in every way for leadership; and he challenged Mr. Whish to point to any important speech of the Congress which could be considered seditious, inflammatory, or even objectionable. The Patriotic Association, which was opposed to the Indian Congress, was characterised by a profound desire to pander to the vanity of patricians in India; it was "patriotic" in nothing more than name. He did not place much faith in the suggestion of compromise. If those of the Congress were legitimate claims, they should be acceded to; if they were the reverse, the Government would be justified in suppressing them. It was simply a question of right or wrong. The National Congress should be encouraged. It was as loyal as anybody in India. Its supporters were of the same Aryan race as the English, though their skin might be darkened by the rays of an eastern sun; they were proud of belonging to the great British Empire, and would do everything in their power to contribute to that Empire.

\* MR. RAJ NARAYEN contended that the Congress movement was the logical and necessary outcome of education: of people understanding their rights and duties. It was associated with the best educated men India possessed. Regarding the assertion as to "European influence" in the matter, if by that term was meant English influence, he was agreed; but, if any other Power was meant, he could not see any reason to think about it. He protested against violent language, whether from one side or the other, but than that of the Congress more loyal and moderate language could not be used. There was the might of English officialdom against the Congress; if the Government decided in favour of the movement, all opposition would be at an end.

† SURG-MAJOR INCZ expressed his sympathy with the Congress, which was the product of English rule during the past twenty-five years—the outcome of education. The position of young men of twenty-five, under the care of their nurses, was that of the people of Bengal in particular, and the cry for a share of self-government was a national psychological development of the Indian mind. The relations between the Indians and ourselves rendered discussion on matters of this nature delicate. The main feature of the native movement was good, but there were always those who gathered round such movements in the manner of blue bottles round a fine piece of meat; and Lord Dufferin's much criticised speech was, he thought, not meant as a downright condemnation of

the Congress, but the outcome of a thoughtful desire to repress too much eagerness. It was the duty of the leaders to suppress any rowdiness amongst their followers; if they did not do this then they deserved suppression themselves.

DR. G. W. LEITNER (late Principal of Lahore College) suggested that the Government would do well to encourage a system of Provincial Congresses which should be attended by men who possessed the traditions of rule, who were distinguished by merit, sobriety, and experience. Compromise was not statesmanship, and some lessons might be taken by this country from the manner in which the Austro-Hungarian Empire had been cemented. He retorted, in reply to a previous speaker, that, if the Patriotic Association was patriotic alone in name, the same might be said of the "National" Congress.

MR. SAUNDERS said that there were three courses open to the Government to pursue—suppression, encouragement, or compromise. Compromise seemed the only reasonable plan. He suggested that a House of Lords for India would serve as a proper counterpoise. The men who came over here from India had been created by ourselves; they were excellent men, but they were not representative. To those who held 92 per cent. of the land was due the voice in the management of Indian affairs. How was it these men, with some of whom few of our own nobility could be compared, did not come forward?

SIR WM. PLOWDEN, M. P., could not agree with the suggestion of the last speaker, but advocated an extension of the system in force at present, in which existed the germ of a popular system of government. It would not be possible to give the Indians Parliamentary government for some time. He sympathised with the native aspirations for a larger share in the control of Indian affairs, and thought that in years to come a thoroughly popular Government would be possible. It was absurd to speak of the Indian population as disloyal: they were not all loyal, but this was a cause for regret in England as well as in the East.

MR. NIHAL CHUND, in a lengthy criticism of Mr. Whish's paper, said that, whilst the author was apparently opposed to the National Congress, he was in reality in favour of it. As to the suggestion of a journal, the English interest was already well represented, and concerning the proposition of Mr. Saunders, they did not want the anomaly of an Upper Chamber in India. If a House of Lords, was objected to in England, why should it do for India?

MR. WHISH in replying to the discussion, thought that after all, no serious objection had been raised to his paper Mr. Banerjees's statement was met by the fact that India was at least half a century behind Europe. Religious fanaticism was very inflammable, and this was the agency that might be resorted to in a dangerous manner. The present state of affairs was deplorable.

The Government and the Congress acted and reacted with ensuing evil. The Government might meet the moderate portion of the native movement half way. It was necessary to keep the subject well before the public, and it was desirable in the extreme that some well-digested and definite plan should be prepared in view of a Parliamentary inquiry being decided upon. He classified the matter of reforms under three heads—possible, impossible, and debatable. Under the first head came an amendment of the Arms Act, a reduction of the income-tax to a minimum of £100 or its equivalent. Secondly, the separation of the judicial and executive offices of police was necessary and desirable, though, owing to considerations of finance, outside, what he might term the range of practical politics at present. Thirdly, he thought certain changes might with advantage be made in the Civil Service, the army might be opened up to the native aristocracy, native volunteering encouraged, and a system of relief of over-assessed estates introduced. In conclusion, wealth should be considered as desirable to the country before education; the question of sanitation was a most important matter; and legislation for women should be left to the natives themselves. We had great difficulty in gauging accurately what took place beneath the surface of this native moment, and to some extent the pessimistic theories put forward might be allowed for, but it must not be lost sight of that sentiment still ruled the world, and unless that sentiment were recognised, this country might sink eventually to the level of a fourth-rate Power. He advocated a governmental inquiry with open doors.

SIR ROGER LETHBRIDGE claimed consideration for the suggestion of Dr. Leitzer and Sir W. Plowden.

Votes of thanks brought the proceedings to close.

## Mr. J. Dacosta's notes on the Assessment and Collection of the Land Revenue in India.

### PREFACE

LONDON, *May*, 1889.

A Commission was appointed in 1861 to inquire into the causes of the famine which had recently afflicted the north-western provinces of India. In an exhaustive report upon the evidence collected, and the conclusions to which it led, the Commission recommended the permanent settlement of the land tax as the measure best calculated to mitigate the effects of drought and scarcity in a country where agriculture is the staple industry of the people. Comparing the famine of 1860 with one which had occurred in the same provinces in 1837, when the number of deaths from starvation and the general suffering of the people had been much greater, the President of the Commission stated in his report:—

"Foremost among the means whereby society in Northern India has been so strengthened as thus to resist, with less suffering, for heavier pressure from drought and famine in 1860 than in 1837, I place the creation, as it may almost literally be called, of a vast mass of readily-convertible and easily-transferable agricultural property. I have before described the condition of agricultural property antecedent to the existing settlements, and it will probably be admitted without serious qualification, that a state of things more likely to weaken the society living under it could scarcely be conceived. To great and unequal pressure of public burdens and arbitrary interferences have succeeded assessments rarely heavy, titles recorded and easily understood, long leases, and the enjoyments of all the profits during the currency of such leases. The natural results of such a change in so vital a part of the social economy have grown more and more apparent. Land has obtained an increasing marketable value. Its value as a security has, doubtless, been largely made use of in mitigation the pressure of famine. Such, then, having been the general results of the protracted fixity of the public demand, the security of titles, the general moderation of assessments, the recognition and general record of rights—the inference seems irresistible that, to intensify and perpetuate these results, we must proceed still farther in the same healthy and fruitful direction. The good which has been done by partial action on sound principles is both a justification and an encouragement to further advances; and entertaining the most earnest conviction that the State interest and popular interest will be alike strengthened in an increasing ratio by the step first and, as I believe most important measure I have respectfully to submit for consideration is the expediency of fixing for ever the public demand on the land, and thus converting the existing settlement into a settlement for perpetuity."

This recommendation was strongly supported by the highest authorities on the subject, including Sir George Edmonstone (then Lieut.-Governor of the North-Western Provinces), his successor the Hon. Edmund Drummond and Sir Wm. Muir, and Mr. Money of the Board of Revenue; and Lord Canning, in giving it his entire adhesion, suggested as further measures towards the same end the sale of waste lands free of land tax, and the permission to redeem the existing land revenue by the payment of an adequate sum of money.

