



Quarterly Journal of the
Poona Sarvajnik Sabha.

Vol. 14

1881-82

POONA 4 (INDIA)
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THE POONA SARVAJANIK SABHA.

Established for representing the wants and wishes of the inhabitants of the Deccan, being appointed on a popular elective system under rules framed for the purpose.

WALEKAR'S WADA, DANE ALI.

LIST OF OFFICERS.

President.

H. H. Shrinivas Rao Parashram Pandit alias Rao Saheb Pant Pratinidhi, Chief of Oundha.

Vice-Presidents.

H. H. Dhundiraj Chintaman alias Tatyasaheb Patwardhan, Chief of Sangli.

H. H. Amrit Rao Saheb Daphale, Chief of Jat.

H. H. Mudhoji Rao Zanrao alias Babu Saheb Naik Nimbalkar, Chief of Phalton.

H. H. Ramchandra Rao Gopal alias

Appa Saheb Patwardhan, Chief of Jamkhindi.

H. H. Gunpatrao Harihar. alias Babu Saheb Patwardhan, younger Chief of Kurundwad.

H. H. Hariharrao Vinayek alias Daji Saheb Patwardhan, Chief of Kurundwad.

H. H. Toolajee Raje Bhosle, Chief of Akalkote.

MANAGING COMMITTEE FOR 1891-92.

Chairman—RAO BAHADOOR VISHNU MORESHWAR BHIDE.

Members of the Managing Committee.

R. B. Gopalrao Hari Deshmukh.

R. B. Narayan Bhai Dandekar.

R. S. Chintamanrao V. Natu.

R. S. Balwantrao Bapuji Phadke.

R. S. Naro Bhasker Dewdhar.

R. S. Damodar J. Gokhale.

R. S. Sadashiv R. Medakkar.

R. B. Koopuswami Vijayarungam.

Professor Bal Gangaobhar Nilak.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale.

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R. S. Raghonath Daji Nagarkar.

Krishnarao B. Mande Esq.

Ramchandra G. Sapkar Esqr.

Ramchandra M. Sane Esqr.

Waman Vishnu Lele Esqr.

Mahomed Sidik Esqr.

Aderjee Dorabjee Ghaswala Esqr.

Dorabjee Dadabhoj Butee Esqr.

Gangaram Bhaui Mhaske Esqr.

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Vishnudas Harikisondas Esqr.

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Sakharam R. Joshi Esqr.

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Nathamal Bharmal Esqr.

R. S. Waman Prabhakar Bhava.

Vinayak Narayan Apte Esqr.

Ganesh Krishna Bawadekar Esqr.

R. S. Sitaran Hari Chiplonkar.

Shivram Hari Sahe Esquire.

Keshav P. Godbole Esqr.,

Treasurer.

R. S. CHINTAMANRAO VISHWANATH ALIAS BRAU-SAHEB NATU.

Auditor.

GOVIND MAHADEO GADRE ESQR., PLEADER.

NARAYENRAO CHINTAMAN FADTARE ESQR.

Honorary Secretaries.

PROFESSOR GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE B. A.

SHIVRAM HARI SATHI ESQR.

Secretary.

KESHAV PANDURANG GODBOLE.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SABHA.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH GOVERNMENT IN REGARD TO THE AGRICULTURISTS' RELIEF ACT.

No. 16 of 1891.

SARVAJANIK SABHA ROOMS.

Poona, 16th January 1891.

To

A. C. LOGAN Esquire.,
Ag. Under-Secretary to Government,

Bombay.

Sir,

In your letter to me No. 6613, dated 28th November 1890, you wrote that as the Report of the Special Officer appointed to enquire into the working of the Agriculturists Relief Act was then under the consideration of Government, Government could not comply with the request of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha to be supplied with a copy of the Report. The Sabha now gathers from newspapers that the Report has been considered both by the Local Government and the Government of India, and that with their remarks thereon it has now been forwarded to the Secretary of State. I have, therefore, again to repeat the request of the Sabha to be kindly favoured with a copy of this Report, as the Sabha is very anxious to submit a representation of its views in the matter, particularly with regard to conciliation and village Munsiffs before final orders are passed thereon.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

G. K. GOKHALE,

Honorary Secretary, Poona Sarvajanic Sabha.

Proceedings of the Sabha.

No. 865 of 1891.

JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

Bombay Castle 10th February 1891.

From

A. C. LOGAN Esquire.,
Ag. Under-Secretary to Government.

To

THE HONORARY SECRETARY,
Poona Sarvajanic Sabha.

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 16, dated the 16th ultimo, reiterating your request to be supplied with a copy of the Report of the Special Officer appointed to enquire into the working of the Dekkan Agriculturists Relief Act.

2. In reply I am to inform you that the Report is still under the consideration of the Government of India and that a copy cannot, therefore, be given.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

A. C. LOGAN,

Ag. Under-Secretary to Government.

No. 130 of 1891.

*Sarvajanic Sabha Rooms,**Poona, 18th March, 1891.*

To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,
Home Department,
CALCUTTA.

Sir,

With reference to your letter dated 20th October 1890, referring to the Bombay Government for copies of the Report of the Special Officer to enquire into the working of the Agricultural Relief Act and connected papers, I am to renew my request to the Government of India for the said copies as the Bombay Government has not yet favoured the Sabha with them, although the matter is purely judi-

cial and concerns the welfare of the indebted agriculturists in the Deccan. The Sabha trusts that no action will be taken by the Supreme Government in the matter without allowing the Sabha an opportunity of expressing its views regarding the several provisions of the Act, particularly those relating to the Conciliation and Village Munsiff systems which have worked for the last ten years so beneficially to the Deccan Ryots.

I have therefore to respectfully request the Government of India to be so good as to direct the Bombay Government to supply the required copies to the Sabha at an early date.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

G. K. GOKHALE,

Honorary Secretary Poona.

Sarvajanic Sabha.

No. 528.

From

P. G. MELITUS Esquire,

Under-Secretary to the Government of India.

To

THE HONORARY SECRETARY

Poona Sarvajanic Sabha,

Poona.

Dated Simla, the 18th April 1891.

Sir,

I am directed to inform you that your letter No. 130, dated the 18th ultimo, asking to be furnished with copies of the Report of the Special Officer appointed to enquire into the working of the Dekkan Agriculturists Relief Act and connected papers has been forwarded to the Government of Bombay for disposal.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

P. G. MELITUS,

Under-Secretary to the Government of India.

Proceedings of the Sabha.

No. 129 of 1891.

SARVAJANIK SABHA ROOMS,
Poona, 17th March 1891.

To

The Secretary to the Government
of Bombay, Judicial Department,

Bombay.

Sir,

I am directed by the Managing Committee of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha to send herewith three copies of the memorial addressed by the Sabha to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India in Council and to request that you will be pleased to forward the same to His Lordship.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your Most Obedient Servant,
G. K. GOKHALE,
Secretary Poona Sarvajanic Sabha.

SARVAJANIK SABHA ROOMS,
Poona 17th March 1891.

To.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

VISCOUNT CROSS, G. C. B.

Her Majesty's Secretary of State
in Council for India.

The humble memorial of the
Secretary of the Poona Sarvajanic
Sabha.

MOST HUMBLY SHOWETH :

That the Managing Committee of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha, an Association established here twenty years ago for representing to Government the wants and wishes of the people of the Deccan, have been given to understand that the Government of Bombay have submitted to your Lordship-in-Council the Report of the Special Officer appointed by them to report on the working of the Deccan Agricul-

tourists Relief Act with a recommendation that the Conciliation system should be abolished. Your Lordship's memorialist regrets to state that the report of the Special Officer and the recommendation of the Bombay Government thereon have not been published, neither have copies of the same been supplied to the Sabha, although application for the same was made several times both to the Bombay Government and the Government of India.

Your Lordship's memorialist therefore humbly requests that your Lordship will be so good as to direct the Bombay Government to favour the Sabha with the copies referred to.

In conclusion your Lordship's memorialist begs to state that the Conciliation and Village Munsiff systems have proved an incalculable blessing to the indebted agriculturists in the Deccan by helping to bring about an amicable settlement of the claims of their creditors in a convenient and economical way, and to request that the consideration of the recommendations of the Local Government in regard to them may be postponed until the Sabha is given an opportunity of expressing its views in the matter.

I beg to remain,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

G. K. GOKHALE,

Honorary Secretary, Poona

Sarvajanik Sabha.

No. 3270 of 1891.

Judicial Department,

Bombay Castle, 17th June 1891.

From

A. C. LOGAN ESQUIRE,

Acting Under-Secretary to Government,

Bombay.

To

THE SECRETARY,

Poona Sarvajanik Sabha.

Sir,

I am directed by the Governor-in-Council to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 129, dated the 17th March 1891, forwarding

a memorial addressed by the Poona Sarvajani Sabha to Her Majesty's Secretary of State that this Government may be directed to supply the Sabha with a copy of Mr. Woodburn's Special Report on the operations of the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act, 1879, and of the recommendations of this Government thereon.

2. In reply I am, under instructions from the Government of India (to whom the memorial was forwarded for transmission to the Secretary of State), to forward to you herewith a copy of Mr. Woodburn's report and to inform you that a copy of the recommendations of this Government on the Report cannot be communicated to the Sabha at this stage, as it is contrary to usage to furnish the public with copies of the confidential opinions of a Local Government while they are under the consideration of the Government of India or of the Secretary of State.

3. I am to add that as the Sabha's principal request has been complied with, the Government of India will not forward their memorial to the Secretary of State, but that the Sabha is of course at liberty to apply again.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your Most Obedient Servant,

A. C. LOGAN,

Acting Under-Secretary to Government.

APPREHENDED DEFICIENCY OF RAINFALL.

No. 275 of 1891.

SARVAJANIK SABHA ROOMS,

Poona, 23rd July 1891.

To

THE SECRETARY to the Government of Bombay,
Revenue Department.

Sir,

I am directed by the Managing Committee of the Poona Sarvajani Sabha to submit for the favourable consideration of Government the following representation on the subject of the desirability of furnishing to the public fuller information in regard to the rainfall,

Proceedings of the Sabha.

the condition of agricultural stock, the progress in agricultural operations, and the rise in prices than is found in the summary of the season reports published every week in the *Government Gazette*.

2. Government are aware that this year's rainfall has been unusually scanty throughout the Presidency and in most parts of the country there has been virtually no rain-fall. To all appearances, the conditions of 1876-77 are being to a certain extent repeated this year over an area larger even than that affected in that calamitous year. The public mind is naturally filled with evil forebodings and the Committee of the Sabha feels, that Government themselves cannot be free from the anxiety which is so universally felt. Under these circumstances the Sabha feels it to be its duty to suggest that Government will be pleased to furnish in their season reports fuller particulars in regard to the matters specified above than what are given at present.

3. The present weekly statement gives general information about the condition of each district only. It is needless to say that this description cannot convey an accurate idea in regard to the state of things in the different Talukas in each district. Of course Government must be receiving weekly returns from each Taluka and there can therefore be no difficulty in publishing particulars about each Taluka till all cause for anxiety is over.

4. The Sabha respectfully requests that this additional information should be furnished under the following four heads as a supplement to the weekly summary :—

- (1) The rain-fall during the week in each Taluka.
- (2) The total rain-fall up to date.
- (3) The average for the past 5 years up to date.
- (4) The prevailing prices of fodder and the chief food for staple in each Taluka.

Such information will enable the public to form a more accurate forecast of the proposals, and lessen much of the anxiety now felt. It will also help to allay panics which often encourage the dealers in grain and fodder to raise prices.

5. If the season proves to be as unfavourable as the present appearances indicate, Government will no doubt take steps to organize their famine relief agency and to start temporary relief works.

6. There is yet time to hope that things may not come to this

pass, but in the meanwhile, the fuller information, suggested above, will go a great way to allay public anxiety and, if possible, give confidence to the public mind.

I have the honor to remain,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

G. K. GOKHALE,

Hon. Secretary P. S. Sabha.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF HYGIENE AND
DEMOGRAPHY.

London August 10th to 17th 1891.

President—H. R. H. THE PRINCE OF WALES K. C.

Offices—20, HANOVER SQUARE,

London, W.

February 1891.

THE SECRETARY TO THE

Poona Sarvajanic Sabha.

Sir,

I beg to forward you a copy of papers relating to the International Congress of Hygiene and Demography, which will be held in London from August 10th to 17th next, under the Presidency of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who will open the Congress in person.

As you will see from the enclosed papers, the Congress will be an important one in Sanitary Science, owing to the variety and range of subjects which have been proposed for discussion; and as it will be the first International Congress of the kind which has met in London, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales is desirous that the Congress shall be worthy of the great country in which it will assemble.

The organising Committee therefore venture to express the hope that your Association will nominate Delegates to the Congress, and

will favour its interests in Poona, in such way as may seem to the Association advisable.

I am,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,
G. V. POORE,
Hon. Sec. Gen.

P. S.—The papers relating to the Congress will be forwarded by book post.

No. 131 of 1891.

Sarvajanik Sabha Rooms,
Poona 1st April 1891.

To

THE SECRETARY OF THE
Organizing Committee of the 7th International
Congress of Hygiene and Demography,
London.

Sir,

We have been directed by the Managing Committee of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha to acknowledge with many thanks your invitation to the Sabha to send delegates to the 7th International Congress of Hygiene and Demography which it is proposed to hold in London in coming August. The Sabha duly appreciates the high honour done to it by the Organizing Committee and has great pleasure in assuring you that it will do all that lies in its power to promote the objects of the Congress in India. Considerations of time, distance and expense, however, debar the Sabha from sending delegates from out of its own body to attend the Congress, and thus, we regret to say, the work of this Sabha in this matter will be mainly confined to moving the Local Government to officially send delegates on behalf of the Presidency, and to spreading through the Sabha's machinery knowledge of the aims, objects and work of the Congress among the people of the Deccan. The Sabha will also request Indian gentlemen at present residing in England, as also retired Anglo-Indians who have taken interest in the Sabha's work, and notably Sir W. Wedderburn, to attend the Congress on its behalf. Thanking you once more for the honour done by you to the Sabha,

We beg to remain,
Sir,

Your most obedient servants,
G. K. GOKHALE,
K. P. GODBOLE,

Secretaries Poona Sarvajanik Sabha.

THE HYGIENIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC CONDITION OF INDIA.*

The Hygienic and Demographic condition of the people of India may be briefly described under the following heads:—

Water supply. Water Supply in India is the most important factor in the causation of disease. The water supply in this country is, on the whole, scanty and unwholesome. The people are mostly indifferent as to its purity and quantity. The supply is derived from wells, embanked rivers, streams, rivers, ponds, tanks &c.* The wells are built with or without steps. Some wells are provided with protecting parapets, and some are without them, allowing surface water to go in. The water from the wells with steps to descend is often spoiled, as the people wash themselves and wash their clothes in them and take the same water for drinking and culinary purposes. This water is thus always impure and contains ova of guinea-worms and gives rise to fevers, diarrhoea, dysentery and intestinal guinea-worms. The water drawn from wells without steps is generally pure. The situation of the wells is generally faulty, especially in the towns and cities, where the privy and the well are often very close to one another so that percolations from the privy into the well are not unfrequent. The water supply from rivers, streams and embanked rivers

* This paper was written by R. B. Visram Ramji Ghole L. M., Fellow of the Bombay University, Honourary Assistant-Surgeon to H. E. the Viceroy, at the special request of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha. Printed copies of it were sent early this month to Sir W. Wedderburn, the representative of the Sabha at the London Congress of Hygiene and Demography, that the paper may be read before the Congress on behalf of the Sabha.

is also contaminated and impure. People generally use the water without filtering it. Some indeed strain it through cloth when muddy, or they add a little alum to it in order to clear it. The fruit of *Strychnos Potatorum* is also used to purify the water when muddy. The use of these purifying agents is however an exception, and not the rule. In large towns and cities, which are very few in India, some attempt is made to filter the supply of water, but even here the operation is marked by great carelessness. The water from the smaller rivers is generally unwholesome. It contains impurities of various kinds due chiefly to the impurities of the surface. The supply from the larger rivers, which have sandy beds or rocky banks, is pretty pure in the fair weather, but streams and rivers, with muddy banks and beds, and those others which run through jungles and receive large quantities of decayed leafage, are often fruitful sources of all manner of disorders and diseases. Their water contains large quantities of suspended matter, chiefly vegetable; hence the use of this water for drinking and cooking purposes causes fevers, diarrhoea, dysentery, skin diseases, calculi &c. Intestinal worms, guinea-worms &c. result generally from the use of pond, tank and well water. The water of natural ponds and tanks is generally unhealthy owing to the large quantities of vegetable and animal and other surface impurities which flow into them. The water from embanked rivers and streams is also impure from surface impurities, but when it is carried a long way off in canals and exposed to the air and sun, it becomes comparatively purified owing to the deposition of the suspended matter by gravity and friction along its course. In India, many large towns, cities and villages are mostly situated along the banks of rivers and rivulets. The sewage and other impurities from the habitations, ashes of cremated dead bodies, animal refuse and trade refuse are allowed to flow into these

the poor resources which are available, the entire extirpation of the evils due to bad selection of sites would be too Herculean a task to be attempted with success in a generation or two. The ground in and round about towns and villages is always uneven, and rendered more so by the people by digging pits from where to take earth for building houses. No care is taken to fill these holes, and they become receptacles for foul water, filth, garbage and ordure, and the waste waters of the cook and bath rooms. These inequalities in the ground are generally resorted to by the people for natural purposes.