The Resolution of the Governor-General stated:—

"His Excellency in Council sees no reason to doubt that, as far as either measure might take effect, it would be in every way for as either measure might take effect, it would be beneficial. As to waste lands, there could be no question. . . . His Excellency in Council has still less doubts as to the beneficial results of permitting a redemption of the land-revenue. He believes that increased security of fixed property and comparative freedom from the interference of fiscal officers of the Government, will tend to create a class which, although composed of various races and creeds, will be peculiarly bound to the British rule; while, under proper regulations, the measure will conduce materially to the improvement of the general revenue of the Empire."

The Secretary of State, in replying to the [above] suggestion, in a despatch dated July, 1862, said—

"After the most careful review of all these considerations, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the advantages which may reasonably be expected to accrue, not only to those immediately connected with the land, but to the community generally, are sufficiently great to justify them in incurring the risk of some prospective loss of land revenue, in order to attain

them, and that a settlement in perpetuity in the districts in which the conditions required are or may hereafter be fulfilled, is a measure, dictated by sound policy, and calculated to accelerate the development of the resources of India, and to insure to the highest degree the welfare and contentment of all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in the country."

The above-mentioned despatch authorised a permanent settlement to be granted to every estate where four-fifths of the cultivatable area had been brought under cultivation and assessed according to the existing settlement. These conditions were upon subsequent investigation found to have already been fulfilled in a number of estates, and the owners of other properties set themselves at once, on the promulgation of the despatch, to the task of complying with its requisitions. Meanwhile Lord Canning had retired and died, and a change of Ministry having taken place at home, the new Secretary of State for India was persuaded by certain Indian officials (who assured him that a permanent settlement would entail a great sacrifice of prospective land revenue) to stop the execution of the despatch of his predecessor. Loud protest ensued against this breach of public faith, and against the abrogation, upon merely speculative grounds, of an important measure, which had been sanctioned after mature deliberation and been pronounced as highly beneficial to all classes of H.M. subjects in India.

It soon became apparent, however, that the despotic power vested in an Indian Secretary of State rendered it hopeless to contend with his fiat. The new Indian Minister, however, was unable to formulate any tenable ground for repealing his predecessor's order; so he left the despatch in abeyance until the authorities in India should provide arguments for strengthening the hands of the Home Government in the matter. This task was one of considerable difficulty, seeing that Lord Canning's suggestion had been supported by the highest revenue authorities in India, and rested upon grounds which could not be controverted. Great pressure had consequently to be exercised, in order to obtain from some of those authorities the expression of views contrary to the convictions they had previously uttered. This endeavour naturally met with strong resistance, but compliance was ultimately yielded in some high quarters, and a despatch was forthwith framed in Downing Street, in 1865, not actually repealing the despatch of 1862, but burdening its purport with new conditions which virtually rendered it of no effect.

One of the new conditions stipulated that, when an estate had complied with the requirements of the despatch of 1862, a permanent settlement should be granted to it *only* if, the *opinion* of the authorities, our irrigation works were not likely, within twenty years, to be so extended as to benefit that estate to the extent of twenty per cent. No freer course, no greater encouragement could have been afforded to arbitrary decision; and the contrivance, accordingly succeeded. Voluminous correspondence followed for several years, and the despatch of 1862 remained a dead letter.

This tortuous proceeding, however, inflicted far greater injury on the country than even a prompt and peremptory cancellation of the despatch of 1862 could have produced; for the people were kept in long years of suspense regarding the actual burdens to which their lands were to be subjected, and the application of capital to agriculture was thus most effectually hindered. Settlement operations, moreover, with all their demoralizing influences, were indefinitely prolonged, resulting in a state of things which will be found briefly but most graphically, described in a passage of Sir Auckland Colvin's *Memorandum* of 1872.

The greatest evil of all was the loss of confidence in the good faith of the British Government, which resulted from the disavowal of the pledge given in the despatch of 1862. The Hon. Edmund Drummond, Lieutenant-Governor, referring to the subject, and alluding to a calculation that £2,00,000 might eventually be added to the land revenue if a permanent settlement were withheld; said, in writing to the Secretary of State in 1866:—

“ Even if this calculation were adopted, I cannot think that for such a sum as this we should, at the last moment, hesitate to fulfil the expectations we have raised and withdraw the promised boon of a permanent settlement; nor does it appear to befitting a great Government to seem to grudge a sacrifice which is as nothing when compared with that which must result from the future rise of prices and enhanced value of land generally, which has been freely accepted. . . . To sum up briefly the conclusions to which I have been led after full and anxious consideration of the difficult subject, I am of opinion that, a measure of large and enlightened policy, the permanent settlement of these provinces should be carried generally unhampered by further conditions.”

These sad episodes in the history of land administration of India have a direct bearing on the present state of things in that country, seeing that the settlement to which they relate (as well as the assessments in other provinces) will soon have completed their period and come under revision. The Indian National Congress has already called public attention to the subject, and the notes in the following pages have been compiled with the view of placing in a concise form, before those who may feel interested in the matter, the main facts and arguments connected with the important question at issue.

J. D.

Agriculture is the principal industry of the people of India, and the revenue of the country being derived in a great measure from a tax on land, it is most important that the means employed for assessing and collecting that tax, should be devised so as to avoid any prejudicial interference with the development of the national industry.

The system of the indigenous rulers in India, was to take a portion of the produce of each field, the respective share of the ruler and the cultivator being sanctioned by ancient tradition. This system, which required the ruler to store and sell his share, when it was needed for the purposes of administration, was

not unsuited to the conditions of the small principalities into which the country was divided; and it even survived the Mahomedan invasion, as the conquerors generally left the collection of the tribute (as well as much of the internal administration) to the native organisations of the country.

The British Government, however, found it impossible to construct, over its vast territories, trustworthy agencies for carrying out operations which require so much care and scrupulous dealing, as the fair division of the produce upon millions of farms, and the sale and conversion of the Government share into money. The *Batai* or share-system, was, therefore, rapidly superseded by a money demand for the equivalent of the ruler's portion. Here our difficulties commenced. In order to fix the money value of the Government share of the crop, it was still necessary to ascertain the exact quantity of each kind of produce raised in every farm, as well as its market price on the day on which the tax was due, and it was soon found that the operations necessary for determining with any degree of accuracy the net produce of the land were hopelessly complicated and practically impossible, the experiments made having led to absurdly erroneous solutions.

Lord Wm. Bentinck, referring in 1833 to the proceedings instituted by a Revenue officer for fixing the basis of assessment in his district, observed:—

“The gentleman took the greatest possible pains to introduce a system of minute inquiry into the produce; he pointed out every possible mode of ascertaining the requisite information, and even suggested that experiment should be made by European officers themselves collecting different kinds of produce varying in quality, and appraising the value by ascertaining the market prices, after deducting all expenses. From the above extract it will be seen how entirely his expectation has been disappointed. To ascertain profits, or in other words, to convert gross into net produce, seems to be decidedly impracticable.”

The Government was thus left to act by guess-work and conjecture; and the assessors, although still professing to regulate the State demand upon ascertained data and fixed principles, were, in reality, guided partly by the character of the season, and the prices current in the neighbouring markets; but chiefly by the reputed ability of the landholder, in each case, to bear the burden that was intended to be imposed on him. As information on this point could only be obtainable through confidential enquiries, a system of secret report sprang up, from which great mischief soon ensued. Underlings in the Revenue Department were able to extort money from cultivators by threatening to have their assessments unduly raised; and landholders were induced to offer bribes to subordinate officials, in the belief that these men could influence the settlements in their favour. Thus great injury has been done, both to the financial interest of the State and the moral sense of the people.

Moreover, the revenue officer who was required, in finally settling assessments, to decide fairly between the Government and the landholders, was placed in the most unfavourable position for acting impartially; for it was

impossible that he should not sometimes be biased in favour of the Government whose interest he was bound to protect, and upon whose good will his prospects greatly depended. To what extent this anomalous arrangement led to overtaxation will be seen in the next chapter.

### BOMBAY.

The following passages in Settlement Reports of 1840-50, which have been partly reproduced at page 10 of the "Blue Book" of 1878, entitled *The Deccan Ryots Commission*, record the evil results, in the Bombay Presidency, of the system of temporary assessments referred to in the preceding section.