Roads. All villages and towns have roads of some sort, but their shape and width are generally not in proportion to the requirements of the place. Very few are open thoroughfares permitting free ventilation, such of the cities as are walled for protection against inroads—and their number is not small,—are often nothing better than hot-houses or enclosures of stagnant air by reason of blocked up roads and the paucity of approaches left for free circulation from without. The streets are generally not straight and wide enough to allow of free ventilation. The Government have constructed good trunk lines of roads, and the Local Boards and the Municipalities have of late been exerting themselves to make some good roads within the limits of their local jurisdiction; but such attempts are generally directed more towards the metalling of roads than towards making them straight and sufficiently wide. The Government and the local authorities have been encouraging the planting of trees along the road sides. They are undoubtedly a comfort to the way-farer in the hot season, but it may be doubted whether they are not positively harmful in towns, cities and villages, as they injure the road surface by droppings from their leaves, and their shade keeps the roads from drying properly. This imperfect drying promotes the decomposition of organic

matter, which is always found to a very large extent on thoroughfares, and the consequent exhalation of effluvia. Another great defect of Indian roads and streets is that they are constantly sending out clouds of dust in all directions to the great annoyance, and often affecting the health, of both householders and way-farers in diverse ways. This great evil is partially met by watering the streets in small places by private efforts, and on a large scale in many Municipal towns. Road-watering, however, is not an unmixed good, as it promotes the decomposition of all organised matter, in which respect the warmth of the Indian atmosphere plays no unimportant part.

Dwellings. Even in large Presidency towns and cities, rules for the proper construction of houses do not exist, and wherever they do, they are seldom observed or enforced. The necessity of choosing a healthy site for building a house, and of providing facilities for the free circulation of air, and effective drainage is very seldom recognized and attended to in house-building operations. They are generally built in blocks close to one another so that the houses receive fresh air only from one side. The width of streets and lanes is often so small as not to admit of free light and air into the dwellings. The only ventilating openings in these habitations are small-sized doors and windows, which too often admit only stagnant air, loaded with all sorts of impurities, and never drive it out. In country places, houses have got yards bounded by a brick or mud wall, which keeps the inside air very foul. A large number of houses in these places are very old and rickety. Over a large part of the country, there are no tiled and sloping-roofs, but a flat layer of earth over-tops the house and presses it down. Openings in the way of sky-lights in the roof to allow the foul air and smoke to pass out are seldom seen. In the Konkan and near the Ghauts, in the front or back of the houses

there are generally to be found dense masses of vegetation, the delight of the owner of the house. There are the cocoanut, the jack, the mango and other fruit trees, and creepers coming down to within five feet of the ground, and displaying, within their meshes gourds of various kinds. Where open spaces exist round about a house, they are very often surrounded by a fence of prickly-pear, wild cane growing in luxuriance and inviting or concealing filth and rubbish of every kind. The plantain tree and *Alu* (*arum campanulatum*) are the great favourites of the people. In short, any thing that can be reared for food or fuel is cherished and stored within the compound. It need not be said that all this vegetation keeps the soil damp, and near the house you have often-times dung-hills of refuse matter and manure, or dung-cakes fixed to the wall to dry for fuel purposes. To crown the whole, cattle are kept tied in verandas or in the inside of dwellings, and a privy, sodden with organic filth, is located either in the veranda or some other part of the house. In many cities, the privies are found near the entrance of the house, and are ranged on both sides of the street. In many big towns in Gujerat and the Deccan, a latrine can very often be seen in front of houses with a cookroom by its side, and a bed-room over it. The sanitary condition of the huts of the poor is even worse. They measure hardly fifteen by ten feet, are low, without plinth, deficient in light and ventilation, damp, closely thatched, the walls and floors made of mud, with only one door for ventilation and ingress. Here the occupant lives with his family of about half a dozen heads with also a few heads of cattle and poultry. The solitary entrance door is always closed at night, and if there is luckily any crevice in the wall, it is carefully blocked up in case of sickness. There is always a place reserved somewhere close to the hut of the poor or the dwelling of the well-to-do, which serves as a pit in which all cattle

Sanitation in India.

dung, ashes and house rubbish is collected for one whole year to be removed to the fields for purposes of manuring. Those that have no fields of their own derive a small income from this stuff.

The waste water of the house, loaded with impurities from washings of clothes, and water from cooking and urinaries, and ablution water from privies where any exist, is allowed to soak into a pit close to the plinth, and thus pollute the ground in and outside the dwelling. The question of the disposal of this dirty water is one which does not admit of an easy solution. Besides the difficulties created by the inveterate habits of the people, and their want of appreciation of the benefits of improved sanitation, there is the difficulty caused by the extreme poverty and resourcelessness of the people.

The removal of excreta. By this is meant solid excrement from bowels and liquid from kidneys. The people of this country, being great consumers of starchy articles of diet, pass every day a much larger quantity of solid fæcus than the standard of two and a half ounces mentioned by English writers on Hygiene. The present writer, when Health Officer of Poona, found that for all ages and both sexes, the average excret a per day of twenty-four hours was not less than ten ounces avoirdupois of semi-solid fæcus. These investigations have been confirmed by Dr. Hewlett of Bombay and Dr. Fawcett of the Alipur Jail. The removal of both solid and liquid human excrements is a *questio vexata* with those who have to deal with the conservancy of Indian towns and villages. As stated above, holes and inequalities in the ground round about dwellings are resorted to for purposes of evacuation. River banks, rivulets, and water courses are similarly used for this purpose. Those that have travelled in India could not have failed to see every morning a number of people turn out of a city or village for this purpose with a small pot full of water in their hands. The practice, insanitary and indecent as it is, is

good in one respect, viz. that it removes a large quantity of excreta outside the city or village, which would otherwise have polluted the soil, water and air of the place. The local authorities should take care to provide outside large cities suitable latrines, or if funds do not permit, dig shallow trenches, screened for decency's sake, and set them apart for men and women separately. These trenches moreover should be to the leeward of the place they are intended to serve, and closed, when they are half full, with fresh earth, and new ones dug by the side of the old. This experiment has been repeatedly tried and found to answer well. The plot of ground so utilised should be ploughed after six months, or, if water is not available, before the monsoons every year, and garden vegetables planted thereon. The crops thus reared are very abundant and grow vigorously and repay all-trouble and expense. One or two sowings render the ground again fit for similar use. This arrangement, however, does not remove all difficulties. Children will not go to these places which must be located at some distance from inhabited areas and yards, and holes will be resorted to at night. Removal by hand must therefore be had recourse to to prevent the soil, water, and air from getting contaminated. The arrangements of trenches will suit rural areas only, but the case of populous cities is quite different. In these places there are generally privies attached to each house. Of these the most objectionable one is the 'well privy,' which in many places still exists attached to the dwellings of even well-to-do people. It is nothing but a pit sunk in the floor of the house for receiving human excrement, which is after long intervals or never removed. It need not be observed that these pits contaminate the wells in the city, and fill the atmosphere with their pestilential gases. There are other kinds of privies in which are placed receptacles which are general-

ly bamboo baskets. These allow of a great deal of percolation. It has been ascertained with tolerable accuracy that nearly one half of the contents of the baskets sink into the soil underneath before they are emptied. The emptying is a most filthy operation. The scavengers are generally in the service of the house owner, and are a most troublesome lot of people to deal with. Wherever Municipalities exist, they are somewhat amenable to discipline, yet they are, as a class, most careless, and therefore the removal of filth in large Municipal towns is always very indifferently done. They have been often detected emptying their loads in rat holes or in some rubbish heaps. The scavengers have a monopoly of their profession ; no other caste, however low, will descend to compete with the Bhangees, who are generally natives of Gujerat or the N. W. Provinces. In places where their number is very small, the people are entirely at their mercy. The slightest attempt to exact work from them is answered by a strike which means stagnation of filth for days together. Notwithstanding these defects, the hand-removal system of house to house service, when placed under the supervision of conservancy Inspectors and their assistants, has effected great improvements in the sanitary condition of many large towns where it has been introduced. The system is very costly, and therefore difficult to be introduced in all places. It has been proposed to induce the Bhangees to come and settle in places where their services are required by making gifts to them of lands for cultivation and building. The proposal, no doubt, is a good one, and deserves a fair trial.

The dry earth system has been often suggested as the best solution of the difficulty. Howsoever successful it may be in asylums and jails where perfect control exists, it will not

do for all Indian towns. The quantity of dry earth required would be enormous to take up ten or twelve ounces of solid and forty ounces of liquid excreta, together with about a pint of water used for ablution per head of population. The cost of collecting, drying and distributing earth required to dry this large amount of solid and liquid filth, and of its ultimate removal and renewal, would be simply prohibitive. Another method suggested is the System Goux. This system will not, however, do for large cities. The difficulties in the way of procuring sufficient absorbing and disinfecting material for a large quantity of liquid filth in Indian closets would, without doubt, be very great, leaving aside the question of costs and the ultimate disposal of the contents of the tubs.

In the case of the larger towns where sufficient money and an ample supply of water are available, the water carriage system of removing excreta is the best. The experience of that system in Calcutta and Bombay, though even in these times the sewers are incomplete, justifies the conclusion that water closets of simple construction best suit the prejudices of the natives of this country. Natives have an aversion to the person of a scavenger and suffer in consequence a good deal of filth to collect in and about their dwellings. The system of removing excreta by water floods in underground drains and sewers is the cleanest and the most economic system in the long run. It pleases one to find that the foolish opposition that once threatened to be formidable against the system of under-ground drains is fast dying out. It had its origin in overdrawn descriptions of outbreaks of Typhoid from badly constructed sewers in England which now and then appear in newspapers. Some of the Native States, such as Baroda and Hyderabad (Nizam), and some Municipalities have wisely voted large sums for the sewerage of their towns. The designs must

be made only by Sanitary Engineers with the most recent drainage experience. Sanitary Engineers as such are almost conspicuous by their absence in India and it would be a wise step on the part of Government to provide at least one consulting Sanitary Engineer of ability for each Presidency. The success of Mr. Baldwin Latham during the last two years ought to induce other specialists to visit India on their own account.

Water-supply. The chief sources of water-supply to Indian towns and villages are rivers, lakes, springs, wells and tanks. All these are natural reservoirs of the annual monsoon rains. Besides the mineral and vegetable impurities, common more or less to many sources of water-supply, the greatest source of contamination in India is human and animal excreta. It is a common thing to find on the banks of a river or tank, which is the chief source of the water-supply of a place, bathing washing of soiled clothes and cattle, and the cleansing of cooking utensils, going on simultaneously with the filling of water vessels for domestic use. The surface wells and rivulets are rarely free from the effects of soakage and overflows. Strict supervision must, therefore, be provided for detecting and remedying these evils wherever they may be found to exist. The scanty water-supply of many cities and villages in India gives rise to many skin diseases and bowel disorders and consequent ill health amongst the people. The increase of the water-supply is a most difficult question to solve in many places, but much is being done of late by sinking wells, and, where funds can be made available, by bringing water from great distances by canals and iron pipes. The conservancy of wells and tanks requires greater attention than is at present given to it. The wells are almost always exposed to the rays of the sun which promote the development of vegetable matter and lose by evaporation. The other evils attendant upon open wells and

tanks are that the water is never cool and bright and there are always chances of foreign substances such as dust, leaves of trees and decaying animal matter, getting into them,

Tanks, wells and cisterns get contaminated by the dipping of buckets in them. One very often sees a water-bearer scrubbing his water vessels with dust, cattle dung or ashes, near a well or cistern, and cleaning the same by dipping them in the water which he afterwards fills his vessels with to carry home for culinary use or drink. This foul practice can be very easily and successfully put a stop to, either by fixing pumps to public wells and cisterns or by providing dipping vessels suspended with chains for drawing water. If the space round about be flagged or paved, and the waste water led out by proper drains and people prevented from bathing, washing or cleaning vessels near them, the water of wells and cisterns will always remain clear and sweet.

Food supply. The staple articles of diet in India are grains of kinds and are so simple that complex legislation is not required to maintain their purity except in very large commercial towns. Grains are ground into flour in each homestead and therefore it is free from adulteration. Rules are, however, required for ensuring the purity of milk and clarified butter (ghee), which are very often adulterated, the former with impure or tainted water and flour, and the latter with fats of different animals, starch &c. Meat, which is more an article of luxury than a principal substance in the dietary of the people of this country, requires strict supervision. It is very inferior in quality and often mixed with flesh from carcasses of diseased animals. Fish, which is a principal article of diet with the non-Brahman population of the sea-coast, places is found very often in different stages of putrification due to want of care

on the part of fishermen and the very high price of salt required for curing, caused by the great enhancement in the salt duty in India.

Disposal of the dead. The question of the disposal of the dead has, of late, been attracting the attention of sanitary authorities all over the world. The practice of cremation is no doubt a very good one and has been largely followed in India from times beyond memory. Very often on account of carelessness or want of sufficient fuel, cremation is imperfect; and half-burnt limbs and imperfectly calcined bones are not infrequently seen on cremation grounds or thrown stealthily into rivers. It is a matter of regret that first-class Municipalities, such as those of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras, have not yet succeeded in erecting suitable crematoria. There are no rules for the burial of the dead and intramural burial is very common. Grave-yards are to be seen in the midst of populous centres within a few yards of dwellings on the banks of rivers and lakes and close to wells. For fear of wounding the feelings of the people, no attempt is made at closing these yards. Even the rules for the burial of dead bodies are conspicuous by their absence in a great majority of places, and where they do exist, they are generally a dead letter. The Parsees are allowed to expose their dead in Towers of Silence. Carcasses of dead animals are seldom buried except in large cities. They are generally exposed to be devoured by vultures and wild animals. The practice of water burial can be seen on the banks of sacred rivers in this country. Old ascetics—*sanyases*—are generally given a water burial. Their dead bodies are immersed in deep rivers with a heavy stone tied to them. This practice ought to be put a stop to, as very often on the third or fourth day the body, disfigured by putrefaction and river fishes, can be seen floating

with a number of crows feasting upon it. The practice of the burial of still-born children in the rooms in which they are born has not as yet attracted sufficient attention even in large cities.

Objectionable trades. These add to the impurities of the atmosphere and therefore are deserving of notice. The pungent and irritating fumes from brick pot and tile burning are familiar to many. The fuel used in this trade is generally stable litter and city rubbish. The trade is very often carried on in the heart or on the out-skirts of cities and villages and its surroundings are generally very filthy. Burning of lime stone for mortar is another objectionable trade, frequently seen carried on in the midst of crowded localities. The slaughter of animals is very often made close to busy centres of population and blood and offal is frequently thrown into the streets. Well-built slaughter houses are found in only a few of the larger Municipal cities. Small tanneries exist in many places and curing of small skins is done by almost all shoe-and-leather-goods-makers of this country at their own places.

Other objectionable trades generally found in Indian cities are those of the milkmen who keep horned and milch cattle. Their stables, even when kept by private individuals, are most filthy. The liquid dung and urine are allowed to soak freely into the ground. The insanitary condition of these places is always a fruitful source of rinder pest and other cattle diseases which destroy thousands of cattle every year in this country.