"The over-estimate of the capabilities of the Deccan, acted upon by our early collectors, drained the country of its agricultural capital, and accounts for the poverty and distress in which the cultivating population has ever since been plunged.

"Even now, little more than a third of the arable land is cultivated."

"In the Ahmednagar District, the rates adopted in 1818-19 proved much too high, and it was necessary to resort to remedial expedients to save the ryots from ruin.....the more unfavourable character of the results must be attributed to the greater degree of over-taxation."

The general prevalence of oppressive assessments at that period also appears, from the instructions which the Government found it imperative to issue at the time, for a general reduction in the fiscal demands upon land; and the following passage, in an official minute of 1841, shows how fully the Government had realised the fatal consequences of their error:—

"No unnecessary reduction can injure the country, and the Government revenue can only suffer to the extent of the reduction. An error upon one side involves the ruin of the country; an error on the other, some inconsiderable sacrifice of the finance of the State, and with such unequal stakes depending, can we hesitate as to which should be given the preponderance?"

This recognition of the error of over-taxation, brought about by a diminution in the revenue, led to moderate rates being sanctioned in the new settlements; whereby agriculture was afforded the encouragement it so greatly needed; and latter, when the Crimean war and the civil war in America created an active demand for Indian produce in the home markets, a remarkable period of agricultural prosperity resulted from the wise course of action which the Government had adopted in sanctioning moderate assessments.

On the 26th of July, 1864 the Government of Bombay wrote:—

"There never was a time during the known history of Western India when land suitable for the growth of grain was in greater demand . . . It may be said, with almost literal truth, that not a thousand acres of land which had been cultivated during the memory of man are now to be found uncultivated in the Deccan and the Konkan."—(*Parliamentary Paper, C. 2071 of 1878*).

The Indian cultivator obtained unprecedentedly high prices for his crops, and was able, not only to satisfy the land revenue demand in full, but to improve his farm and his dwelling, to increase his stock of cattle, to excavate irrigation wells, and even to lay by savings. These happy results will be found recorded

pages 11 and 18 of the Blue Book already quoted, and from which the following passages afford very striking illustrations of the episode :—

“The re-action agricultural prosperity under light assessment and a system at once ample and rigid, was as rapid, as the decline of the district had been under opposite conditions. During the period which followed, the district reached a very high standard of prosperity before the year 1860. In 1862 began the period of extraordinary prosperity, caused by the rise in the price of cotton, which followed the American blockade. Those years, the ryots would under ordinary circumstances, have suffered severely from the constant deficiency in the rainfall during five successive seasons. In 1862, the Pooah and Amendnagar Districts had enjoyed fixed assessments, the former for 20 years and the latter 10 years.”

In the midst of this prosperity the land settlements, which had been concluded in the Bombay Presidency thirty years before, began to fall in. The Government of India had, meanwhile, been transferred to the Crown, and the late expenditure under the new *regime* having greatly increased, strenuous efforts were being made for raising additional revenue. The Government of India, regardless of the transient nature of the circumstances whence the agricultural prosperity of recent years had chiefly arisen, and casting aside the experience so dearly bought by the disastrous effect of the assessments of earlier times, peremptorily directed that the new settlements should be based upon enormously increased assessments. The rates were thereupon enhanced, in some instances to one hundred per cent. and more, and, on the whole, to fully sixty per cent. above the rates of the settlements that had just expired.

The restoration of peace in Europe and America had meanwhile allowed the produce markets to relapse into their normal condition, and the cultivators were no longer able, with the diminished value of their crops, to satisfy the suddenly enhanced demand of the Government. For a time the savings of previous years were used in staving off eviction and immediate ruin, and, when these were exhausted, assistance was obtained from the money lender. The village bankers, however, were not slow in perceiving that they had no chance of recovering their advances so long as the increased land-tax was maintained—they accordingly refused to grant further loans. This caused at once the revenue to fall into arrears; whereupon the Government directed the defaulting landholders' farms to be put up for sale, but purchasers would scarcely be found at any price for land subject to the new settlement. Large tracts of country were thus thrown out of cultivation, and much agricultural capital was wantonly destroyed.

In a minute of the Government of Bombay, on the report of the Collector Sholapore for 1872-73, it is stated :—

“The Government has read, with much concern, the opinion expressed by the Collector to the undue pressure of the revised rates, in consequence of which a large quantity of land has been put up for sale in default of revenue, much of which found no purchasers.”

Another official report of the same year states :—

“ The difficulty of recovering the Government demand, which was considerable in 1872 and 1873, culminated in 1873.”

In Guzerat (which has often been called the Garden of India, on account of its rich soil and careful cultivation), no less than 7663 farms, measuring 25,035 acres, were thrown out of cultivation in 1873; and in the Surat Collectorate 10,880 acres of land had been similarly abandoned during the previous year. In the district of Poonah things assumed a still darker complexion, the Collector stating in his annual report that the amount of revenue unrecovered had been very considerable, and that, in order to realise the amount actually recovered, he had found it necessary to sell up many farms or occupancies.

The widespread distress, engendered under these circumstances, soon manifested itself in disturbances of a very serious nature. The cultivators, in their desperate state of insolvency, being pressed by the Government for the payment of the land-tax, and by the bankers for the re-imbusement of their loans, rose against the latter as the weaker adversary, broke into their houses, maltreated their persons, and destroyed the records of their loans; and troops had to be called in before these disturbances could be quelled. This occurred in 1874. A Commission was afterwards appointed to inquire into the cause of the riots, and a minute of Sir Auckland Colvin, who had been appointed a member of the Commission, stated that the pressure of the land-tax, at the revised rates, was among the chief causes of the disturbance.

Such was the state of things when the drought of 1876-77 overtook the country. Thousands of families, stripped of their savings, plunged into debt, and, turned out of their homesteads, spread over the land, struggling for existence. Can it be wondered, then, that millions amongst that wretched agricultural population should have perished, during those direful years, of actual hunger and exposure, or of disease brought on by insufficient food?

Such have been the disastrous effects of a system which was introduced in the expectation that the periodical revision and arbitrary enhancement of the land-tax would enable the Government to add to its revenue, as, with time, the resources of the country were developed and national wealth had accumulated. The error was to suppose that time alone was needed to produce these beneficial effects. Agriculture, which is the main source of wealth in India, is by its very nature, exposed to vicissitudes far greater than those attending most other industrial enterprises. In trade and manufactures, success depends in a great degree upon sagacity and prudence. These qualities may prove unavailing to the cultivator against a succession of bad seasons. Money laid out in the improvement of land in India, as elsewhere, slow in yielding its full results; and when, as in the case of periodical settlements, the fruit of the money and labour expended on a farm is exposed to be absorbed in the Government demand at the

next revision of the tax, a most effectual obstacle is placed against the application of capital to agriculture, and consequently against the development of the chief industry of the people.

It is worthy of particular notice that, although the danger involved in the system in question was recognised and acknowledged by the Government more than forty years ago, it became possible for a succeeding administration to disregard the experience so dearly bought, and to wantonly repeat the error which had been denounced thirty years before. This fact must be ascribed entirely to the defective constitution inaugurated in 1858, which vested the supreme control of the Government in a Cabinet Minister unacquainted with India and people, and exposed in Parliament (the only body to which he was made responsible) to the influences of different sections of the people of Great Britain, each striving to promote interests and projects often adverse to the interests of India.

While the system of temporary settlements in Bombay thus inflicted the most serious injury on agriculture, it entirely failed in its *sole* purpose, that of increasing the land revenue. Accordingly, while the revenue collected in Bombay in 1868, when the new settlements were about being introduced, amounted to £3,612,612, the average collection of the ten years, ending with 1877, was only £3,588,676. (*Vide Statistical Abstract for British India, No. 12.*) Furthermore, this financial result of the system was aggravated by an expenditure of several millions in the relief of the famine which that system had so fearfully intensified.

#### NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCES.

THE injurious effects of temporary settlements noticed in the preceding section, have been reproduced in every part of India where such settlement prevailed. In the North-Western Provinces, the country being mostly held in large estates by individual owners or brotherhoods, the assessments are professedly based on the rental, and the settlement work would be comparatively simple if the rent rolls of the owners could be accepted; but these documents would not be a safe guide as to the productive value of the land, seeing that many leases have been granted at low or nominal rents, in consideration of relationship or personal services, or for religious purposes. An investigation has therefore to be made at each settlement, as minute and inquisitorial as in the case of Bombay. The deleterious effects of these operations will be seen from the following passage in Mr. (now Sir) Auckland Colvin's Memorandum of 1872:—

“In 1874, twenty-six years will have elapsed from the date on which the two first of the districts now comprised in North-West Provinces were placed in the hands of a settlement Officer. Others were begun twelve years ago, and are not yet sanctioned; one of these is not yet even completed. These facts are significant to those who know what the settlement of a district means; the value of property depreciated until the exact amount of the new assessment is declared, credit affected, heart-burning and irritation between landlord and tenant, suspicion of the intentions of

the Government, a host of official underlings scattered broadcast over the vexed villages. Nothing can equal the injury inflicted by a slow, uncertain settlement, dragging its length along, obstructed by conflicted orders and harassed by successive administrations, and finally threatened with annihilation at the moment when it seems to have nearly finished its course . . . Little wonder that we hear of the land needing rest?"

The hesitations, uncertainties, and delays alluded to by Sir A. Colvin, are unavoidable, so long as India is governed by a Viceroy and his Council in their mountain retreat at Simla, acting under the directions of a Secretary of State in London unacquainted with the country, and harassed by conflicting rumours and opinions. The situation is more clearly elucidated in other passage of the same paper where the writer says:—

"In the course of the settlement great and unforeseen circumstances led to a marked, though ephemeral, increase in the price of agricultural produce. . . In the financial panic there grew and rapidly strengthened a conviction that the assessments in the N.-W. Provinces were inadequate, and that the State was not receiving its proper share of the public revenues. The views of 1861 had fallen into discredit, and great pressure was put on the public officers to show cause why their calculations should not lead to the assumption of a larger rental."

MR. BIRD, another distinguished revenue officer, stated in a report of anterior date:—

"The district of Budaon was in a state of great distress and disorganization. The revision of the settlement took place at a period when the disposition to over-assess was far from being allayed. It is impossible that, in a district so greatly injured by oppressive assessments and great mismanagement, the mistakes and evils which have arisen can be redressed at one operation. No slight benefit will have been gained if the Government and its servants are convinced, as I trust they now are, of the actual loss of money which is certain to follow over-assessment."

These extracts show on what vague and uncertain data, and under what baneful and fluctuating influences the important and delicate operation of assessing the land-tax is carried on.

Before closing this chapter it may be useful to quote from a few more official documents, in order to show that the injury inflicted on these provinces by land settlement, has been as deep and as widespread as in Bombay.

The Lieutenant-Governor, in his administration report published in 1873, state that he had been forcibly struck, while travelling, by the wretched condition of the Lullutpore district, in which many estates were so depopulated, and so much land had fallen out of cultivation, that the assessments pressed most severely; and, referring to the coercive measures which landlords had been compelled to take against their tenants, in order to raise sufficient money for the discharge of the Government demand, His Honour said:—

"The antagonism of classes whose interests lie so closely together, and who have hitherto been connected by so kindly a bond, is one of the greatest political dangers of the day."

About the same time the Collector of Cawnpore recorded the following observations on the condition of his Collectorate:—

"This district has the benefit of water communication by both the Ganges and the Jumna—it is intersected by the East India Railway and is partly traversed by the Ganges

Canal; yet land is only worth five years' purchase, and the state of the average cultivator is one of hopeless insolvency and misery."

From the report of the Collector of Allahabad it appeared that a number of landowners, who had failed to pay up the revenue, had not only their estates attached, but their persons imprisoned, and their personal property seized and sold; and the Commissioner of the division advertng to the depressed condition of the Futtehpoore district, stated that the addition of ten per cent, which had recently been made in the land-tax, "fell heaviest on the villages which were least to bear it; that many villages had broken down, and many more were threatened with ruin."

Innumerable cases of a similar character are to be found in the reports of district officers.

#### MADRAS.

The land in this province is occupied chiefly by small cultivators, whose fields are designedly assessed at such high rates that the tax can be realised only after an exceptionally abundant harvest.\* There is consequently an unrealised balance at the end of each year when the Collector remits such portion of the accumulated arrears of previous seasons as he considers to be hopelessly irrecoverable, and holds over the remainder for realisation when possible.

It will doubtless readily be admitted that a more effectual plan for keeping an agricultural population in hopeless indebtedness and misery could scarcely be devised. As a consequence of this condition of things, methods of great severity have to be employed in the collection of the revenue in this Presidency. The processes are not described in the official reports which are destined for publication, but certain figures of an alarming character found their way into the Administration Report, published in 1881, from which it appeared that the arrears of land-revenue recovered through the eviction of cultivators and the sale of their lands had been increasing annually, and had risen from Rs. 31,800 in 1865 to Rs. 665,091 in 1878. It was attempted to explain away this ugly feature in a Local Government Resolution, in which the following passages occur:—

"High prices have caused an increase in the cultivation and much risky speculation in land. Any person can obtain land by applying for it, and a desire of becoming a landowner is strong and general."

A glimpse of the truth, however is to be had in a subsequent passage of the same document, where it is stated:—

"Another cause is the reduction of the remissions granted, and the gradually increasing charge for waste"

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\* The land revenue in Madras "is fixed on each field to be paid for *good crops*; if the crops fail, the revenue is reduced, and there is an annual settlement on cultivated land."—*East India Progress and Condition in 1872-73*, page 26.

This simply means *the enforced collection of a larger portion of that oppressive assessment, the nature of which has been explained at the commencement of this chapter.*

The reader will now feel no surprise at learning that more than 3,000,000 acres of arable land were lying uncultivated in the Madras Presidency, according to the Administration Report for 1877-78; and he will apprehend the signification of the remark contained in the above-mentioned Government Resolution, that "every person can obtain land by applying for it."

The following extracts from the Blue Book on *the moral and material condition of India*, throw further light on the land revenue system of Madras, called Ryotwarae and on its effect upon agriculture:—

"The land revenue collections for 1876-77 are returned at £3,296,575, shewing a decrease of £1,248,438 below the previous year. Large remissions of the ryotwarae revenue were rendered necessary on account of the decrease of cultivation and failure of crops.

"Considering the adverse nature of the season, the collection of revenue was very satisfactory; but collectors had to resort to coercive processes to a much greater extent than in the preceding twelve months, the number of defaulters having risen from 336,226 to 1,242,877, and the amount of arrears from £306,947 to £833,236. The value of property actually attached was £194,700, as compared with £164,009 in the previous year."

The only bright spot in this dark picture of oppression and misery, is the statement in the same Blue Book, that no remission had, as a rule, to be granted in respect of the permanently settled portions of the province, and that the people in those portions needed no relief during the recent famine. These statements refer to a number of states which were permanently settled portions of the province, and that the people in those portions needed no relief during the recent famine. These statements refer to a number of estates which were permanently settled towards the end of the last century on assessments aggregating about £500,000. The revenue from those estates has ever since been collected with remarkable regularity, and the people have been able to lay by savings, which enabled them to tide over the famine period without needing eleemosynary assistance.

#### BENGAL

The condition of Bengal differs materially from that of our other Indian provinces, owing to the widely different principle which has regulated her land administration. When the country came under our rule in the second half of the last century, wars and the rapacity of conquerors had reduced it to a very low ebb, and extensive tracts lay entirely uncultivated. There was no inducement for the proprietors of these waste regions to reclaim them, seeing that the arbitrary and oppressive exactions to which they were subjected by the rulers, left them no hope of deriving any benefit from the enterprise. Under these circumstances, Government experienced the greatest difficulty in recovering the land-revenue, and were unable to realise more than a small and uncer-

tain portion of their demand; while the landowners, in order to collect even such small portions, had to resort to very oppressive measures against their tenants.

In this critical and distressing state of things, a drought occurred in 1770, which resulted in a famine of so terrible a character, that many millions of the inhabitants perished of hunger within a short space of time. This greatly added to the difficulty of collecting the revenue, and the Governor-General wrote on the 18th September, 1783:—

“ I may safely assert that one-third of the company's territory is now jungle, inhabited only by wild beasts. Will a ten years' lease induce any proprietor to clear that jungle and encourage ryots to come and cultivate his lands, when at the end of that lease he must either submit to be taxed *adlibitum* for the newly cultivated lands or lose all hopes of deriving any benefit from his labours, for which perhaps by that time he will hardly be repaid ?”

Every question relating to the administration of the land was then very carefully considered by the Government of India, and also by the most eminent statesmen of the day at home; and the conclusions arrived at in both countries were to the following effect. It was considered unreasonable to expect the owners of the waste tracts to clear jungles, make roads, build markets, advance money to settlers for erecting dwellings, draining swamps, digging wells and tanks, purchasing seed, cattle and food until crops were raised and realised—in short, to expend large sums of money and undergo much labour of mind and body, without any guarantee that the fruit of their outlay should not be taken from them. Such guarantee they certainly had not, so long as the Government retained the power of arbitrarily regulating its demand on land. It was, therefore, thought necessary that this arbitrary power should be abandoned, and a solemn pledge be given by the Government to abstain from further enhancing the land tax. The measures framed upon these conclusions remained under anxious consideration for ten years and were ultimately enacted in 1793, in a number of regulations, in which the necessary pledge was given in the most unambiguous and solemn terms, and provisions were framed for giving due effect to the compact thus made by the State with the owners of land in Bengal.

The Preamble to Regulation II. of 1793, which is hereunder reproduced *in extenso*, will afford full information regarding the sound principle on which the measure was carried out:—

“ All questions between the Government and the landholders respecting the assessment and collection of the public revenue and disputed claims between the latter and their ryots (tenants), have hitherto been cognisable in the Courts of Maal Adawlut or Revenue Courts. The Collectors of revenue preside at these Courts as Judges, and an appeal lies from their decision to the Board of Revenue, and from the decrees of that Board to the Governor General in Council in the department of revenue. The proprietors can never consider the privileges which have been conferred upon them as secure, whilst the revenue officers are vested with these judicial powers, exclusive of the objections arising to these Courts from their irregular, summary and often

*ex parte* proceedings, and from the Collectors being obliged to suspend the exercise of their judicial functions whenever they interfere with their financial duties, it is obvious that, if the regulations for assessing and collecting the public revenue are infringed, the revenue officers themselves must be the aggressors, and that individuals, who have been wronged by them in one capacity, can never hope to obtain redress from them in another. Their financial occupations, equally disqualify them from administering the laws between the proprietors of land and their tenants. Other security, therefore, must be given to landed property and to the rights attached to it, before the desired improvements in agriculture can be expected to be effected. Government must divest itself of the power of infringing, in its executive capacity the rights and privileges which, as exercising the legislative authority, it has conferred on the landholders. The revenue officers must be deprived of their judicial powers. All financial claims of the public, when disputed under the Regulations, must be subjected to the cognisance of courts of judicature superintended by judges who, from their official situations and the nature of their trusts, shall not only be wholly uninterested in the result of their decisions, but bound to decide impartially between the public and the proprietors of land, and also between the latter and their tenants. The collectors of the revenue must not only be divested of the power of deciding upon their own acts, but rendered amenable for them to the courts of judicature, and collect the public dues, subject to a personal prosecution for every exaction exceeding the amount which they are authorised to demand on behalf of the public, and for every deviation from the regulations prescribed for the collection of it. No power will then exist in the country by which the rights vested in the landholders by the Regulations can be infringed or the value of property affected. Land must in consequence become the most desirable of all property, and the industry of the people will be directed to those improvements in agriculture which are as essential to their own welfare as to the prosperity of the State."

Before proceeding to narrate how fully the expectations on these founded measures have been fulfilled, it might be useful to compare the legislation of 1793 with certain recent enactments introduced in the North-West Provinces and Bombay, where the assessments enforced about 1870 had as already shown, proved excessively oppressive. The proclaimed basis of those assessments was to fix the demand at fifty-five percent, of the rental in the North-West Provinces, and at one-sixth of the productive value of the land in Bombay; but the landholders alleged that those limits had been greatly exceeded, and a few among them appealed to the Civil Courts for redress. Thereupon, the Government prepared Bills removing all rent and revenue cases from the cognisance of the Civil Courts and vesting revenue officers with power to adjudicate on all such cases. These retrogressive measures, tending to place the provinces above-named under the same conditions as those which had proved so fatal to the prosperity of Bengal before 1793, were highly repugnant to the authorities in India, but the Secretary of State laid down the rule that the Government in India were bound to introduce any measure sanctioned by him, and that every official member of the Legislative Council was equally bound, irrespective of his personal convictions, to vote in favour of such measure.\* Accordingly, two

\* The Government must hold in its hands the ultimate power of requiring the Governor-General to introduce a measure, and of requiring also all the members of his Government to vote for it.—*Duke of Argyll's despatch of 24th November 1870.*

of the Bills relating to the North-West Provinces were introduced in August, 1873; and while no member came forward to justify them, yet all voted for them. The President and the financial Member of the Council refrained entirely from explaining the principle involved in the Bills, and the military member voted for them *on trust*. The law member confessed that, "before drawing the Bills he had to divest himself of those principles with which he had been familiar, and that much of the matter was to him of great obscurity, complexity, and uncertainty," meaning, probably, that the measures violated those principles of justice which, as an Englishman and a lawyer, he had been taught to respect and uphold. The member for Madras, after expressing doubts on the necessity and soundness of the measures, voted for them as *in duty bound*, adding these ominous words: "I can only express a hope that, when these Bills become law, they might prove an exception to our past experience in regard to enactments affecting land tenures." The member in charge of the Bills, after supporting some of their clauses by merely specious arguments, manifested his antagonism to their principles, by saying: "In reference to the peculiar powers taken for officers engaged in the revision of settlements, I hope to see the time when the revisions of the land revenue will not occur with the same frequency as they now do, and that existing settlements will be prolonged; or, if a certain enhancement of the revenue were deemed to be justified and necessary, that it might be assessed upon some other procedure involving less of inquisition and interference with the agricultural classes, than is inherent in the present system." Lastly, the members for Bengal and Bombay (the attendance of non-official members having been dispensed with by holding the Session at Agra), expressed their disapproval of many clauses in very forcible language.

It thus became apparent that the members, through whose instrumentality the Bills were passed, were actually opposed to them, and that the result obtained, was due entirely to pressure from above.

The effect of the above enactments would be to enable the Government, when levying an illegally assessed tax, to prevent any judicial investigation being made in the matter. That such was also their actual purport is more clearly shown in the Bill relating to the Bombay Presidency, which was avowedly introduced because a landholder had sued the Government for an illegal assessment and obtained, on appeal to the High Court, a re-adjustment of the demand. Accordingly the member in charge of the measure, in urging the Legislative Council to pass the Bill, observed:—

"If every man is allowed to question in a Court of Law the incidence of the assessment on his land, the number of cases which might arise is likely to be over-whelming."

The character of these enactments show the danger which is involved in the system of Government inaugurated in 1858, under which India is being

despotically ruled from Downing Street, by a Cabinet Minister exposed to influences often adverse to the interests of India.

Reverting now to the results of the Permanent Settlement of Bengal, it may be briefly stated that, while a number of landholders lost their estates through their inability to discharge the revenue with the punctuality exacted in the new order of things, a powerful stimulus was given to agriculture, and the province was gradually converted into an almost uninterrupted sheet of cultivation. Its agricultural population rapidly increased and their condition improved steadily, as will be seen from the following passage in a speech which the Hon. Sir Ashley Eden delivered in 1877, shortly after being appointed Lieutenant Governor of Bengal :—

“ I have just returned from visiting the Eastern districts, and I may say on this occasion, when my administration is only at the commencement, what I could not well say at a later period, without seeming to seek credit for the Government of which I am the head :—Great as was the progress which I knew had been made in the position of the cultivating classes, I was quite unprepared to find them occupying a position so different from that which I remembered them to occupy when I first came to the country. They were then poor and oppressed with little incentive to increase the productive powers of the soil. I find them now as prosperous, as independent, and as comfortable as the peasantry, I believe, of any country in the world ; well fed, well clothed, free to enjoy the full benefit of their own labours, and to hold their own, and obtain prompt redress for any wrong .”