Sheep-pens and pig-sties, kept by low caste people, though not as great nuisances as the preceding, require serious consideration from a sanitary point of view. These give out a peculiar penetrating odour, which is very sickening.

Horse and pony stables, kept for hackney purposes in large cities, are as bad as the cattle pens; no precautions being taken for the proper removal of dung and urine, which is allowed to sink into the ground.

The other objectionable trades are those of collecting and storing bones, horns and hoofs of animals, melting of tallow, dry fish and hide stores, skinning of dead animals &c. The effluvia arising from these trades, which are now ~~and~~ then carried on in many cities and rural districts, are injurious to health and require most careful vigilance on the part of sanitary authorities.

The erection of factories and other workshops within the last quarter of a century threaten to add one more evil to those that already exist. The smoke nuisance, which is so loudly complained of in Bombay, Calcutta and many other places, is an evil of considerable magnitude, and special legislation is required to compel the owners of factories, who burn large quantities of fuel, to consume their own smoke.

Conclusion.—These remarks on the sanitary condition of Indian towns and villages would be incomplete without a short account of the present state of Municipal and Local Boards finance, on which the whole question of sanitary reform obviously depends.

It is well known that Municipal and Local Boards, with a due mixture of the popular and official elements, were established throughout this country by that liberal-minded statesman and administrator, the Marquis of Ripon. It is very often said that Municipal institutions are an exotic growth in this country and will not flourish. This view, however, is not correct and it involves a fallacy. Manu, the oldest of Hindu Law-givers, has laid down what a township

should be. A description of Manu's ideas in the matter is given in Elphinstone's *History of India*, from which it can be clearly perceived that Municipalities or Corporate bodies, self-elected, self-taxing and self-governing, are of very ancient origin in India.

The people of India may be weak in their instincts when large interests are concerned, but they are keenly alive to the efficiency of their Municipal arrangements. It is true there is very great ignorance and apathy in the mass of the people, and there is, above all, the phenomenal poverty of the nation. These draw-backs are to be removed, and this must take time and require a large exercise of patience. The poverty of the people makes them impatient of Municipal burdens, and no large work of reform can be undertaken without considerable expenditure. Formerly Government advanced loans from public funds or extended its guarantee to Municipal loans. Government has shown considerable unwillingness of late years to follow this policy. The Municipalities, left to themselves, cannot borrow money on cheap terms. People cannot bear additional taxation, and so, from year to year, large undertakings have to be put off, till the work of reform becomes, if possible, more urgent and more expensive. Moreover, in rural areas, Local cesses were introduced professedly for improving communications and promoting education and effecting sanitary improvements. Out of every one anna charged as cess on the Rupee, levied as Land-revenue, 8 pies were to be devoted to Public-Works, including sanitary improvements, and 4 pies to education. Public Works, especially road-repairs, have gradually absorbed the 8 pies of cess Revenue, and very little is spent or can be spent in improving water-supply in small villages and towns. The Local Legislature passed last year a Village Sanitation Bill, but as it failed to provide the

means, the law has remained a dead letter. Unless sufficient funds are provided for, no real progress is possible in this connection. Boards and Committees are powerless in such matters, unless funds are provided to strengthen their hands. When the Local cess was introduced, the one anna charged on land Revenue was also charged on Abkari Revenue. The Local Government has, however refused, to recognize the claims of this cess on Abkari Revenue and has appropriated all the increase to itself. If a due share of the 8 pies, appropriated for Local Boards, were set apart for sanitation, and if it were supplemented by a contribution out of the increased Abkari Revenue, the Sanitary Boards will have a standing fund of their own, and they will be in a position to make slow but sure progress each year.

In large towns, facilities must be provided by the Government lending its guarantee to Municipal loans and thus enabling Municipalities to borrow large sums on reasonable terms. The present constitution of the Boards, half elective and half nominated, is all that can be desired. But without adequate funds, it is idle to expect that the Boards would ever be able to effect substantial reforms. It is a subject worthy of the consideration of this Congress how far it can bring the pressure of public opinion to bear on the Indian Government to initiate a more liberal policy in this matter by taking steps to increase the local resources of Sanitary Village and Taluka Boards.

Notwithstanding the many difficulties in the path of Local Self-Government, the admitted success of the past few years promises for it a more useful future. Let the Government for some time more continue to instruct and guide, and refrain from undue interference or official pressure, and let it further liberally help, where help is necessary, and the results will satisfy all who feel an interest in the prosperity of the people of this country.

RAJA SIR T. MADHAV RAO K. C. S. I.

A great name has passed into history. Raja Sir T. Madhav Rao,—“the Turgot of India,” as the late Mr. Fawcett justly styled him,—has departed, leaving on the sands of time foot-prints deeper and more distinct than have been made by any other Indian statesman of his generation. Outshining his compeers in intelligence and culture, and peering above his contemporaries in administrative tact and political sagacity, Sir Madhav Rao was an imposing figure in the arena of Indian politics. Towards the close of his life he suffered in the estimation of some of his countrymen and was attacked by some as an enemy to reform and was set down by others as but a mediocre thinker. Two circumstances combined to produce this erroneous view,—Sir Madhav Rao's contributions under the *nom de plume* of “A Native Thinker,” and his secession from the Madras Standing Committee of the Indian National Congress. The reflections, which Sir Madhav Rao published under the pseudonym mentioned above, were too cautious, not to say commonplace, for the ardent social reformer; nor were they such as to please the enthusiastic political reformer of the day in any greater degree. To this cause for dissatisfaction was added Sir Madhav Rao's withdrawal from the Congress Committee. Sir Madhav Rao, as is well known, withdrew because he disapproved altogether of the radical election scheme for the reform of the Legislative Councils in India, which was proposed by the Madras Committee and adopted by the National Congress assembled at Bombay in 1889. Sir Madhav Rao stood up for nomination and not for election, at any rate not for that mode of election which was suggested by

the Madras Committee and stamped by the Bombay Congress with its approval. The position which he had taken in this respect brought on him attacks from many quarters. Persons, who ought to have known better and thought better, misjudged him as an enemy of the Congress movement,—misjudged the man, who only a couple of years before had acclaimed the Indian National Congress as “the soundest triumph of British Administration and a crown of glory to the great British Nation.” Later events proved that Sir Madhav Rao was right in protesting against the Madras election scheme. However, let that pass. We do not intend to examine here Sir Madhav Rao’s position in reference to latter-day political movements in India. We propose only to take a brief survey of his remarkable career, and to portray, as faithfully as is possible within the limits of an article, Raja Sir T. Madhav Rao, the administrator, the politician and the statesman.

I

Madhav Rao was born at Cumbakonum in 1828. He was a Mahratta Brahmin by caste and belonged to one of those adventurous families, which in the palmy days of the Mahratta ascendancy in India followed the national flag to the southernmost corner of this Peninsula, settling at Tanjore and making that city the chief outpost of the Mahratta Empire in the south. During the troublous times of the latter part of the last century, when the British Power was making efforts to assert itself in South India, Venkat Rao, the uncle of Sir Madhav Rao, cast in his lot with the British. Recommended by his official superior to the Resident of Travancore, Venkat Rao entered the service of that State. By his remarkable ability he soon rose there to the post of Dewan. Venkat Rao’s brother, Ranga Rao, later on won laurels in the Travancore service. Madhav Rao was the youngest of Ranga Rao’s sons.

With the advantages of these brilliant family traditions, young Madhav had the rare good fortune to combine the benefit of a careful training under the care of that eminent educationist, Mr. E. B. Powell. The school career of Madhav Rao extended over only half a dozen years, but during that short time he made remarkable progress, and, according to Mr. Powell, showed such proficiency in Mathematics and Physics as would have secured him an honourable position even in the University of Cambridge. But Mr. Powell paid him a still higher compliment by getting him appointed to act for some time for himself as Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. Madhav Rao was hardly nineteen when he received this substantial recognition of his merits at the hands of his teacher. To this testimony might be added that of a former Resident of Travancore, who said "he had never met with a native of India who had obtained so thorough a mastery over the English language and so full an appreciation of English views in regard to politics and political economy." Thus equipped, Madhav Rao began life early in 1849 in the Accountant General's office at Madras. There he remained for a little over two years, when an offer was made to him to take charge of the education of the Princes of Travancore. Madhav Rao left British service and accepted the offer gladly enough, for the prospect of making his *debut* on the stage, where his uncle and father had played so conspicuous a part, could not but be pleasing to him. Well qualified as he was for the part he had undertaken, he acquitted himself most satisfactorily, and was four years later (in April 1853) appointed by the Maharaja, with the hearty concurrence of General Cullen, the Resident, to a responsible post in the Revenue line under the Dawan. Two years later the Maharaja recognized his services in the following terms: "The unaffected zeal with which

you undertook and satisfactorily succeeded in improving my nephews by imparting to them useful and liberal education, the ardour, interest and integrity manifested by you in the capacity of a public servant and the skill with which you have been conducting the affairs immediately under your guidance to my full and entire satisfaction are services too valuable to pass unnoticed or unrewarded." And the Maharaja promptly rewarded Madhavrao's services by promoting him to the office of Dewan, Peshkar or Naib Dewan,—a post next in importance only to that of the Dewan. The work which Madhav Rao did in his new capacity marked him out as a man possessing extraordinary administrative talents. The State of Travancore at this time was hopelessly rotten. Numerous petitions had been sent to the Madras Government by the subjects of the Raja and by Christian Missionaries, complaining of the misrule which prevailed in the State. The police force, it was complained, was a tremendous engine of oppression; prisoners were confined for very long periods without investigation, and many were acquitted after torture and long imprisonment; the regulations of the State were systematically set aside; appeal to the Resident brought no relief, since the Dewan was the Resident's *protege*; convicted criminals were suffered to be at large; the Ryot's complaints were unheeded; the system of the forced labour was rampant; incalculable evils arose from the pepper, salt and cardamom monopolies; the high Government officials were corrupt; men of the worst character were in some cases appointed to responsible offices; every appointment had its price; and, as a consequence, official power was abused, bribes extorted, justice perverted, the weak oppressed, the guilty shielded, and royal favourites amassed large private fortunes. When this distressful tale of anarchy and misrule reached the ears of Lord Dalhousie, he almost made up

his mind to annex the State ; but a second thought suggested milder measures. Through the Local Government he warned the Maharaja that the contingency of annexation was inevitable, unless averted by timely and judicious reforms. It was on such a scene and at such a time that Madhav Rao began his work of administrative reform. The Peshkars at the time we speak of varied in number from two to four and were all stationed at the headquarters. They did little responsible work and spent their time and energy in intriguing against the Dewan. Madhav Rao was disgusted with this state of things and suggested to the Maharaja that each Peshkar should be given responsible charge of a separate District, or group of Districts, subject, of course, to the general control of the Dewan. The suggestion was adopted and Madhav Rao was appointed to the Southern Division, comprising the very Districts from which complaints to the Madras Government had been most serious and numerous. And before even a dozen months had rolled by, the hand of a skilled administrator was seen at work in these Districts. The Political Officer described Madhav Rao's work in these words : " Within the short space of a year, Madhav Rao has called forth order out of disorder ; has distributed justice between man and man, without fear or favour ; has expelled dacoits ; has raised the revenues ; and his minutes and State papers show the liberality, the soundness and the statesmanship of his views and principles. He has received the thanks of his sovereign ; he has obtained the voluntary admiring testimony of some of the very Missionaries, who memorialized to the excellence of his administration." " Now, here is a man," remarked Mr. Norton, " raised up, as it were, amid the anarchy and confusion of his country to save it from destruction. Annexation, looming in the not far distant future, would be banished into the

shades of night, if such an administration as he has introduced into two of the Districts were given to the whole kingdom by his advancement to the post of Minister. He is indeed a splendid example of what education may do for the native." The hope, expressed here by Mr. Norton, was soon realised. Dewan Krishna Rao died in 1857; and though Madhav Rao was then only twenty-nine years old and had a senior competitor in the field, the choice of the Maharaja fell on him. It was approved by the Resident and finally confirmed by the Madras Government towards the end of 1858. Thus Madhav Rao surpassed the traditions of his family by reaching the high position of his uncle and father at the early age of thirty.

II.

In most cases thirty would certainly be deemed too early an age for so high a trust as that of a Dewan. But Madhav Rao's extraordinary talents and intellectual attainments more than made up for his immaturity of years. The task he had undertaken was one of rare difficulty;—it was that of rehabilitating a rotten State, of reforming and re-modelling an entirely disorganised administration. The picture that has already been presented of the condition of the districts, which Madhav Rao undertook as Dewan Peshkar to administer, did not represent the state of misrule in only an isolated spot; it applied to the whole State of Travancore, as it was at the time we are speaking of. With the public treasury nearly emptied; with payments and collections largely in arrears; with the public service made up, from top to bottom, of an army of voracious place-seekers, with whom corruption was second nature; with speculation, torture, false accusations and compulsory benevolences on behalf of the Sirkar as matters of every day occurrence; with the courts of justice turned into

they are born and very rarely get any clothing. They are generally half-starved and they rarely have a strong and healthy look. The bloom of health, which the cultivators in other countries have, is conspicuous by its absence in India.

Drainage. The drainage of surplus waters in hilly and mountainous countries is naturally effected by rivers, brooks and declivities of hills. It is generally good; but in low-lying districts, the drainage of villages, towns and cities, and of the plains cultivated with rice, is generally defective and injurious to the health of the people. Indian villages, towns and cities are generally built on the banks of rivers and streams with the object of securing a plentiful water-supply at hand; hence many of the villages and towns, with a very few exceptions, are built in low-lying districts, along the banks of rivers, in valleys and at the foot of the hills. The prevalence of malarious fevers among the generality of the population, such as agues, remittent fevers, brow-agues &c., is the natural consequence of this defective location. These malarious diseases prevail largely in rice-growing districts and in jungly tracts where copse wood abounds. The land is generally formed by the disintegration of trap and basalt rocks and granite mixed with vegetable debris, which accounts for the prevalence of malarious diseases. Even the gravelly and chalky lands are rendered unfit as eligible sites by reason of their being mixed up with vegetable matters. Wherever the natural drainage of a district is defective, malarious fevers to a large extent prevail there. In the rice fields where water has to be dammed up by embankments for the growth of the plants, there is no underground drainage except what may be provided by the porous or hard nature of the soil, and malarious fevers are the consequence. The villages, towns and cities, except a few of the latter,

are very badly drained. Artificial drainage there is none in the country, and even the natural drainage in the shape of the soil and conformation of the ground is interrupted by irrigation canals and roads and bridge-works in many places.

Burial grounds. Most of the Hindus burn their dead to ashes, which are then thrown into rivers, streams and tanks. This is a most salutary practice. A few Hindus, however, bury their dead. The Mussulmans, Christians and Jews also bury their dead. In villages, the burial grounds are generally at some distance from the inhabited areas. But in large cities the burial grounds are situated in the heart of the town. They act injuriously on the health of the population. They defile the air by effluvia arising from the crevices of the tombs or graves, and they contaminate by percolation the waters of the wells, situated in the neighbourhood of the burial grounds.

The prickly-pear. The prickly-pear round about villages and cities and towns, especially in the Deccan, has out-grown its proper limits. Though useful as a hedge-plant, when properly trimmed up, it has now grown to a most injurious extent in a great many places through the carelessness of the population. This exuberant and uncontrolled growth of this plant affects the health of the people injuriously.

Roads.—Since the advent of the English, the construction of cart roads, trunk roads, bridges, railways, &c., has done much to improve the sanitation and trade of the country; yet want of common cart roads in rural districts and out-of-the-way places throughout the country is acting most injuriously on the health of the population and of cattle.

Cattle-housing.—The practice of housing cattle, horses, asses and pigs in the dwelling houses prevails largely through-

out the country in rural districts. This practice facilitates the communication of disease from man to beast and from beast to man.

Demographic habits.

Drinking habits. The people are generally sober, but the vice of drinking, which existed formerly in the country to a very limited extent, is latterly making rapid progress and ruining many a family, poor and wealthy alike. Contact with Western civilization has given it a new and aggravated phase. The well-to-do people have commenced to prefer, and are largely consuming foreign liquors. The vice of smoking and chewing Tobacco is also widely prevalent in India. The use of Tobacco as snuff prevails much. All these uses of Tobacco prove injurious to health.