This improvement in the condition of the tenants could result only from the landlords gradually relaxing their pressure, as the extension in the cultivation of their lands enabled them to satisfy the Government demand without resorting to the severe measures they had before been compelled to employ.

Furthermore, the revenue has for a long series of years been collected with regularity and at a comparatively small cost, while famine has been prevented or mitigated by the agricultural classes being allowed under the legislation of 1793, to lay by savings in favourable years, and thus be provided with means for tiding over seasons of scarcity. These statements find their confirmation in the following quotations :—

“ The revenue of the permanently settled estates in Bengal has for years been realised with great punctuality. Losses sometimes occur through famine, epidemics, the devastation of cyclones, and other calamities of the seasons ; but under the conditions of this settlement no such pleas can be urged as excuses for non-payment, and as a rule the large present excess of the annual rental over the Government demand enables the present holders to meet that demand even in the most disastrous years.”—*Administration Report for 1872-73.*

“ The deficiency of the collection consequent on the famine was very small, and such suspensions of revenue as were granted were given as a reward for exceptional exertions in relieving distress. The result is creditable to the working of the permanent settlement.”—*Administration Report for 1873-74.*

It should be observed here that, although the drought of 1873-74 in Bengal was very severe, the scarcity did not amount to famine, seeing that no deaths accrued from want of food, and the revenue did not materially suffer on that

occasion. It may also be well to state (seeing that misconceptions have taken place on the subject) that the province of Orissa, which was desolated by famine in 1666, did not belong to us in 1793, and was not included, therefore, in the Permanent Settlement. The Orissa mentioned in our official documents of the last century was adjoining tract, now called the Midnapore district.

One more extract may suffice to show how fully the expectations of 1793 have been realised :—

“ The Bengal of to-day offers a startling contrast to the Bengal of 1793—the wealth and prosperity of the country have marvellously increased, increased beyond all precedents, under the permanent settlement. A great portion of this increase is due to the zemindaree body as a whole, and they have been very active and powerful factors in the development of this prosperity.”—*Commissioner of Burdwan's Report, Gazette of India, 20th October, 1883.*

The opponents of the Permanent Settlement point this prosperity, and argue that the difference between the revenue fixed by that settlement and the larger sum which, they assert, might be levied on the land in its present prosperous condition, constitutes a loss which the compact of 1793 has inflicted on the State. They ignore that the increased rental of Bengal consists chiefly of the returns made by the capital and labour bestowed on the land, and that these would not have been so bestowed without the encouragement and security afforded by the compact of which they complain. In short, they view the question as theorists or as fiscal officers, not as statesmen. Their attention seems concentrated on the comparatively trifling increase of revenue which enhanced assessments and stringent modes of collection might, they believe, bring in for a time; and they overlook the greater, the permanent, the growing income which would accrue to the state from the prosperity of the people and the accumulation of national wealth. In 1793 the revenue of Bengal consisted solely of the land tax, and even this could only be recovered under heavy deductions. At present, customs, excise, stamps, salt and provincial imposts yield twice as much as the full amount of the land tax. This Government was relied upon by Lord Cornwallis when, in reply to the charge that a permanent settlement would involve a sacrifice of prospective revenue, he wrote on the 6th March, 1793 :—

“ If at any future period the public exigencies should require an addition to your resources, you must look for it in the increase of the general wealth and commerce of the country, and not in the augmentation of the tax upon land.”

His anticipations in regard to drought and inundation have likewise been most completely realised in the drought of 1873-74, and in the ravages of the extraordinary cyclone and sea-wave which overwhelmed the south-eastern districts of Bengal on the 31st October, 1876. Lord Cornwallis wrote on the 3rd February, 1790 :—

“ There is this further advantage to be expected from a fixed assessment, in a country subject to drought and inundation that it affords a strong inducement to the landholder to exert himself to repair, as speedily as possible, the damages which his land may have sustained from

these calamities. His ability to raise money to make these exertions will be proportionately increased by the additional value which the limitation of the Public demand will stamp upon his property; the reverse is to be expected when the public assessment is subjected to unlimited increase."

### CONCLUSION.

The great advantages which flow from fixity in the State demand upon land, are not denied by the opponents of permanent settlements in India; their sole contention is, that the Government by retaining the power of periodically enhancing the land tax, are able materially to increase their income. Apart from the immoral character of a system which thus enables the Government to appropriate the fruit of the cultivator's capital and labour, the contention itself is refuted by our experience of a century in the administration of India. No only have temporary settlements most effectually hindered the accumulation of national wealth, whence the State might legitimately have derived additional revenue, but the very expectation of an increasing revenue from land has every where, under such settlements, been entirely disappointed.

An attempt was made in the *Financial Statement for 1888-89* (page 44), to show, by means of a table exhibiting land revenue receipts in 1856-57 and 1886-87, that such receipts had during the intervening period, increased at the rate of Rs. 166,000. But the comparison was most defectively established seeing that the proceeds of waste lands, which were largely sold since 1860, together with the capitation tax in Burma, the receipts from fisheries in Assam and the value of estates confiscated after the mutinies, were all entered under the head of Land Revenue Receipts. The comparison was further vitiated by the mutiny year, when the country was abnormally disquieted, having been taken as its basis. For these reasons, the results exhibited in the above-mentioned table cannot be accepted in any inquiry respecting the effect of temporary settlements upon the revenue from land.

On the other hand, the tables A and B in the Appendix, will show that during the last nineteen years, the land revenue in India, far from increasing has been steadily on the decline; that while the receipts in 1870 amounted to £21,088,019, they averaged only £ 20,811,276, in the years 1870 to 1878 and similarly, that the net revenue which was £19,363,477, in 1879, averaged only £19,016,773 in the years 1879 to 1888. /

How much of the decline occurred in the provinces under temporary settlements, whose circumstances have been cursorily reviewed in preceding page will appear from tables C, D, and E, from which it will be seen that the net land revenue in 1879 amounted

In Bombay to	...	...	...	£3,028,354
„ N.-W. Provinces and Oudh	...	...	...	5,268,632
„ Madras	...	...	...	4,281,447
Total	...	...	...	12,578,433

## SOME HISTORICAL ANALOGIES TO THE NATIONAL CONGRESS.



The Indian National Congress, like every other great political movement which has helped mankind to break through the fences of privilege and prescription and to take a forward step in the path of progress and civilization, has from the day of its birth been subjected to most searching criticisms, at the hands, alike, of its friends and its foes—those who read in its humble origin the promise and potency of a great regenerating element in the political life of India, and those who looked upon it as a movement which inspired men with a discontent dangerous to the public peace and security, which assailed the political monopolies of an alien bureaucracy and called upon the people to claim equality with their rulers in the government of their country. The critics of the Congress may be divided into two classes—those who have been opposed both to its objects and the methods by which it has sought to achieve them, and those who while viewing with favour and even sympathy its principal aims and objects have been opposed to it on the ground that the means by which it seeks to inculcate its doctrines upon the public mind, are objectionable, even reprehensible. There are still critics left of the former kind, but their number is daily diminishing and public opinion, both in India and England has come to recognise in the Congress a safe exponent of India's just political demands. It seems now to be admitted on all hands that the reforms advocated by the National party are in some form or other needed by the political necessities of the present situation, although some of those who admit all this are yet unwilling to recognise the fact that promptitude in carrying out reforms the necessity of which has once been realized is the first and essential condition of a wise and generous concession. But there are those of our critics who approve of our demand, but entertain the strongest possible objections to our methods of advocacy of that demand, and think that so long as our methods are what they are, any concession to us would encourage and stimulate our dangerous tactics, embolden us to continue in the dangerous path we have begun to tread, and add fresh fuel to the flames of a seditious and disloyal agitation.