Opium is largely eaten and smoked in many parts of India, especially in the Panjab, Rajputana, Malva and Kathiawar. The habit is very injurious to health. It invariably produces a sort of mental depression. As a rule, mothers give their children small doses of opium to lull them to sleep, though the habit is dying out on this side of India at least. When the children grow up, the effects of the poison are not obliterated altogether.

The use of Indian hemp or *ganja* or *bhanga* among a large portion of the population is also very common, and has a very deleterious effect on the physique and morals of the people. Insanity in many cases is due to this habit. The mental deterioration produced by the use of *ganja* has turned many a person into an itinerant beggar.

The habit of masturbation has its victims amongst the people. This habit produces seminal weakness, despondency and general debility, and renders its votary a curse to himself all his life.

Fornication has victimized the urban population a good deal in India. The spread of gonorrhœa and syphilis is on the increase in large towns and cities, and even the poor villagers are not wholly free from it.

Bathing and cleanliness of the skin. The people as a rule bathe daily, especially the Hindus, but the bathing is merely nominal and not thorough. Hence they suffer from skin diseases.

Bodily exercises. Walking, running, riding, swimming, wrestling, fencing and other gymnastic exercises, such as swinging, moving about clubs, playing with bat and ball, and various other amusements are all popular forms of out-door and indoor exercises. The out-door exercises are not systematically practised except by those who resort to the gymnasiums called Talims. The higher classes are not equally well off in this respect. Want of exercise in those whose habits are sedentary, such as shop-keepers, traders, clerks &c., acts perniciously by producing such diseases as chronic dyspepsia, piles &c.

Polyandry, a barbarous and revolting practice, prevails on the Malabar coast amongst a caste called Nairs. Polygamy also prevails to a slight extent amongst the Hindus and the Musulmans. Both the practices are highly injurious to the growth of a healthy progeny.

Early marriages and unequal marriages, i. e. marriages performed when the disparity of age between the man and the woman is great, e. g. the marriage of a bride of 10 years with a bridegroom 50 or more, have also a large influence in deteriorating the races by whom they are practised.

Quarrels. The mention of domestic, civil and public

quarrels would appear ludicrous in this place, as they exist in India as well as in other countries on the surface of this globe and perhaps have common causes; but since they acquire a peculiar character in India from the existence of caste systems and heterogeneous religious systems, one cannot help mentioning them as they have a most baneful effect on the body, mind and conduct of the people.

Jatras and fairs. Pilgrimages to Benares, Prayaga, Gaya, Dwaraka, Jaggannath, Haridwar, Rameshwar, Dakur, Pundharpur, Amrutsar and other places entail hardships on the pilgrims besides inflicting on them the misery incidental to travelling by slow stages on foot or in country carts. The water is almost always dirty and filthy at these places. No matter how filthy the water at the holy places may be, the pilgrim delights to bathe in it and drink it with the object of washing off his sins and attaining heaven. Many diseases of an epidemic type, such as cholera and malignant fevers &c, break out at these Jatras and are spread over the country through infection by the returning tide of the pilgrims.

Fasting. The habit of observing fasts several days in a month amongst the Hindus, and especially among their fair sex, in propitiation of some imaginary deities is very common. They eat on fasting days ground nut, red potatoes, sweet-meats, fruits &c and suffer at times a good deal from Diarrhoea, Dysentery, Dyspepsia &c. This habit undermines the health of the persons who observe these fasts.

Caste system has prevailed in India from ancient times. It has wrought evils of great magnitude among the population. It prevents the unification of the different races and sows the seed of hatred and enmity all throughout the land. It restricts men in the choice of their profession and in

forming marriage alliances. It has demoralized the people and has checked the intellectual growth of the population.

The doctrine of fatalism prevails among the population to a most injurious extent. They believe that everything is decreed by fate and, no matter what precaution man takes, things will not fail to happen as has been pre-arranged by his destiny. These doctrines prevent many people from adopting precautionary measures in cases of dangerous diseases, or on the eve of great natural calamities. This fatalism has been acting injuriously on the mental and bodily condition of the people.

Idol Worship. Hindus, properly so called, are idol-worshippers. They worship idols, representing the so-called incarnations of Vishnu, such as Rama, Krishna, and Parsharam and of heroes, such as Hanmant, and Khandoba, and of holy saints, such as Tukaram, Dynaneswar, Namdev &c. They also worship trees, such as Tulshi, Pimpal, Ondumbar, and also animals, such as cows, bullocks, monkeys, mice and serpents. This evil practice has prevailed from times immemorial. It has perverted the minds of the people and has debased their intellect. It has checked the growth of civilization amongst them. It has retarded their progress in every department of the human life. Whatever flimsy pleas the old fashioned learned Hindus may bring forward in support of idol worship, whether on religious, philosophical or moral grounds, there can be no doubt that idol worship has not only demoralized the people to a fearful extent but has acted injuriously on their mind and even on their physical well-being. The observance of this idol-worship with its concomitant evils, such as fasting, and feasting, and bathing, and other debasing practices have proved most injurious to the mind and the body of the people.

Demon Worship. This practice, demoralizing and vicious as it is, has led the people to perdition and depravity. It is very common in India, especially among the Hindus. The fear of the devil causing harm and disease is a common belief. Idols of various imaginary devils such as Mhasoba, Vethal, Bhoollanath, Asra &c are worshipped and sacrifices of goats, sheep, cocks, coconuts &c are offered to appease the imaginary wrath of these imaginary devils. A good deal of harm is done to the people and large pecuniary losses are sustained by them by this belief. The fear of the devils, has the most pernicious effect upon the mind and body of the people and not a few fall a prey to this imaginary fear. The idol and demon worships are a bar to civilization.

Enforced Widowhood. This evil practice obtains among the upper classes of the Hindu society. It has entailed upon the poor widows a fearful amount of untold misery. It has produced demoralization, crime, misery and disease. The practice of observing fasts is very common among the Hindu widows. Poor widows eat on the fasting days parched grains, ground nut and fruits, and suffer at times terribly from the effects of this self-denial. The unwholesome food generally produces Dyspepsia, Diarrhoea and Dysentery. The poor widows are allowed to eat only one meal a day. They are prevented from wearing good and sufficient clothing. They are obliged to observe all the fasts prescribed by the Hindu religion. The prohibition of widow-marriage among the higher castes causes a large section of the female sex to be virtually useless in the promotion of household happiness and the multiplication of good progeny.

From this brief summary of the Hygienic and Demographic condition of the people of India, the necessary measures for the removal of the defects in these two conditions become

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self-evident. Government has done a great deal in improving the insanitary condition of the country by establishing Municipalities in cities, towns and large villages, which have done a great deal to improve the sanitary condition of the country. They have netted the country with Railways, made common roads, and trunk roads, and built large and small bridges. The Bombay Government has recently passed Village Sanitation Act, from which much good is expected in rural areas. They have besides introduced Sanitary Primers (in English and the Vernaculars) in schools and Colleges. The epidemics of small-pox, which were very frequent and virulent before, have been brought under control by most elaborate and efficient Vaccinating Departments, kept up and maintained all over India by Government. Government are also trying to diffuse a knowledge of the laws of sanitation in the country. The Missionaries also have done a great deal of good in this direction. They are teaching the people, wherever they can, the simple rules of health—the necessary conditions of physical well-being. The great problem in India besides having a sufficiency of pure water, good drainage in inhabited and cultivated areas, removal of excreta and other filth from dwelling houses, good ventilation of houses and streets, good roads, good privy-arrangements &c. is to modify the climate of the country which is so hot and inimical to health. There is only one way of doing it, viz, by planting as many tall trees over the arid plains of Hindustan as can possibly be done by public and private agencies.

THE SANITARY CONDITION OF THE TOWNS AND VILLAGES IN THE BOMBAY PRE- SIDENCY AND THE MEANS FOR IMPROVING THE SAME.*

The attention of the Government of India has been of late more and more drawn to the sanitary condition of Indian towns on account of the quarantine restrictions imposed by foreign powers on the commerce of the country. A great deal, no doubt, is being done for the improvement of the general sanitary condition of our large cities, but the apathy and habits of the people are so inveterate in certain matters that the question of sanitary reform in India is not one which admits of an easy solution. In this paper an attempt will be made to show what these varied circumstances are, and to give a general sketch of the sanitary condition of our towns and villages, with a view that it may be fully realized by those members of the Congress, who may never have visited India.

Situation and soil. In India, as in almost all other countries, the sites of cities and towns seem to have been chosen chiefly from considerations of defence from inroads from without, and close proximity to fresh water.

In not a single instance has it happened that these sites were selected on grounds of sanitary advantages or facilities,

* This paper was written by Dr. K. V. Dhurandhar, Medical officer and Superintendent of Vaccination, Baroda State and late Health Officer of Poona, at the special request of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha. Printed copies of it were sent early this month to Sir W. Wedderburn, the representative of the Sabha at the London Congress of Hygiene and Demography, that the paper may be read before the Congress on behalf of the Sabha.

hill sanatoria excepted. As a consequence of this neglect, the choice of the site is generally very unfortunate. The low-lying banks of rivers, or open plots at the foot of the hills or in the wide gorge of a valley, liable to flood—these are the situations where most of our towns and villages have been built. As a matter of fact, many towns and villages often seem to have been erected on what were formerly swamps, river beds, or ruins of old cities. They have been so built as to shut out the breezes all the year round instead of allowing them free access to sweep off miasmatic poisons. In many cases a wall is built all round the town or village, very useful once for protection, but now positively harmful. It is hardly necessary to enumerate the different diseases that go to swell the mortality returns and which are directly due to emanations from bad soils. The red soil, formed by the disintegration of granite, and made more unhealthy by rank vegetation of the forests in the Konkan, the "Cotton soil" of the Deccan, very absorbent of water, formed by disintegrated basalt and trap, and supposed to be very retentive of, if not generating, the cholera poison, the alluvium brought down by the Tapti, Narbuda, Mahi, Saburmati, Indus, Ganges, Godavari and Krishna and other rivers of this Peninsula, with a clayey laterite substratum exposed to heat and the winds and the rains, the immense marshy tracts of the Runn of Cutch—these ingredients of the soil have greatly favoured the insanitary condition of our towns and villages. The process of decay and corruption has gone on unchecked for ages, so that large tracts have become the permanent home of malarious fevers and cholera and other bowel complaints generally. A great deal, no doubt, can be done by costly works towards mitigating the evils arising from the conditions enumerated above, by scientific drainage of storm-floods and sullage and fæcal matter; but with

ivers, and the people use the same water for their domestic and other purposes. In some places, the towns and villages are situated on the banks of tanks and ponded streams. This is especially the case in Central India and Malwa. In these places, all manner of impurities from the inhabited areas are allowed to flow into these tanks. The animals are watered therein, persons bathe in them, clothing is washed there; and this water, so polluted, is freely drunk by the people. Persons observe calls of nature in the immediate vicinity of these rivers and tanks. In some holy places, such as Benares, Pandharpur, Alandi and others, the river water is rendered most filthy by a large concourse of people visiting these places at stated periods during the year, and large numbers of pilgrims fall an easy prey to cholera. All the fairs, called Jattras, which are periodically held in several holy places during each year, give rise to epidemics, from the fouling and scarcity of the water supply. The water from the tanks, protected with parapet walls and without steps to descend, is generally pure. These remarks, it is hoped, will suffice to give the Congress some general idea of the impurities of the Indian water supply. Lately large cities such as Bombay, Karachi, Poona, Ahmedabad, Allahabad, Agra, Calcutta, and Madras have been supplied with pure and filtered water brought from some distance, and delivered through pipes; but such instances are again the exceptions and not the rule. There is thus a paramount necessity for providing an ample and pure supply of water all over India.

Houses. The next subject which demands consideration relates to the houses of the people and the ventilation therein. Generally speaking, the people of India are badly housed. The houses are built low; the walls are made of mud, burnt or unburnt bricks, or stones

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or bamboos, or carved wattle covered with mud and cow-dung. The roofs are thatched with grass and straw. Some houses are tiled; some are roofed over with mud or brick and mortar, supported by rafters or timber. The houses in the villages are generally built apart, having some nominal compounds, built of stones or bricks, or of hedges of living plants or dead branches. The plinths are generally low, so much so that during the rains the floor gets wet and damp. These houses are provided with low doors, and the windows are few and small. In their place, small holes are kept in the walls just to admit a little light; but these holes are generally closed or stuffed with rags during the night to prevent air coming in. Houses in large towns and cities are better built, but the ventilating arrangements in these houses are generally lamentably defective. The food is cooked within the house,—detached cook-rooms are only found in Bangalows.

Privies. There are no privies in the villages; the people go to obey the call of nature out of the village or in the streets. In large villages and towns and cities, people generally have privies. The privies generally form part of the houses; detached privies are few. A most unsanitary, injurious and filthy practice of having privy pits, exists in some parts of the country. Surat, Belgaum, and Dharwar may be cited as instances. These pits are never cleansed and the foul matter is allowed to ferment and rot in the soil. In former times, occasionally some common salt was thrown over the ordure from time to time as a disinfectant; but since salt became so dear as at present, this became too expensive a process, and consequently it has fallen into disuse.

Ventilation. Light and air are purposely excluded from the houses in the majority of cases. The cultivators and other

working people enjoy the full benefit of fresh air during the day, but in their houses they have to breathe and rebreathe this foul air all through the night. This fouled air gives rise to coughs and consumption. When women are confined, they are shut up in rooms almost "hermetically sealed;" they breathe and re-breathe the limited and confined air for months together; the air is further vitiated by a lamp being kept up in the room burning day and night. Owing to these habits, many a woman falls prey to Pulmonary consumption without any hereditary taint. When a person is sick, he is generally confined in a room well closed up so as not to admit any air in. Many cases of fever thus become aggravated and end fatally. So the free ventilation of houses and huts is very defective in India. Nor is the street ventilation any better. The streets and alleys are generally narrow and crooked. The rows of houses are built without any aim to secure thorough ventilation. In large towns, the houses are mostly built close to one another without any interspace for ventilation and light between them. The street-ventilation is thus almost as bad as the inside house ventilation. The people of this country in their ignorance deprive themselves of the "lung food" so necessary to health and thus shorten their lives and lose many working days by illness.

Food. In the matter of food also, the people of India are very badly off owing to general poverty brought on by various causes; they have generally to pass their days on scanty fare. The frequent recurrence of famine, due mostly to scanty or irregular rain or no rain, has brought about a great deterioration in the physique of the people, besides causing immense mortality in the years when famine prevails. The people live chiefly on grains and vegetables. Animal food is used by some people, but sparingly, as they cannot afford to have

it daily. The staple food in some parts of the country, such as the North-West Provinces and Central India, is wheat; in the Deccan, it is Bajree and Jowaree; and on the sea coast, rice. Milk and Ghee, which were abundant and cheap before and were largely consumed by the people, have now become dear and scarce owing to the dearth of the fodder and want of sufficient grazing-lands for the cattle. The restrictions put of late on the grazing areas have had a very injurious effect on the health of the cattle and have still further stunted the supply of milk and ghee which once formed a principal part of the dietary of the people. The food supply of the people, however, is not a subject which can be properly dealt with in the Congress, as it is beyond the reach of public measures of relief, except in times of famine. There seems to be no necessity, therefore, of enlarging on it in this paper.

Clothing. The poor people continue generally in a state of half nudity. Even the cultivating and labouring classes are very scantily clothed. One blanket, a covering for the head and a strip of cloth about the loins constitute too often the only clothing of the male population; while a long cloth, called *saree*, and a covering round the chest, called *cholee*, constitute the dress of females. As for bedding, "the blanket, which you generally see the cultivator carrying about him, is his all in all." He uses one half of it as his bed and the other half covers him at night. He uses it as his hooded cloak during the rains and as a covering against the biting winds in winter. When he goes to the market, he uses it as his corn bag; and on great occasions and if a great man comes to his hut, he spreads it on the floor in lieu of a carpet. The female cultivator does not fare better than her husband. Her *saree* generally serves as her only covering at night, if she happens to have no ragged blanket to use as a bed. The poor children go about as naked as when

bazars of corruption ; with dacoits and marauders scouring the country by hundreds , and with the so-called Police requiring to be protected against instead of affording protection, the Travancore State was in a perilous plight indeed. When Madhav Rao was placed at the helm, he guided the State bark with such wisdom that it avoided the shoals of danger and entered into the haven of prosperity. How Madhav Rao did this we shall presently describe. Fully as he had imbibed the spirit of western life and western thought, and perfectly convinced as he was of the benevolent intentions of the British Indian Government towards the subjects of the Feudatory States, Madhav Rao discerned instinctively what was best in the British administrative machinery, and assimilated it gradually and wisely into the State under his control. In his letter to the Governor-General in Council, dated 9th August 1879, in connection with the transfer of Mysore to Native rule, Viscount Cranbrook observed that "the absolute security against internal revolt, which is now enjoyed by native rulers, entails upon them obligations towards their subjects which they cannot be allowed altogether to disregard. It is in the gradual and judicious extension in the Native states of the general principles of Government which are applied in British territory that their rulers will find the surest guarantee of their administrative independence, and the best safeguard against intervention on the part of the paramount power." What Viscount Cranbrook enunciated in 1879, Madhav Rao practically anticipated in 1853. He saw that the country had entered or was entering upon a new era, and that the old ways of thought and life, the old machinery of administration and the old methods of government were unsuited to the changed circumstances and new requirements of Native States. And the very first thing that he did on assuming the

reins of office showed what high ideal of Government he had set before himself. Travancore, like most other Native States, was given over to superstition and caste dominance. The Brahmins had dictated different modes of wearing clothes to the different castes, any deviation from which was jealously watched and checked not only by the Brahmins but by the different castes themselves, whose servile obedience to their selfish dictators affords a pitiful illustration of the depths of slavish degradation to which men can sink and in which they can remain not only without a sigh, but with pleasure and with pride. The Shanars or toddy-drawers of Travancore proved an exception to the debasing servility of the non-Brahmin classes to this spiritual tyranny. The women of these Shanars were, by custom and by Brahmin-made religious ordinances, prevented from covering the upper part of their person. When the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 was declared, the Shanars, encouraged by the Protestant Missionaries residing in South Travancore, protested against the practice and openly disregarded the degrading custom to which they had been subjected. The other superior castes pretended to read the great Proclamation (in the same way in which it has been more recently misinterpreted) as rivetting anew the bonds of custom and spiritual tyranny. — They thought the Proclamation guaranteed British non-interference in matters religious under any and every circumstance, and thus gave them the right to do what they liked, provided they did it in the name of religion. Things took a serious and turbulent affray ensued. Madhav Rao was now on his trial as an administrator. His difficulties were increased by the fact that the Resident and the Maharaja did not favour the cause of the Shanars. But Madhav Rao rose superior to caste-prejudices. He saw that the Shanars were right, and that important

principles were at stake in the struggle. At the same time, he saw the difficulty of quieting the disturbed state of feelings. There was serious rioting and it was a question how to conciliate the disputants. Madhav Rao went to the scene of the disturbance himself. A detachment of the Nair Brigade had preceded him to the spot. Some of the leaders of both parties were arrested, and without having recourse to extreme measures, Madhav Rao succeeded in restoring peace. The Shanars were granted liberty to dress as they chose, and the Maharaja's consent to this change was secured, though not without pressure from the Madras Government. The Resident, for his want of judgment, was asked to resign, and Mr. Francis Maltby, a man of talents and great official experience, succeeded him in the post. About six months after this appointment, the Maharaja died; and his nephew, Prince Rama Varma, was placed on the *gadi* on the 19th of October, 1860. With this young prince-pupil as his master, and a Resident of high character and enlightened views as his supporter, Madhav Rao began the work of administering the State with vigour and with skill. The most striking feature of the first few years of his administration was his great fiscal reforms, for which he was praised by Mr. Fawcett as "the Turgot of India." The finances of the State, as we have already noted, were in a hopeless condition. The chaotic fiscal policy that was pursued laid upon the people very heavily. There were oppressive monopolies and vexatious taxes of various kinds. The most oppressive of these was the pepper monopoly. Deducting the cost of collection, which was nearly one half of the gross income, this monopoly yielded a net revenue of a little over a lakh and a quarter of rupees. The proposal to do away with this revenue, when the finances were in a very critical state, was by no means an easy thing, and

even the boldest statesman might have hesitated before such a prospect. But Madhav Rao was equal to the task. The monopoly system was abolished and an export duty of 15 per cent. *ad valorem* was imposed to cover the loss in revenue. This duty was afterwards lowered to 9 per cent. and ultimately to 5 per cent. The question of abolishing the tobacco monopoly was next taken up. As a source of revenue, it was to the Travancore State what the opium monopoly has been to British India. "The monopoly system," said Madhav Rao in his report for 1863-64, "was open to objection for the double reason that the mode of deriving revenue was in itself opposed to sound fiscal principles, and that the taxation of the commodity was carried too far in reference to the power of the Sirkar to counteract the operations of the smuggler." The evils of the system were patent, and its abolition was necessary; nay, it became imperative when the monopoly of the same commodity in the adjoining British districts was done away with. Sir T. Madhav Rao proceeded cautiously in the work of this great reform. Instead of the Sirkar purchasing tobacco from contractors on its own account and selling it by retail to its subjects, Madhav Rao first permitted all dealers to import tobacco on their own and not the State account, provided they paid a certain import duty. The scale of duty was first a little high, and in consideration of its pressure, importers were allowed by the Sirkar the privilege of keeping their goods in hand,—a privilege without which the trade could never have prospered. Some time after, the duty was lowered; and a still further reduction was made later on. These light duties encouraged the growth of the import trade in tobacco to such an extent that, at the end of 1868-69, the import duty on a little over eight thousand khandies of tobacco brought in a revenue of Rs. 8,36,684; whereas in 1856-57,

the last year of the previous Dewan's administration, only about three thousand and a half of khandies were sold on the State account and the net revenue realized was 8,48,978 rupees. Thus while an enormous amount of smuggling was stopped and its demoralising effects were removed, the tobacco trade was freed from its fetters, and the loss to the State was represented by the paltry sum of a few thousand rupees. This achievement speaks volumes for Madhav Rao's financial genius. Having done away with these monopolies, Madhav Rao turned his attention to reforming the system of general taxation. Upwards of a hundred minor taxes were abolished, which, while they yielded little to the State, were vexatious to the subjects. The land-tax in one district, which was found to be excessively high, was reduced considerably. This involved a loss of revenue to the extent of about fifteen thousand rupees annually. In the middle of 1863-64, the export and import duties were reduced all round. In the following year, the commercial treaty between the British Government and the Sirkars of Travancore and Cochin was concluded. By this treaty, State duties on goods imported from and through British India or Cochin Sirkar territories were, with a few exceptions, removed. The relief to trade thus given was estimated at nearly a lakh and a quarter of rupees. The duties, levied in British India and Cochin on Travancore goods, were also taken off. Trade was thus freed from the burden of oppressive taxes amounting to many lakhs of rupees, and as a consequence, it progressed rapidly. Whereas in 1861-62, the exports were under three millions and a half of rupees in value, in 1868-69 they rose to no less than seven millions and a quarter, showing an increase of more than cent. per cent.

These great fiscal reforms in the administration of free trade brought in their train one great evil, namely, the enhancement

of the price of salt, which is one of the necessaries of life in India. The salt tax is really the most oppressive of imposts in the whole fiscal system of British India, and it is a pity that the Government of India, in its anxiety to promote the trade, makes light of this burden and imposes it freely even in independent States. Travancore, as a matter of fact, was lightly taxed in this respect before this agreement was made, and it was owing to the interference of the British Indian Government that the people of that State were subjected to the hardship of enhanced salt duties. Madhav Rao certainly was not responsible for the imposition of this tax, though it is but fair to remark that it was his duty, as it was within his power, to protest emphatically against this measure, despite the small chance he had of making himself heard effectively on the point.

After uprooting oppressive monopolies and reforming the fiscal system, Madhav Rao turned his attention to the improvement of the Public Service. The Travancore Public Service, as we have stated above, was under-paid and, as a consequence, thoroughly corrupt. Madhav Rao removed the main cause of corruption by raising the salaries to a respectable standard. The increase in the cost of the Police establishment was more than cent. per cent. and in the establishment charges of the Judicial Service, it was nearly as great. Next came the organisation of the Public Works and Educational Departments. Under the former head, the expenditure trebled itself in the nine years, 1861-70, and the expenditure on education was doubled during the six years, 1864-70. Besides the legitimate expenditure of the State on its large departments, Madhav Rao had to provide for a very extravagant expenditure of public money (amounting on an average to something like three lakhs and three quarters per annum) especially on the State charities, for which Travancore has always been renowned, for

feeding Brahmans gratis all the year round. Notwithstanding these heavy demands on the Treasury, Madhav Rao managed to pay off the whole of the public debt of Travancore amounting to many lakhs of rupees within a few years. During the reign of the previous Maharaja, the State had been brought to the very brink of bankruptcy, and when Lord Dalhousie warned him that if matters were not speedily mended, the British Government would be compelled to resort to annexation as the only remedy, a sum of five lakhs of rupees was borrowed from the Pagoda to meet the exigencies of the moment. This sum, together with the interest which amounted to half as much, was paid off by the end of 1868. This was no small financial achievement. When Madhav Rao assumed the administration, he started with an empty treasury, a heavy debt, and a voracious system of fiscal policy, which ate into the very vitals of the ryots. In a few years, the debt was liquidated; oppressive monopolies were abolished; numerous minor taxes were removed; and the customs duties were greatly reduced. All this involved a large sacrifice of public revenue. And yet, except in the case of the enhancement of the price of salt, for which Madhav Rao, as we have stated above, was not responsible, not a farthing was added to public taxation. Salaries were largely increased to improve the tone of the Public Service; large sums were devoted to works of public utility, and to the furtherance of education; a frightful waste of public funds for the purposes of mistaken charity, which Madhav Rao was not free to stop, had to be reluctantly sanctioned; and yet, with all this, State finances were so carefully managed that handsome surpluses were left to accumulate each year in the State coffers. In 1866, the Secretary of State for India expressed himself satisfied with the financial results of Madhav Rao's administration and congratulated him on his "enlightened

and able administration of the revenue department." Comparisons are generally odious, but still one cannot always avoid them, and we hope it will be thought excusable if a countryman of Sir Madhav Rao remarks with pride that the great Maratha statesman, in the narrow field in which he was called upon to work, did with ease and skill what has taxed to the utmost the resources and talents of British, Indian statesmanship, which, again, has achieved no better result than barely to make the two ends meet and this with the public debt and public taxation doubled all round.

The success of the financial policy pursued by Sir T. Madhav Rao was not marred by any inattention to the paramount claims of improving the efficiency of the Public Service generally. The reorganisation of the Police Department was taken up by Sir T. Madhav Rao in the early years of his administration. The wants of the Department were: "First, increased pay; secondly, increased strength; and thirdly, more method and discipline." And all these defects were removed in the course of a few years by a steady and watchful attention to details. The administration of justice was placed on a sound basis. The Civil Procedure Code of British India, the Criminal Procedure Code, the Law of Limitation and the Registration Act were introduced one after another with such modifications as the conditions of the State demanded. An experienced Judicial officer from the Madras Presidency was nominated to the Post of Chief Justice. Well qualified men were appointed as Zillah Judges; qualified Vakils were admitted to plead in their courts; and the number of Munsiffs was doubled, each Taluka being provided with one Civil court. The jurisdiction of these Munsiffs, as also that of the Zilla Judges, was defined and enlarged and placed under check by a careful system of appeals; and lastly the Munsiffs were invested with

powers to decide small causes finally. No less noteworthy was the reform in the administration of the land-revenue. The Travancore Sirkar does not claim to be the sole land-lord of public land. More than half of the cultivated land belongs to private owners and to Pagodas. The remaining State lands are farmed to tenants, and were, previous to Madhav Rao's administration, subjected to an arbitrary and a constantly increasing rack rent. It was not uncommon for one ryot to dispossess another of his land simply by offering to pay more rent to the State. The feeling of insecurity, to which this gave rise, told heavily on agriculture, and greatly reduced the saleable value of the Sirkar lands. Madhav Rao fixed the assessment on these State lands, and their holders were recognized as possessing heritable, saleable and otherwise transferable property in their lands. The ryots were assured that they would be allowed to enjoy their lands undisturbed so long as they paid the appointed assessment, which was to continue unaltered till circumstances required a general revision. The land-tax, it may be here noted, was fixed very moderately, being in most cases below one-fourth of the net produce. Side by side with this wise measure, regulations were made to facilitate the sale and reclamation of waste lands. The cultivation of coffee, which before Madhav Rao's administration was almost unknown, received great encouragement under the new regime. In 1869-70, nearly seventeen thousand tubs of coffee, valued at about three lacs and a half of rupees, were exported, and the export duty on this article brought in something like seventeen thousand rupees. Along with coffee, tea-cultivation also began to flourish. Experiments in cinchona-gardening were also made under Sirkar management. Thus, while a great impetus was afforded to the extended cultivation of lands and the growth of new and remunerative crops, taxation was kept within very moderate bounds, and the

security of possession and freedom of transfer were fully guaranteed to all the Ryot-holders of Sirkar lands. As a consequence, the land revenue went on rising, year by year. In 1861-62, it brought in a little over fourteen lakhs and a half of rupees to the State treasury; and in 1869-70, this amount rose to no less than seventeen lakhs of rupees.

Since the *regime* of Venkat Rao, Madhav Rao's uncle, no public works of any importance or magnitude had been undertaken by the Travancore State, excepting one masonry bridge. Madhav Rao organised a regular Public Works Department in 1860 and he made large grants of State money for pushing on a forward P. W. policy. A trunk road from the Capital to the southern extremity of the State, extending over more than fifty miles, was thoroughly repaired. A net-work of branch roads, extending in all to between a hundred and hundred and fifty miles, was laid in south Travancore. Two ghat-roads, together with a road crossing and connecting these latter, were also constructed at great expense. To these trunk roads, measuring several hundreds of miles, were added many lines of village and town roads. A large scheme for the extension of water communication was also projected. A splendid iron girder bridge was erected in South Travancore and smaller bridges of the same sort were put up by scores over many rivers and streams in the State. A light-house was constructed at Aleppy. A commodious College building was commenced, and numerous public offices were built throughout the State. Altogether Madhav Rao undertook "great and enduring works" during his ministry, and "estimably enhanced the material prosperity of the country."

"If the public works in Travancore owe to Madhav Rao

so much," remarks the writer of the article on Sir Madhav Rao in the *Calcutta Review*, "education owes to him still more. There was but one English school worth the name in the whole of Travancore, and as for vernacular schools there were none. Alive to the great importance of education, as exemplified in his own case, he strove ceaselessly to extend its benefits to Travancore." We have said in a previous part of this article that the State expenditure under this head went on increasing year after year. The old English school was re-organised and a full-grown Arts' College was added to it. As feeders to this central institution, sixteen English schools were opened in the districts. In 1865-66, an annual outlay of twenty thousand rupees was sanctioned for the furtherance of Vernacular education. In addition to this provision for the education of males, three girls' schools were started. All these additions doubled the State expenditure on education in the course of half a dozen years.

This brief review of the leading features of Madhav Rao's administration of Travancore for fourteen years will give an idea of the high ideal aimed at and the great success achieved by him during this period of his life. In his own words, it was his cherished aim "to provide for every subject, within a couple of hours journey, the advantages of a doctor, a school-master, a judge, a magistrate, a registering officer and a post-master." Progressing steadily towards this ideal, he "banished annexation into the shades of night." He found Travancore a den of misrule;—he left it "a model Native State." The Madras Government went on complimenting Madhav Rao on his administrative success from year to year and the Secretary of State echoed the praise in no faint voice. In 1862, when Madhav Rao visited Madras in company with the Maharaja, he was appointed a Fellow of the Madras University.

When he next visited Madras, following the Maharaja, who proceeded thither for his investiture with the Insignia of the "Star of India," he received his own Knighthood. Sir Madhav Rao resigned his office a few months after, and the Maharaja settled on him a pension of a thousand rupees per month. The retired Minister retired to Madras with a reputation already made.