Perhaps the time has come now when it may be useful to show that not only the objects of the Congress but the methods by which they are sought to be achieved are loyal, peaceful, and constitutional, such as have been resorted to by the English people themselves in their struggles for political freedom, and have yielded results that have been conducive to political progress throughout the civilized world. Indeed, political agitation excites on the one hand so much

ridicule and odium in official quarters, and political agitators, who represent, without doubt, the intellect of India, are considered such a low and degraded species of humanity ; while, on the other hand, the agitators themselves—if so we may call those patriots who are fighting bravely against the fearful odds of the Anglo-Indian community, a constitutional battle for the just rights of their country—get occasionally so disheartened at the small success they seem to achieve after great exertions, and the hostile attitude of a handful of interested officials makes some of them so doubtful of the ultimate reception of their demands by the great English nation, that we may, without any further apology, place before our readers some of the principal lessons of the political history of England—lessons which teach, far beyond the reach of doubt, that it is agitators and agitators that have built up the glorious edifice of the English constitution, that have destroyed the despotism of Kings and the exclusive privileges of the nobles ; and that we, too, who are engaged in a similar struggle, but under more favourable circumstances—because we are living at a time when the conscience of England is more sensitive to national welfare, when the British democracy is more powerful and more prompt in redressing political grievances, than it was ever before—would do well to follow, without fear and without hesitation in the footsteps of those English worthies who have raised England to her present proud position, and whose example is the common heritage of all mankind.

“ In our well-balanced constitution” says Sir Erskine May, “ political agitation, to be successful, must be based on a real grievance, adequately represented in Parliament, and in the press—and supported by the rational approval of enlightened men.”\* Let us see how far the Congress agitation conforms to these conditions—how far the grievances which it is calling upon British statesmen to redress are real, what is the extent of the sympathy which it possesses of British Parliament, what the scope of its influence in the press, and in what light its aims and objects are viewed by the wisest of English and Indian statesmen. There exists undoubtedly much difference of opinion on this subject, and political partisanship is even now ready to deny the representative character of the Congress and the genuineness of its demands, but there are certain facts, simple but irrefutable, which must convince all those who can keep their heads above the waves of party prejudices and are not wedded to any foregone conclusions, that our political agitation which is as yet in its infancy is conducted on the same loyal and constitutional methods which have been productive of such beneficial results in England, and in as much as it is so conducted, it is sure to triumph in the long run.

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\* May's constitutional History, Vol. II., page 214.

There was a time when no free press existed in India, and consequently there was no free discussion. With a free press commenced a free criticism of the acts of the Government. But there was no organised public opinion, and the diverse wants and grievances of the people—the scattered rays of national interests could not therefore be concentrated in a focus, so as to arrest the eye and engage the attention of the governing class. A generation was needed to organise a strong body of public opinion, which checked in a large measure the eccentric moves of Lord Lytton, and supported and stimulated the noble efforts of Lord Ripon. The influence of public opinion was confined within comparatively narrow bounds; and although Mr. Lal Mohan Ghose was thrilling the hearts of the English people in England with his stirring eloquence and shocking exposures of the present misrule in this country, and although Mr. Bright and Mr. Fawcett—alas! both of them now dead—were fighting, within the walls of British Parliament, like the brave knights of old, for weak and suffering India, yet the grievances of the Indian people were little known to the great mass of the English nation, nor had the idea of setting on foot an organised agitation in England yet assumed any definite, practical shape or form in the minds of our political leaders. The Congress organised the scattered forces of agitation in one body, and concentrated their efforts, which had hitherto been little controlled by any steady ideal of political reform and had consequently been spent not unfrequently either upon trifling or impossible objects, upon certain cardinal proposals, which include, absorb, and over-shadow all minor schemes of Reform.

The history of the origin and growth of the Congress movement is well known; it is enough for our present purpose to say that from the very first, it enlisted the sympathies of the wisest Indians. It is true that in the first year of its existence it could not be called a popular movement in the ordinary sense of the term, but was confined to the educated people. But it does not lie in the mouth of our Anglo-Indian critics, among whom figure unfortunately men like Lord Dufferin and Sir Auckland Colvin to taunt the Congress with its having originated with the educated classes and not with the illiterate classes, when they must be well aware how considering the course of their own country's history, we may accept what they mean to be a reproach as a great compliment—all the more valuable, because coming from hostile quarters. It is no reproach to the doctriens of Free Trade that seventy years before it was abolished, and that long before it was conceived of and appreciated by the masses, it was taught by Adam Smith and a small band of his philosophic followers. The iniquities of the Corn-laws first shocked the enlightened consciences of men like Cobden and Bright, but it was not without a long and painful exertion that they succeeded in getting those laws abolished; and surely it is no reproach to them that they

fore-saw, and approved, and fought for what the better judgment of their countrymen—itsself the result of their persistent teaching and preaching—approved and accepted a few years later. The ground for the Roman Catholic Emancipation had been prepared by the wisdom and foresight of Burke and his contemporaries, fifty years before it was accomplished, when the general mass of the English people was saturated with Anti-Catholic prejudices. The mitigation of the Criminal Law was the work not of the ignorant populace but of thinkers like Romilly and Bentham, whose utilitarian principles would surely have been condemned by the masses, had legal reforms been submitted to their suffrage. Religious and social liberties have been won by the hard struggles of Bruno, Luther, and a host of other great martyrs and reformers of the world—not by the illiterate masses who have always been intolerant of free opinions, who burnt Priestley's house for his scientific opinions, and who till yesterday would not allow Mr. Bradlaugh to enter Parliament. But surely religious and social liberty cannot lose one iota of its usefulness to men because it was won with the weapons of knowledge and not with those of ignorance; nor can the great teachers and preachers who fought under its banner be dethroned from the lofty position assigned to them by history because the vast majority of their contemporaries did not follow them, and were even opposed to them, in a work, which they thought—and as we know now, rightly thought—was calculated to forward the best interests of progress and of mankind. All great movements begin with the enlightened few; and surely if there is any difference between knowledge and ignorance it is this, that a man of knowledge does in some measure foresee events and shapes his conduct accordingly, but the mental vision of an ignorant person is bounded by the cares and thought of the day without any capacity of foreseeing the exigencies of the morrow. It is a matter not of reproach, nor of lamentation, but of congratulation, and even, jubilation that the happy thought of subduing and organising forces which were beginning to run into dangerous courses, first occurred to some of the most enlightened of our countrymen, and that when the foundation of the great movement was thus laid upon knowledge, culture, and patriotism, it was easy to enlarge the circle of its adherents and sympathisers by popularising its teachings among the masses and by persuading them to see that a great cause espoused and advocated by the cultivated intelligence of their country waited for their support and encouragement. Whatever taunts the unfairness of political rancour may hurl at them, the founders of the Congress have yet the satisfaction of thinking—which is indeed their chief reward—that at a time when the ruled and the rulers are divided by the impassible gulf of civilization, of manners, of religion, and of nationality, when millions of Indians cannot appreciate the usefulness of those great boons which entitle the British rule to our highest affection and

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regard, when the memory of the past rule is still cherished by the people, when for obvious reasons, the government and the subject race are apt to misconstrue each others motives and actions, they have organised an institution which acts as an interpreter of the people's wants to the government and of the just but so often misjudged actions of the government to the people, and which under the present circumstances, possesses the chief condition of a safe and reliable guide to both; namely, that it represents the national intelligence and not the popular will.

Originating with the cultured few and expanding by slow degrees its influence upon the minds of the people, the Congress has within the short period of four years, grown into a power, a great political factor, which no wise government can long afford to ignore, and which has become firmly rooted and grounded in our national affections. It has survived the scoffs, and sneers, and scorn of its detractors which rocked its cradle; it has outlived the abuses, the ridicule, and the misrepresentations which greeted it in the beginning, and it is to be hoped that the storm which burst upon it at the commencement of its voyage, may be but a presage and an indication of the sunshine and calm, which await it in the not far distant future.