The high ideal that Sir Madhav Rao had placed before him, though not fully attained, was well nigh reached. The State was set in order and it was for his successors to perfect the administrative machinery he had so skilfully adjusted. *Cen'est que le premier pas qui coute*, as the French proverb rightly says, and the "first step" taken by Sir T. Madhav Rao in the work of reforming and re-modelling the Travancore State was indeed a giant stride.

After his retirement, Sir Madhav Rao was offered a seat in the Viceregal Legislative Council, but for some reason or other he was compelled to decline the honour. He was only forty-five years at this time and that was hardly the age for him to retire from public life. He was not, therefore, to remain inactive long. Maharaja Tukoji Rao Holkar offered him the Dewanship of his State. Sir Madhav Rao accepted the offer and went to his new field of activity in 1873.

At Indore he had not much scope for his administrative talents, hedged round as he was in every department of administration by the all-powerful will of the Maharaja. Yet when he left the State, every department of the State showed the work of his reforming hand. It was during his administration that he brought about the reconciliation of Tukoji Rao Holkar with Jayaji Rao Shindia, and thus put an end to long-standing disagreements. While at Indore, Sir Madhav Rao was

invited to go to England to give evidence before the House of Commons Committee on Indian finance, but he was not able to accept the invitation.

III.

Just at this time, a storm was brewing in a Native State of considerable importance. Under Maharaja Malhar Rao, Baroda was realizing all the horrors of despotism. The cancer of corruption had entered into the vitals of all departments in the State and oppression was rampant. Numerous petitions were sent by the Gaekwar's subjects to the Resident at Baroda, complaining bitterly of misrule. The Hon'ble Mr. Rogers thus described in his minute the state of things at Baroda, as disclosed by the report of the special Commission of inquiry. "A people arbitrarily taxed at the pleasure of a selfish man, surrounded by courtiers aware of the uncertain tenure of their position and eager to amass riches while they have the opportunity; the right to levy the taxes farmed out to whosoever pays the heaviest bribes (for the Nazaranas levied can be called by no other name) and who obtains not only fiscal but civil and criminal jurisdiction also, but in return is exposed to be deprived of his purchased right without warning by another paying a heavier bribe; a custom, excused by the Commission on the ground that it is a well-known custom, of levying the revenue, not by any reasonable process of law, but by the bodily torture of the cultivators of the soil; justice almost openly administered by ignorant and corrupt tribunals by means of torture (the flogging case, in which one man died, leaves no doubt of this in my mind), and capable, when called to account, of falsifying records and shameless perversion of the truth; old retainers of the State and relatives and trusted advisers of former rulers cast ruthlessly

on the world without the means of gaining their livelihood, petty chiefs roused to desperation by new exactions; debts, due to bankers, to whom the State has been under great obligations, repudiated, and their private property confiscated without a shadow of excuse, they themselves and the members of their families being kept prisoners without any charge being brought against them and without even the semblance of a trial; tradesmen offering jewels for sale simply swindled out of their fair value; women, the wives and daughters of respectable men, seized in open day in the Capital of the kingdom, ordered into domestic slavery in the Gaekwar's Palace by himself personally, sometimes dishonoured by attendants and fearing to come forward to tell the story of their shame before the world; —such was the tale of woe and horror disclosed by the inquiry which brought on as a consequence its own retribution. Our readers know how it compelled Government to resort to a drastic remedy. When the bold step of deposing Malhar Rao Gaekwar was resolved upon, the next question which had to be considered related to the form of the administration to be set up. Annexation was out of the question as opposed to the most solemn pledges given by Government. Lord Northbrook wisely resolved to conciliate public sentiment by discarding the usual plan of setting up a British officer to rule the State during the young chief's minority, and proceeded to try the noble experiment of entrusting the work to a native statesman who enjoyed the confidence of the Government and the good will of the people. Sir T. Madhav Rao was called upon accordingly to undertake the work as being the best and perhaps the only man for the post.

Sir T. Madhav Rao's work at Baroda did not differ in kind from the work he had to do at Travancore twenty years before, but it much differed from the latter in dimensions.

Sir Madhav Rao, being the trusted nominee of the British Government, had the disadvantage of going to his work at Baroda with the people around him full of suspicion and fear, for they looked upon him as the representative of an intruding authority. Besides, the tyranny and misrule, which he had to undo at Baroda, was much greater and much more wide-spread than at Travancore, and the difficulty of strengthening the foundations of a good Government were immensely more trying. There were claimants to the Baroda Gadi, who were busy in intrigues, fancying that the stars might favour them some time and that they would have their day of good luck. These had to be quieted and ultimately defeated. Sir Madhava Rao dealt gently with these intriguers. He relieved them of heavy accumulated debts, made liberal provision for their maintenance, and treated them with consideration. Madhav Rao had also to face the difficult problem of depriving a large number of the ex-Maharaja's dependants, who had lavish grants conferred on them during the previous *regime*, of their unmerited allowances without at the same time provoking general discontent. This was done by means of cash grants and by giving them in addition a moderate subsistence allowance on condition of good behaviour. Next, there were various complicated pecuniary claims pending against some of the leading members of Mulhar Rao's administration. These were got rid of by summary compromises. There were, again, the complaints of Native bankers to be disposed of. Under the old order of things, rich banking firms were entrusted with the management of public funds on behalf of the State. The allowances of several of these had been discontinued by the late Maharaja and their services dispensed with. These prayed for the restoration of their allowances. Some of them also claimed the restoration of their private property which had been confiscated

during the past *regime*. The settlement of these complaints was really a difficult affair, but Sir Madhav Rao did the work with consideration and tact. Equally difficult was the work of settling the claims of jewellers, who complained that their jewels, taken away for inspection, had been neither purchased nor returned by the ex-Maharaja, but were needlessly detained. In deciding these applications, Sir Madhav Rao had to make his way through scattered and uncertain data, and, in many instances, where the circumstances would not brook delay, he had to lay down a rough basis of settlement and order payments with reference thereto, pending a closer scrutiny at leisure. The allowances of some of the near relatives of the late Maharaja had also to be satisfactorily settled or re-adjusted. The claims of some of the members of Maharaja Khanderao's family, who had their allowances stopped by Mulhar Rao and were treated with unjust severity by him, had also to be considered and decided. Besides these complicated claims, there were cases in the nature of private suits, the main complaint in which was that the ex-Gaekwar had misdecided the suit, or that he had unjustly abrogated a decision of his predecessor. The disputes between the Sirdars and their bankers were a further source of vexation. These difficulties were all successfully met by Sir Madhav Rao, and the British officers, who watched events carefully in the early years, were most favourably impressed with the Minister's wonderful tact.

When these difficulties were settled, Sir Madhav Rao undertook the formidable task of forming a well-regulated system of administration. He well knew that it would be unwise to hastily thrust a foreign administration upon the people of the State, and he therefore proceeded slowly but surely. "We have resisted the temptation," he wrote in his first Administra-

tion Report, "to enter upon an ambitious course of legislation. It would be premature to make and promulgate regular and rigid laws. A simple population must be unable to understand and therefore unable to act up to minute, elaborate and intricate provisions. What they desire is substantial justice. What they dislike is a system of technicalities, the object of which is not apparent to their rough intelligence and the action of which they conceive to be only the defeat or the delay of justice." So that the programme of administration which Sir Madhav Rao marked out was mainly intended to maintain public order and tranquility; to redress the evils of the past mal-administration; to establish a machinery for the proper administration of justice and create a Police commensurate with the extent of the country; to promote education; to provide suitable medical agencies; to reduce taxation and enforce economy in expenditure; and permanently to keep the expenditure fairly below the receipts, so that a surplus may become available as a provision for adverse seasons and available also for further administrative improvements.

The administration of justice under the old rulers occupied a very subordinate place in the list of public duties. Sir Madhav Rao allotted to it the position and importance to which it is entitled according to the ancient Hindu and modern European ideas. The Public Works Department was brought into being for the first time and adequate resources were placed at its disposal. The finances of the State, which had fallen into utter disorder, were placed on a sound footing, and all existing resources carefully husbanded; Previously revenue farmers made enormous gains and a venal and selfish order of officials favoured them and enriched themselves at the cost of the State and its subjects. Sir Madhav Rao wrote a very telling paragraph on this subject in his first Administration

Report. "It was an exchequer", he wrote in the words of Burke, "wherein extortion was the assessor, fraud the cashier, confusion the accountant, concealment the reporter, and oblivion the remembrancer." Sir Madhav Rao faced this most difficult financial problem with confidence, rescued the finances from all the old embarrassments and confusion, introduced honesty and integrity into the administration and assured the solvency of the State as thoroughly as he had done at Travancore. He placed the land revenue system upon a sound basis, substituting the ryot-wari for the old farming system, thus making a clean sweep of all the vexatious and extortionate incidents of the latter system. The following was the triangle within which the lines of his financial policy were laid out: (1) to simplify and purify the taxation of the country and so to fix it that it may last unaltered for a good period of years; (2) to fix scales of expenditure for the several departments of the State so that the limits thus imposed may continue unchanged also for a considerable term of years; (3) to insure in ordinary cases a fair surplus over expenditure, so that a surplus may accumulate and be available in bad seasons to meet extraordinary demands.

It is hardly necessary here to go further into the details of Sir Madhav Rao's internal administration at Baroda, to tell how he evolved order out of chaos, introduced honesty and efficiency into the administration, improved the finances of the State, relieved the people from vexatious taxes, carried out a vigorous Public Works policy, made provision for the protection and education of the people, afforded them medical relief free of charge, placed the administration of justice on a sound footing and assured continuous progress and prosperity all round. We shall content ourselves with only sketching, in Sir Madhav Rao's own words, the

broad outlines of the work he did during the five years he was at Baroda. "It would be false modesty," he wrote in his last Administration Report, "to disguise the fact that during these five years, our work has been exceedingly heavy and trying, for the fact accounts for our visible delays and deficiencies. It is not simply that we have had to carry on ordinary current business. We have had to investigate and decide a multitude of matters inherited by us, which in number and complexity are probably unsurpassed in any other Native State. We have had to organise the machinery of Government. We have had to carefully consider and carry out vital reforms. We have had to bring under control a vast expenditure in all its dark and intricate ramifications. We have had to rectify our relations with our numerous and diversified neighbours. In this respect, grave and embarrassing aberrations from sound principles had, in course of time and neglect, sprung up, and their correction presented peculiar difficulties. We have had to bring them to the notice of the authorities concerned, to explain, to discuss, to convince and sometimes to respectfully expostulate. The extra strain thus caused has, however, begun now sensibly to diminish, and it is therefore hoped that we shall be increasingly enabled to devote our time and energies to the development of internal improvements. It must be frankly admitted that there is still abundant scope for our exertions in this direction. All we claim to have done is that we have fulfilled the primary obligations of a civilized Government."

Such is the tale of Sir Madhav Rao's administrative work at Baroda. We would have gladly recorded in detail the strength and completeness of the work he did there, but we must resist that temptation as our space is but limited. There was one feature of his administration, however, in regard to

which Sir Madhav Rao has been strongly attacked in some quarters, and it is necessary to dwell upon this subject with more fulness of detail.

It is contended by some critics that Sir Madhav Rao failed to safeguard the interests of the Baroda State, when they clashed with those of the Imperial Government, that he yielded without a protest to the aggressive policy of the British Indian Government, that, in a word, the State was nothing to him if only he could win a smile in high quarters. We think such a charge could only be made by those who are ignorant about the actual facts of the situation. Sir Madhav Rao was not at all responsible for whatever injuries the State might have suffered during his *regime*. Wherever and whenever he thought that the interests of the State were in jeopardy, he protested against outside pressure in the strongest terms possible. Beyond this he was powerless to do anything. He had to yield, as any other politician in his situation would have had to do, when the Supreme Government's ruling was peremptory and inexorable. In most cases, however, his protests resulted in a compromise,—a great achievement, when we remember how difficult it is to get the Government of India to budge an inch from their superior position in their dealings with Native States. So that what ignorant and irresponsible critics have blamed Sir Madhav Rao for is precisely that which brings him out as a high-class politician.

To exemplify our remarks, let us take the salt question. The British Government, besides prohibiting the manufacture of salt in the Baroda State, claimed the right to work salt-pans within the Gaekwar territory, and demanded the exemption of salt so manufactured from the Baroda duties. Sir Madhav

Rao protested that the right to levy these duties belonged exclusively to the State and that the British Government was not justified in demanding exemption. "Apart from the question of right," he added, "it is clear that the opening by the British Government of salt works within the Gaekwar territory is undesirable. However affairs may have been managed in past years, when neither the ruler nor the subjects had any precise ideas of right and justice, in these days such matters are better understood, and a steady progress (no doubt the result of the close contact with the British Government) has set in towards the definition of the rights of the State and of individuals. Such being the case, the opening of the salt works, which will render necessary the presence of the servants of the British Government within the territory of the State, and transactions of various kinds between them and Gaekwar ryots, may lead to collisions and conflict of jurisdiction. It appears to me that there is every reason to deprecate such a source of probable trouble and unpleasantness." Again, when the question was raised, whether or not the Baroda Government was prepared to extradite to the British local authorities certain persons found in Baroda territories, and accused by those authorities of having taken thereto a quantity of salt in contravention of British fiscal laws, Sir Madhav Rao strongly deprecated this demand of the British Government. "It would," he respectfully submitted, "be a needless and injurious interference with the recognised integrity of Native States' internal administration to permit British officials and peons to enter Baroda territories anywhere and at any time to seize persons and property, to search goods and packages in transit &c. under fiscal rules of their own and which have no operation in these territories. Such a course would probably lead to great hardship to our

subjects in many ways, and to collisions of authorities and to unpleasantness in many respects between both Government, while the policy aimed at is to simplify relations and to render them the most smooth and cordial." Further, when the officers of the Salt Department of the British Government cited two or three instances in which extradition was granted by the previous Administration, and therefore asked Sir Madhav Rao's ministry to do the same, he gave a characteristically emphatic reply, saying that the transaction of business in former times was lax or inexact, that important and necessary considerations were often overlooked, that things were often done to meet the exigencies of the passing moment without looking to the future, and that, therefore, proceedings of the sort in past times could not with justice be construed as precedents and made binding for all the future. But what was the result of all this? "It is plain from reports to be found in this and previous correspondence," wrote the Agent to the Governor-General at Baroda under instructions from the Government of India, "that the existing condition of things makes it very difficult for the Government of India to release the exercise, in this matter, of the rights which, as has been before observed, the British Government has long possessed." Thus there was an end of the matter. But with regard to the aggressive policy cleverly planned by the salt authorities, Sir Madhav Rao was able to secure a compromise. "The Government of India," the Baroda ministry was informed, "is willing to agree that, if Baroda will undertake the effective prevention of illicit manufacture and collection of salt and of contraband traffic in the Baroda territory, that Government will engage not to open salt works in Baroda without due notice, the terms of notice to be a matter for future adjustment."

And under the circumstances, what else could Sir Madhav Rao have done than agree to the compromise ?

To take another question,—the opium revenue. The British Government desired to conserve the revenue derived from opium by themselves as well as the Baroda Government, and proposed on that account to forbid the cultivation of the poppy in the Gaekwar's territory. Sir Madhav Rao protested that the object in view did not require the radical measure of prohibiting the cultivation of the poppy in Baroda territories,—a cultivation which had been going on from very old times and which had attained a considerable magnitude. "I feel justified," he wrote, "in most strongly deprecating such a measure, and indeed any measure which might have even a tendency to that consummation. Any measure, having for its aim the immediate or ulterior suppression of the production of opium here, cannot but be as unfair and as unwelcome to this Native State as to any Native State of Malwa. Very large vested interests have grown up in process of time, and these cannot, I submit, be summarily swept away." "Any measure" he further represented, "having the effect of sooner or later destroying the production of opium in Baroda territories would not only prove ruinous to the agricultural and commercial industries therewith connected, and to the revenues therefrom derived by this State, but would also, I submit, be prejudicial to British interests," for the British Government would thereby be losing an annual revenue (in past duty) of about twelve lakhs of rupees. Various other reasons were assigned by Sir Madhav Rao in support of his position. The outcome of his protest was that the State was asked to establish a monopoly of its own in regard to opium. Sir Madhav Rao next made out a strong case against the establishment of a monopoly, but the reply of the Government

of India was peremptory and stopped any further discussion. "There is, no doubt, considerable force in the objections stated by Sir Madhav Rao to an absolute State monopoly, but the system has been worked successfully in Bengal for a long series of years, and if rules analogous to those of Bengal are followed, there are fair grounds for believing that it will succeed in Baroda also." Thus the Bengal system of monopoly was forced on the Baroda Government and Sir Madhav Rao was compelled, as any other man in his position would have been, to reluctantly submit. "Though His Highness' Government," he wrote, "still continue of opinion that less drastic measures than the one just mentioned are fairly available and ought to be tried, yet yielding to the pressure of the situation, we accept what, for the sake of brevity, may here be designated the Bengal system." Thus the monopoly system was forced on the State notwithstanding Sir Madhav Rao's energetic opposition to its introduction. One good, however, came out of his protest. An important concession was made to the Baroda Government. "It should be pointed out to the Agent to the Governor-General," said the resolution of the Bombay Government dated the 6th April 1878, "that in accepting as satisfactory the arrangements now proposed by the Minister, a very material and important concession is made to the Gaekwar's Government. Under the Convention of 1820, the manufacture of opium in the Baroda territory was strictly limited to the quantity required for home consumption, but under the scheme now proposed, permission would be granted to manufacture opium not merely for home use but also for export through British territory." Again we ask what more could Sir Madhav Rao have done in this affair to safeguard the interests of the State?

To take another instance,—the *Giras* question, The

Bombay Government were of opinion that the fact of a Mahal Girassia returning to his home in the Gaekwar's village did not forfeit his guarantee. Mahal Girassias were Girassias, who before the agreement of 1825 left their homes in the Gaekwar's villages, where they had *giras* rights and went to reside in the villages of the Mehvasi Zemindars in the Rewa Kanta. The view taken by the Bombay Government with regard to these Girassias, Sir Madhav Rao protested, would change the express provisions of the Kalumbandi of 1825, wherein the guarantee to them was made conditional upon the place of residence. He submitted that what was expressly a conditional guarantee, and had always been so, should not be made absolute. There was a very good reason for giving that conditional guarantee. Certain Girassias, residing originally in Baroda territory proper, had gone over to live in the villages of the Rewa Kanta Zemindars. Under the Kalumbandi of 1825, these Zemindars were responsible for the good behaviour of these emigrant Girassias, but since the Zemindars could not be justly held responsible for the good conduct of the Girassias while the latter had no security for the regular receipt of their dues, it was arranged for the sake of the Zemindars that the rights of Girassias under their control should be guaranteed. But when any one of those Girassias returned to Baroda territory proper, the responsibility of the Zemindar for his good conduct ceased, and there was no longer any reason for the continuance of the guarantee. Thus it was that the guarantee was conditional upon the place of residence of the Girassia, and "the making of a conditional guarantee an absolute one," Sir Madhav Rao protested, "would bring under guarantee many Girassias who are living in the territories under the direct administration of this Sirkar and in whose case there is no reason whatever for any guarantee any more than in the case

of the rest of the large body of Girassias." But what was the outcome of this? The Government of India sided with the Bombay Government and ruled "that the guarantee of a right to *giras* or *wonta* is not affected by the place of residence of the holder of the guarantee." What have Sir Madhav Rao's critics to say to this?

Again, in regard to the remission of tribute due from different Darbars to the Baroda Sirkar. The Political Agents attached to these Darbars forwarded applications for remission to the Baroda Government whenever there was a diminution in the revenue of the tribute-paying Darbars, whose tribute the British Government had engaged to collect and pay into the Baroda exchequer. Sir Mahadav Rao represented that the mere fact of the decrease in revenue in any given year was not sufficient to establish a claim for remission. He advocated that when a tribute-payer realized a revenue exceeding that standard with reference to which the tribute was originally fixed, he had no right to claim any remission of tribute. The tribute was permanently fixed at the time of Colonel Walker's settlement in 1807 with a view to obviate fluctuation of the amount and consequent disputes,—an arrangement by which the Gaekwar Government had sustained a heavy loss as the revenues of the tribute-paying States had since considerably increased. "Heavy as the sacrifice has thus been on the part of the State," he represented, "it is entitled to at least the benefit, inadequate though it be to that sacrifice, of not being called upon to entertain claims for remission whenever the tribute-paying States choose to advance them." He further claimed the right of the Baroda State to refuse, if it chose, the remission applied for. The Government of India wrote in reply "that impoverished circumstances, by which term is meant such a falling-off in the

revenue from causes not directly attributable to the misconduct of the Tributary as to render payment of the tribute impossible with a due regard to the proper maintenance of the Tributary, is always to be considered a sufficient reason for a remission in the tribute," and that they were empowered and morally obliged to demand remissions from the tribute in every case in which a necessity existed for granting the indulgence. And as for the right claimed by Sir Madhav Rao, the Resident at Baroda was instructed to say "that the question of our right to demand remission should not be entertained at all or any further inquiry instituted, but that we should at once maintain that it has always existed, and from its having been so long in abeyance, it is much to be feared that it will now be necessary to act upon it very extensively." Before this decision was arrived at by the British Government, Sir Madhav Rao had represented forcibly his views to the following effect :—" I may mention here that Travancore pays to the British Government the very large sum of eight lakhs per annum. A little before I took charge of that administration, the State was on the point of total insolvency. It tried hard to get a remission from the British Government. But the British Government would not listen to the application. On the contrary, the British Government threw out a broad hint that it would take charge of the State and manage its administration, if the finances should continue so bad as to make the payment of the subsidy difficult. Since that, the subsidy has been paid with unerring punctuality." The appeal, however, was made in vain, and Sir T. Madhav Rao had to yield at last.

In all these cases, did not Sir Madhav Rao fight sturdily in the interests of the State? A number of other instances might be cited, which would make it clear beyond the shadow

of a doubt that Sir Madhav Rao endeavoured energetically to safeguard the interests of the State. In the face of this testimony, it is idle to say that he yielded without a protest to the aggressive demands of the British Indian Government. He strongly protested whenever he thought the rights and welfare of the State were in danger. When he found that there was little chance of his views being accepted as a whole, he tried a give-and-take policy and agreed to a compromise. In some cases he succeeded, but at times it availed nothing, and he had to yield, however unwillingly.

Another point on which Sir Madhav Rao has been roundly found fault with was the fact of his having sent for the sanction and approval of Lord Ripon's Government a draft constitution proposed to be enforced in the Baroda State on the installation of the young Gaekwar to the Baroda Gadi. It was contended that Sir Madhav Rao's constitution would have reduced the Baroda State to a mere Zemindari. We have no space to discuss that constitution here and show the hollowness and unwisdom of this criticism. It is but fair to note the contention of the adverse critics that enough time had not been given for a constitution to grow from within, and that it was premature to enforce a cut and dry system of alien ideas of Government on an ignorant people. Side by side with this, it is equally fair to remark that Sir Madhav Rao's constitution was entirely the same in spirit and nearly the same in detail as the one promulgated in Mysore when those territories were restored to Native Rule, and we all know how beneficially that constitution has worked there in the best interests of the State.

Sir Madhav Rao retired from Baroda in 1882, soon after the installation of the present Maharaja. He passed his days

of retirement at Myslapore, where he died at the age of sixty-three on the 4th of April last.

IV.

We hope we have given a sufficiently clear presentment of Raja Sir T. Madhav Rao, the administrator, the politician and the statesman. Evolving order out of chaos in two, if not three, important Native States, and skilfully sowing the seeds of an advanced system of Government—this was the work of Raja Sir T. Madhav Rao, the administrator. Destroying silently the elements of disturbance and discontent by laying the malcontents under obligations to the State, and securing for the State under his control the utmost possible good under the utmost possible pressure of the Simla Foreign Office without producing friction, was the work of Raja Sir T. Madhav Rao, the politician. And perceiving beforehand the relations which would come to subsist between the British Government and their Feudatory States, and adjusting accordingly his system of administration so that it may suit the changed circumstances under which Native States had begun or were soon to live, and forestalling, through the force of his extraordinary talents, aided by the high education he had received and acquired, such reforms in the States, placed under his charge, as time would sooner or later have made imperative, as also fore-stalling the relations which increased education in Native States would bring about between the Maharajas and their subjects, and proposing accordingly a constitution which, while preserving what was good in the old order of things, would so fashion the State introducing it as to make it capable of moving with the movements of the age and rising with the rising aspirations of its subject people,—that was what constituted Raja Sir T. Madhav Rao's title to statesmanship.

Sir Madhav Rao, in our opinion, was a greater man than either Sir Salar Jung or Sir Dinkar Rao. These latter did not possess that familiarity with the English tongue and hence with European thought on politics and political matters, which was Sir Madhav Rao's forte. Sir Madhav Rao's acquaintance with literature bearing on Native States and policy pursued towards them from time to time by the British Indian Government, as also his knowledge of European views on economics and finance, was, it will be clear to those who study his official writings, simply perfect, and that circumstance gave him a great advantage over the two other native statesmen of his time. He could appreciate better than they could all that was best in the British administrative system. And having the capacity to appreciate that, he could inaugurate, with less difficulty and more confidence, an era of reform and progress in the States which were entrusted to his care. In a way, Sir Salar Jung laboured under greater difficulties than Sir Madhav Rao. His lot was cast amid less enlightened and less peaceful population; so that he could not effect reforms as smoothly as Sir Madhav Rao succeeded in doing. Yet we are not under-rating the great politician of Hyderabad, when we repeat that he was, on the whole, a smaller man than Sir Madhav Rao,—smaller in intellectual attainments and perhaps in talents. Sir Dinkar Rao represents the old school of native politicians, which becomes extinct with him. Sir Madhav Rao was a perfect politician of the new school. Sir Salar Jung plied between the two.

Before closing this sketch, it is pertinent to inquire, what does the life of Sir Madhav Rao teach us? It teaches us beyond any other thing that there is a very serious drawback in the British system of administration. It is a sad reflection on British rule in India that Sir Madhav Rao found his career,

not in British India, but in Native States. If the red line in the map of India had not been here and there interrupted, would young Madhav, serving in the Accountant-General's office at Madras in 1847, have died Raja-Sir T. Madhav Rao, the administrator, the politician, and the statesman? Would he not have been one of those many flowers that are 'born to blush unseen'? And yet, 'Annex Native States' is the cry of Civilians of the imperialist school. It is a pity that the leaves and fishes of office in the British Government are monopolized by non-natives. There is no chance for an Indian of Sir T. Madhav Rao's talents to develop and display his powers and be useful alike to the rulers and to the ruled. The life of Sir T. Madhav Rao, we repeat, is a sad commentary on the British Indian Administration.

To educated natives, Sir Madhav Rao's life is a rich mine of knowledge and experience. Those who study his State papers will not fail to be impressed with the vast store of information and the keen observation of men and things which he brought to bear on his ministerial work. His life will also teach them to be, especially in politics, more practical than theoretic, more accurate than wordy, more moderate than enthusiastic, more cautious than precipitate.

Shall India, we ask in conclusion, not cherish the memory of this great man in a fitting way? In these days of cheap memorials, is it not sad to contemplate that not a word is said about raising a memorial to the great Mahratta Statesman? Or may it be that in the whole array of bronze and marble monuments, his is to remain conspicuous by its absence?

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- (1) The Reorganization of Real Credit in India.
- (2) The Anti-opium Alliance movement.

THE POONA SARVAJANIK SABHA.

Established for representing the wants and wishes of the inhabitants of the Deccan, being appointed on a popular elective system under rules framed for the purpose.

WALEKAR'S WADA, DANE ALI.

LIST OF OFFICERS.

President.

H. H. Shrinivas Rao Parashram Pandit alias Rao Saheb
Pant Pratinidhi, Chief of Oundha.

Vice-Presidents.

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| H. H. Dhundiraj Chintaman alias
Tatya Saheb Patwardhan, Chief
of Sangli. | Appa Saheb Patwardhan, Chief
of Jamkhindi. |
| H. H. Amrit Rao Saheb Daphale,
Chief of Jat. | H. H. Gunpatrao Harihar alias
Baru Saheb Patwardhan, younger
Chief of Kurundwad. |
| H. H. Mudhojirao Zanrao alias
Bapu Saheb Naik Nimbalkar,
Chief of Phalton. | H. H. Haribarrao Vinayek alias
Daji Saheb Patwardhan, Chief
of Kurundwad. |
| H. H. Ramchandrarao Gopal alias | H. H. Toolajee Raje Bhosle,
Chief of Akalkote. |

MANAGING COMMITTEE FOR 1891-92.

Chairman—RAO BAHADOOR VISHNU MORESHWAR BHIDE.

Members of the Managing Committee.

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|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| R. B. Gopalrao Hari Deshmukh. | Mahomed Sidik Esqr. |
| R. B. Naraysu Bhai Dandekar. | Aderjee Dorabjee Ghaswala Esqr. |
| R. S. Chintamanrao V. Natu. | Dorabjee Dadabhoj Butee Esqr. |
| R. S. Balwantrao Bapuji Phadke. | Gangaram Bhaui Mhaske Esqr. |
| R. S. Naro Bhasker Dewdhar. | Rajanna Lingoo Esqr. |
| R. S. Damodar J. Gokhale. | Vishnudas Harikisondas Esqr. |
| R. S. Sadashiv R. Medatkar. | Becherdas Amolik Esqr. |
| R. B. Koopuswami Vijayarungam. | Sakharam R. Joshi Esqr. |
| Professor Bal Gangadhar Tilak. | R. S. Sakharam R. Phadke. |
| Gopal Krishna Gokhale. | Wasudeo L. Athawale Esqr. |
| Waman S. Apte. | Nathamal Bharmal Esqr. |
| Govind M. Gadre Esqr. | R. S. Waman Prabhakar Bhave. |
| R. S. Raghoonath Daji Nagarkar | Vinayak Narayen Apte Esqr. |
| Krishnarao B. Mande Esq. | Ganesh Krishna Bawadekar Esqr. |
| Ramchandra G. Sapkar Esqr. | R. S. Sitaram Hari Chiplonkar. |
| Ramchandra M. Sane Esqr. | Shivram Hari Sathe Esquire. |
| Waman Vishnu Lela Esqr. | Keshav P. Godbole Esqr. |

Treasurer.

R. S. CHINTAMANRAO VISHWANATH ALIAS BHAI SAHEB NATU.

Auditor.

GOVIND MAHADEO GADRE ESQR. PLEADER.

NARAYENRAO CHINTAMAN FADTARE ESQR.

HONORARY SECRETARIES.

PROFESSOR GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE B. A.

SHIVRAM HARI SATHE ESQR.

Secretary.

KESHAV PANDURANG GODBOLE.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SABHA.

Representation regarding Special Officer's report on
the working of Agriculturists' Relief Act, Con-
ciliation, and Village Munsiff system.

No. 817 of 1891.

SARVAJANIK SABHA ROOMS.

Poona, 30th September 1891.

To

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,

Judicial Department,

Bombay.

Sir,

We are directed by the Managing Committee of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha to submit for the favourable consideration of Government the following representation in regard to Mr. Woodburn's report on the working of the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act, a copy of which Government was pleased to supply to the Sabha in July last.

2. When Government first appointed Mr. Woodburn as Special Officer for the purpose of inquiring into the results of the working of the Act in the four Districts as compared with the condition of five other Districts where the Act was not in force, the Committee of the Sabha entertained doubts as to how far inquiry by a single officer would prove satisfactory. At the Provincial Conferences held in 1888 and 1889, under the auspices of the Sabha, the question was discussed at some length and it was resolved that Government should be requested to entrust the inquiry to a mixed Commission (copies of these Resolutions are sent herewith). The report of such a Commission would naturally have carried more weight and to some extent prevented the

differences of views which on such a subject it is almost impossible to avoid between the District Executive Officers who, as Mr. Woodburn's report shows, are in favour of extending the Act to other Districts, and the District Judicial Officers who are generally less impressed with the benefits of the Act by reason of their being less in touch with the people, except in connection with the litigation which comes before them. Notwithstanding this difference of views the Committee of the Sabha are glad to notice that in the Special Officer's opinion the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act has, on the whole, proved beneficial to the agriculturists in the four Districts where it is at present in operation, and they join with him in his recommendation that the Act might with advantage be extended to other classes than agriculturists and to other districts. The Special Officer's report gives exhaustive statements about the economical effects of the Act in improving the condition of the agriculturists and in reducing their debts. His report is not, however, equally full in regard to the judicial working of the more important provisions of the Act; but the Committee notice with satisfaction that the Special Officer approves of the policy which suggested the necessity of giving power to the Courts to reduce exorbitant rates of interest to reasonable rates, to go behind the bond to examine the parties in all cases and see that no fraud or undue influence has been exercised, to allow instalments, and to remove undue pressure upon agriculturists by exempting immovable property from liability to sale for money decrees.