But even during the short period of its existence, it has passed through certain phases which bear a striking resemblance to those through which some of the great historic movements of England have passed. Arguments from analogy are not as a rule of great logical weight, and in politics they are apt to be misleading. But when the points of resemblance between any two sets of political phenomena are material and significant, when these political phenomena, besides bearing an apparent resemblance to each other, are such as may be traced equally to the universal laws of human nature and of progress, then historical analogies are the strongest aids to the right comprehension of political questions, and may with perfect propriety be used in justification or in condemnation of any proposed reforms in the government of a country. A cursory glance at some of the chief political changes which mark the history of Modern England will show that when an agitation is carried on within certain bounds and is controlled by certain safeguards and conditions, its success is assured; and as the Congress agitation fulfils these conditions, so tersely summarised in the dictum of Sir E. May, it is sure to be successful.

The history of the reform of the representative system of England is so full of interest and instruction and presents so many points of similarity to the National Congress, that it may be well to narrate it at some length in this place. The representative system of England was very defective till 1831. The House of Commons which was supposed to represent the people and to be a check upon the actions of the House of Lords, was at once dependant and corrupt. The crown

and the Peers commanded a majority of that House. A large number of the members were nominees of the Crown, and the peers of the realm were not ashamed to bribe M. P's for their political purposes. The basis of the franchise was very narrow, and every effort was made to limit the rights of election and to make them, uncertain, inequitable and confused. In some of the corporate towns the right of election was confined only to the bailiff and twelve burgesses, and in others even a smaller number were entitled to vote. While such places as Leeds, Birmingham, and Manchester were unrepresented, about thirty-five places which contained scarcely any electors at all, sent about seventy members to parliament.

The representation of Scotland was still more defective. Till the passing of the first reform Bill, the total number of county voters did not exceed 2,500 and that of borough voters did not exceed 1,500. Thus the entire electoral body of Scotland was not more than 4,000. Cities like Edinburgh and Glasgow had each a constituency of thirty three persons.

The abuses of the representative system existed in their most aggravated form in Ireland. In Belfast and other towns the right of election was vested in a dozen self-elected burgesses. "According to the law of Ireland, freeholds were created without the possession of property ; and the votes of the freeholders were considered as the absolute right of the proprietor of the soil". Thus after the Union more than two-thirds of the Irish members were returned not by the people of Ireland, but by about fifty or sixty influential patrons. The uncontrolled sway of landlordism, and the political disabilities of the Roman Catholics, had placed the entire representation of Ireland in the hands of a few Protestant peers.

To reform these abuses of the elective system, "the Society of the Friends of the People" was formed, which presented through Mr. Grey, afterwards Lord Grey, the distinguished champion of the Reform Bill, a petition to Parliament, in which it was alleged that 84 individuals absolutely returned 157 members to Parliament, that 70 influential men secured the return of 150 members ; and that in this manner 307 members were returned to Parliament by 154 patrons of whom 40 were peers.

It is needless to relate here the abuses of bribery; of lotteries of secret pension, and of all forms of corruption which human ingenuity and cupidity could devise and which disfigured the history of England till fifty years ago. Suffice it to say that the evils of an unjust, inequitable, and corrupt electoral system had affected every section of the society and the statesmen of the age saw that they were doomed to perish one day, if they were not going to destroy the whole fabric of the Government. Sixty years before these abuses were put an end to, Lord Chatham warned Parliament that "before the end

f this century, either the Parliament will reform itself from within or be reformed with a vengeance from without." These words of warning fell upon deaf ears. The opponents of reform looked upon the then existing abuses as part of the constitution, and anything calculated to rectify them was considered to threaten the existence of the constitution itself.

But a reaction against the stereotyped evils of an inequitable representative system had commenced, and some wise men had begun to read in the murmurs of national discontent, the moanings of a coming storm. Lord Chatham was probably the first statesman who drew the attention of Parliament to the reform of the elective machinery which he called "the rotten part of the English constitution." In 1770, he suggested a very modest reform, namely that a third member should be added to every county, "in order to counter-balance the weight of corrupt and venal boroughs." But Parliament was not prepared to listen to even this modest proposal. In 1776, Mr. Wilkes introduced a more comprehensive scheme, which also shared the fate of its predecessor. In 1780—the year famous for Gordon's riots—the Duke of Richmond presented a bill for establishing annual Parliaments, universal suffrage, &c., but it was rejected without a division. The friends of reform were not disheartened by these defeats; their earnestness in the cause was unabated, and their enthusiasm was gradually infecting the popular mind which had hitherto been indifferent to political changes. Mr. Pitt, who in his later years was destined by a cruel fate to falsify the glorious promise of his early career, made his famous motion of inquiry into the abuses of the representative system, in 1782; and public opinion had progressed so far on the question of reform, that Mr. Pitt's motion was superseded by reading the order of the day, by a majority of twenty only.

In the meantime, the Great Revolution broke out in France, which spread panic all over England, made the cause of reform unpopular in the eyes of the nation, and brought about a Tory re-action which lasted for about forty years. For some years, the word "reform" was scarcely whispered in Parliament, and the prospects of the Whig party seemed to have reached their *nadir*. At length in 1790, Mr. Flood introduced a scheme which was consigned to the limbo of abortions.

Although Parliament was determined to resist every proposal of reform, yet outside Parliament its prospects were a little brighter and more cheerful. A political association called "The Society of the Friends of People" had been formed which counted among its members several eminent politicians and men of letters, and about 28 members of Parliament, the most eminent of whom were Mr. Grey and Mr. Erskine. The association had once presented a petition to Parliament and failed; it was proposed that the subject should again be

pressed upon the attention of the legislature. In 1792, Mr. Grey gave notice of a motion similar to that which Pitt which had made 10 years before. The hurricanes of the French Revolution had swept away the question of reform from the arena of public discussion and Mr Grey's motion, after two nights debate, found only 41 supporters. For the time, the question seemed to be outside the sphere of practical politics, and after a decisive and discouraging defeat, it was allowed to sleep for another five years. In 1797, Mr. Grey again brought the subject of reform to the notice of Parliament, but his motion was again rejected—91 voting for and 256 against it. These successive defeats would have crushed the spirits, and damped the enthusiasm of ordinary men; but the advocate of reform, far from feeling discouraged at the disastrous results of their exertions, gathered fresh strength and consolation from failures, reverses seemed to kindle their enthusiasm and rouse their spirits; defeats and disaster seemed to apply fresh spurs to their courage and energy; and every time that they fell, they rose like the god in the fable, with a redoubled strength from the touch of mother earth. In 1818, Sir F. Burdett proposed certain resolutions in favour of parliamentary reform, but could not find more than one member to support him in the House of Commons. In the meantime, the reformers were gradually educating the public mind on the question of reform, and the signs of the times showed that the nation was awakening however slowly, but still unmistakably to the evils of the existing system. An eminent nobleman who was destined to play a most prominent part on the stage of parliamentary life, cast in his lot with the reformers. In 1822, Lord John Russell introduced the subject in parliament in the form of a very moderate resolution "that the present state of representation required serious consideration," which was rejected by a majority of 105, only 51 voting for the resolution. In 1823, Lord John brought in another motion and this time he was supported by numerous petitions one of them signed by 17,000 free-holders of the county of York—but the motion was thrown out by a majority of 111, although the cause had progressed so far that 169 voted for the motion. In 1826, he proposed the same resolution, pointing out forcibly the injustice, the daily aggravating inequality of the representation, but his resolution was again negatived by a majority of 124. In 1830, some other proposals were made, but Parliament was not willing to move one step in the direction of reform. Indeed, so far as can be judged from the action of Parliament in the matter, it seemed as if the reformers were engaged in a hopeless struggle, as if the constitution as it then was was going to last till the end of time. Even some of the wisest statesmen were blind to the changes that were going under their very noses and were quite unconscious of the vast changes which the near future had in store for them. No less a man than Sir Robert Peel said in the course of debate, in 1830—less than two years before the passing