3. The Committee, however, entirely differ from the Special Officer in regard to his views about the working of the Conciliation System. The Special Officer admittedly does not appear to have carefully studied the working of this portion of the Act, and his suggestion that the Conciliation System might be abolished is not entitled to any weight. The Committee are fully persuaded that much of the good which the Act has, on the whole, done is due to the system of conciliation provided by it. This system is popular as being to some extent a revival of an old and time-honored Indian institution *viz.*, the village Panchayat and it is recognized as such by the people in the four Districts where the Act is in operation. The people of this country are not generally fond of litigation in Courts and resort to it only

when all other means fail. The general practice is to request respectable gentlemen to settle a dispute in the first instance, and it is only when these are unable to arrive at a settlement satisfactory to all the parties concerned that the matter is taken to a regular law Court. Under the Native rule settlement by arbitration was the rule, and the regular Courts took up only such cases as could not be so settled. No one, the Committee think, would dispute the fact that conciliation when fairly and successfully carried out is a blessing all round. Apart from the saving in money to the parties concerned—a very important consideration in this poor country—there is the moral and educative influence of the system which is scarcely less valuable. Under a successful system of conciliation where the disputing parties have to place their facts before men of local influence and straightforward common sense who are not hampered in their work by any mere legal technicalities, the people have, to some extent, the advantages of a Jury trial in civil matters by persons who know both the parties. The system is also free from all those demoralising effects which characterize litigation in Law-Courts viz., the tendencies and inducements to fabricate evidence and pervert facts, and to take unfair advantage of mere technicalities. An amicable settlement of a dispute prevents much bad feeling, and teaches people to respect one another's rights. Eminent statesmen have often avowed that the policy of the British Government in India is to gradually educate the people of this country in the art of self-Government, and the Committee think that a further extension of the system of conciliation to all classes and suits will exercise most beneficial influence in this direction.

4. It might perhaps be objected that the legal training and general education of the persons who are available for doing the work of conciliators, are not generally high and that it is therefore unsafe to entrust them with the powers which the Act confers on them. But the Committee would submit that the functions of conciliators are not the same as those of Judges or even of arbitrators who have to minutely sift evidence and decide intricate questions of fact or law. Conciliators do not judge matters in dispute but merely help the parties in effecting an amicable settlement. Common-sense, respectability, disinterestedness and honesty of purpose are all the

qualities that they need possess and the experience of the past ten years justifies the Committee in maintaining that Government would never find it difficult to secure such persons for discharging the duties of conciliators and there would be no risk in conferring powers of mediation on them. It might be added that the Conciliation System is in force in many of the European countries and in the United States and the powers conferred upon the conciliators there are more extensive than those accorded to them by our legislature.

5. The Committee are not aware that Government has ever expressed dissatisfaction with the work done generally by conciliators. On the contrary, it has from year to year acknowledged the value of the work done by these gentlemen and conveyed its thanks to those who have shown zeal and ability in the discharge of their duties. The only objection, within the knowledge of the Committee, taken to the work of conciliators is that sometimes new transactions are embodied in the agreements effected by them. Now in the first place, although a few conciliators might, owing to inexperience, commit such irregularities, the Subordinate Judges can easily rectify them by setting aside such agreements; a course which, so far as the Committee are aware, is generally adopted. Then there is the Special Judge with his Assistants to supervise the work of the Subordinate Judges and no one, the Committee think, would seriously contend that this is not a sufficient safeguard against any possible irregularities. Again even if the new transactions embodied by conciliators in their agreements escaped undetected by the supervising machinery no harm would result therefrom beyond the paltry loss of a few rupees to Government in the shape of stamp-fees. But this loss is a consideration too trivial and too insignificant to justify the abolition of a system so far reaching in its beneficial effects.

6. The Committee further beg to observe that the village Munsiff System has also become popular. This system has obtained for nearly 75 years in all districts in the Madras Presidency where the village Patel is *ex-officio* Village Munsiff and is invested with large powers, and the Committee learn that the Government of North-Western Provinces is thinking of introducing it in those provinces.

The costs of litigation in the shape of Court-fees, process-fees, pleader-fees &c. in Civil Courts, and the delay and harassment are so great that some relaxation in favour of poor suitors, such as that afforded by the Village Munsiff System, is very desirable.

7. With regard to the Village Registration System, Government must have noted that it has almost entirely checked the complaints about the fabrication of bonds. It cannot be denied that so long as the vast mass of the agriculturists are unable to read and write, such a check on the fabrication of bonds is necessary. The report of the Deccan Riots Commission shows that the Commissioners laid great stress on the necessity of appointing public Notaries, and went so far as to prepare a draft-law on the subject long before the Relief Act was thought of.

8. The last point that the Committee of the Sabha would beg leave to refer to is that it is not only desirable but necessary, to have a Special Officer with sufficient leisure to supervise the work of these voluntary agencies and to help them in a friendly and sympathetic manner and generally to supervise the working of the Act and give effect to the views of Government in a uniform manner which advantage will be lost if the work was split up among a number of over-worked officers with varying opinions. While doing this work, he can, if necessary, relieve the District Judges of a portion of their appeal work. The Committee are of opinion that much of the good, which the Act is intended to achieve and has, in some measure, already secured, will disappear if there is no Special Officer to supervise the working of the Act, and to suggest remedies whenever any defects come to his notice.

9. For the several reasons noted above, the Committee pray that if the report of the Special Officer has failed to satisfy Government about the successful working of the Act, the questions at issue might be referred to a Special Commission. Under any circumstances, the equitable provisions of the Relief Act should be retained with a view to modify the rigour of the ordinary procedure and that the services of the voluntary agencies of village Munsiffs and Conciliators should be continued. The committee also pray that Government will be pleased

to forward this representation to the Government of India and the Secretary of State for consideration, before any final decision is arrived at.

We have the honor to remain,

Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

VISHNU MORESHWAR BHIDE,

Chairman, Sarvajanic Sabha, Poona.

G. K. GOKHALE,

K. P. GODEOLE,

Secretaries, S. S. Poona.

THE REORGANIZATION OF REAL CREDIT IN INDIA.*

No fact in the economic condition of this country arrests attention more forcibly than the contrast presented by the hoards of unused capital, stored up in the vaults of the Presidency and other Exchange Banks, and the high premium Government Securities command on one side, and on the other the utter paralysis of Industry in rural India due to the poverty of the resources of the classes engaged in the production of wealth. It would appear as if some impenetrable barrier intercepted the overflow of wealth, and barred the channels of communication between the reservoirs of capital and the parched fields of Industry dried up for want of the wealth-bearing and fertilising moisture. This is not a fancy picture. It is a stern reality which has to be faced by all who feel an interest in the well-being and progress of the country. The Presidency Bank of Bombay alone has at this moment more than five crores of deposit receipts which it does not know how to use, and which drives it in despair to refuse Municipal and other private deposits except as current accounts which bear no interest. Nearly two crores of rupees are locked up in the Post Office Savings Banks in this Presidency alone, and as many as five crores are similarly locked up all over India, which the Government cannot turn to account except by buying its own Paper, and maintaining from the interest proceeds its Paper Currency Department.

* The Hon'ble Rao Bahadur M. G. Ranade has kindly placed this paper at our disposal. It was read by him before the last Industrial Conference.

2 *The Reorganization of Real Credit in India.*

Government 4 per cent. Paper sells for 107 or 108 Rs. and 5 per cent. Municipal loans fetch 111-112 Rs. per nominal value of 100 Rs. The average for ten years of gold imports has been 4 crores, and of silver 7 crores, the latter chiefly coined into rupees, the former chiefly absorbed in ornaments. Meanwhile the cultivating and artisan classes can get no loans except at rates of interest ranging from 12 per cent. to 24 per cent. In four districts, with a population of 35 lacks, for which information is available, the amount of annual borrowings on the mortgage of land exceeds forty lacks, and of simple loans 16 lacks, the interest rate on mortgage loans being generally 12 per cent. and on simple bonds 24 p. c. The slightest irregularity or delay in the annual rain-fall deprives the whole population of food, and, what is far worse, leaves them without work, and Government finds it necessary to strain all its resources to arrest not only the food famine, but the work famine as well. Less than 3 per cent. of the land in the Presidency proper is protected by Irrigation. This is the actual situation, and it is clear that it is alarming enough. If there were no capital in the country seeking investment, there would be reason for despair. But as things stand, the situation is not hopeless. There is capital ready to hand awaiting secure investment. There is the broad dreary expanse of Industry which is thirsting for capital, and offering the most secure investment for its fruitful employment. What is wanting is the necessary skill and patience which will adjust the capacity of the one to the wants of the other, and make both work in a spirit of harmony and co-operation.

In this connection it is very unfortunate that the economic conditions of England are so widely divergent from those of India that the rulers of the country, brought up in the tradi-

tions of their native land, find themselves more or less unprepared to grapple with the difficulties created by this novel situation. With its land owned chiefly by a few landlords, and its peasantry representing a very small proportion of the wage-earning classes, with its large accumulations of capital, and the vast development of its manufacturing and commercial activities, Great Britain is most peculiarly circumstanced, and its economic history furnishes no guide for dealing with the difficulties of the situation in India, where, except in a few provinces, the State claims to be the sole landlord, and agricultural classes form 80 p. c. of the total population, and there is no accumulation of capital, and manufactures and commerce are in their rudimentary stage, and in that stage also chiefly monopolized by strangers. On the Continent of Europe, however, Indian problems are fairly reproduced with Indian conditions of life and property, and the lessons to be derived from the study of Continental economy have a more practical bearing than the maxims contained in the usual textbooks of English Political Economy. The task of reorganizing credit, both real and personal, on a sound and progressive basis has been undertaken by Continental statesmen and thinkers during the last fifty years, and they have succeeded in bridging the gulf which separates the saving few from the producing many in a way which commands attention. If this task were undertaken in the same spirit by those who feel its importance here in the promotion of national well-being, and a *modus operandi* established by which people seeking secure investment can be brought face to face with those who need their help and are prepared to offer that security, the nation would soon start upon a new race of life with its powers invigorated; and its energies awakened in a way no other single agency can accomplish. This Conference will not have met in vain, if it succeeds in drawing public atten-

tion to the subject as one of paramount importance, and if it attempts to suggest ways and means for practical adoption, based on principles which will, in course of time, find their further development in far-reaching beneficial consequences. With this view it is proposed to give a brief history of the growth of the organization of real credit in the countries of Hungary, and Austria, France and Italy, Belgium and Switzerland, during the past fifty years.

To take up the history of the movement in Hungary, it is noticeable that two important developments in the condition of the agricultural classes forced this subject upon the attention of the ruling classes in Hungary. As these developments find their counterpart in India, they deserve special notice. In the first place, after the Revolution of 1848, the Hungarian peasants found themselves in the possession of a freedom, born, in a sense, of individual right which they had only imperfectly possessed before. They were serfs before, and though partially emancipated under Maria Theresa, their complete emancipation took place in 1848 and the subsequent years. The old serfs were made proprietors of the lands they held under their landlords, who were bought off to give their consent by suitable compensation. Compulsory labour was abolished; rents, taxes, and tithes were consolidated together, and the nobles were taxed like any other classes, and had to pay wages to their old serfs when they employed them on their diminished farms. Copy-hold and serf-hold property became freehold. As many as five-lacks of families were thus restored to freedom, and, on an average, their holdings were about 15 acres each. This, it may be noted, fairly corresponds with the change which has been brought about over the greater part of India by the survey settlements, except that the State in India has stepped into the position of the private landlord, and

claims to be owner of all cultivable and cultivated land. The next change which took place in Hungary was also reproduced in the history of our own country. Owing to increased facilities of communication, new markets were opened, and the export trade was developed to a large extent. Old methods of cultivation, which did well enough under old conditions, were felt to be inadequate, and it was found necessary to abandon the old system. Owing to the poverty of good waste land, the cultivation had to become intensive in place of the old system of extensive cultivation.

Under the double influence of these two causes, the problem of reorganizing real credit, i. e. of securing loans on easy terms on the security of real property, first presented itself for practical solution, and real credit Institutions, worked on divergent principles, were started, either in the interest of the borrowers who clubbed their resources together, and founded such institutions as the Boden Credit Institute, or in the interest of the lenders who opened departments for real advances in the great National Banks, such as the Austro-Hungarian Bank or the Provincial Savings Banks. The first Boden Credit Institute was started in 1863 by 209 land-owners who subscribed among themselves a large amount of capital—about $1\frac{1}{2}$ crores of Rupees—of which $\frac{1}{10}$ th was paid up in cash, and the remaining $\frac{9}{10}$ th was represented by bonds passed by the founders in favor of the Bank, which were gradually withdrawn as the Reserve Fund increased. Every borrower had to become a member, and guaranteed with others, who joined with him, the solvency of the concern to all who had dealings with the Bank as bondholders or depositors. The ordinary rate of interest on mortgage loans was much higher, but the Institute

made its advances at a fixed rate of interest,— $6\frac{1}{2}$ p. c., which was gradually reduced to $4\frac{1}{2}$ p. c. The advances made were limited to $\frac{1}{2}$ of the assessed value of the property mortgaged. No property was mortgaged which did not yield a fixed and certain income, and no loan was made except by way of a first and sole charge. The rates of interest stipulated included interest proper, and one p. c. for the sinking fund or for the amortization charge, and, 25 to 50 per cent, for expenses and the reserve fund. The repayment of principal and interest was secured by spreading the payment over a period of $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 41 years. The Bank issued its bonds of 100 or 1000 or 10000 florins at 4.85 per cent, and these bonds were made payable to bearer, and being negotiable freely changed hands, and a portion of them was withdrawn by lot as each debt was paid off in part. The Bank was required by law to keep its bonds strictly within the amount of the value of the mortgaged property. Besides this guarantee, the creditors had a first charge on the 10 per cent. paid up capital of the founders, and on the Reserve Fund, and the mutual guarantee Fund, and the subsidy paid by Government to help the Reserve Fund. It is very important to note the concessions granted to this Bank by the Hungarian Government. The Government granted a subsidy to the Reserve Fund of 3 lacks of florins. It exempts the Bank's profits from the income-tax, and its operations from all stamp duties. It lends it the help of its officers for assessing the value of the property mortgaged. It orders inspection of accounts with a view to secure obedience to the rules, and, finally, it permits the Bank to foreclose or sell the mortgaged and also unmortgaged property of its debtor on default being committed in payment without requiring it to go to law, and take its chance of justice with all its delays and costs,

The borrower is required to pay six-monthly interest in advance, and the Bank also pays the coupons on its bonds to the holders thereof after every six months. In consequence of these exceptional privileges, few defaults were committed, and it has been estimated that out of some 14 millions advanced by the Bank to 11000 borrowers, the Bank had to suffer loss to the extent of £ 25000 only. The borrower is allowed freedom to pay off his debts in anticipation, and a considerable minority take advantage of this privilege. The Institute has thus fully realized the leading ideas of its promoters. It acts as intermediary between the borrower and the lender; while procuring for the borrower easier terms, and teaching him self-reliance and freedom, it favours the lender by offering its own guarantee for the money he advances to the borrower through its agency. These facilities have greatly helped the prosperity of all classes in the country, and lowered the rate of interest all round.

The Boden Credit Institute also deals with Communes and Municipalities, and advances loans on special terms favourable to these Corporations and to the Bank. This Bank is the best type of institutions worked in the interests of the borrowers, as the founders are content with 5 P. C. interest on paid up capital, and its directors receive no payments. There are other institutions worked on the same principles in the interest of the lenders, and in their case dividends are declared as in ordinary Banks, varying according to the conditions of each year's operations. The principle of all these Banks which make advances on real property is to interpose the Bank between the borrower and the lender, to guarantee the lender against all risks, and thereby secure a reduction of the rate of interest so as to help the borrower with

loans at a slightly enhanced rate of interest, and provide for a reserve fund, and for the expenses of management, and by spreading the payment over a long number of years, generally 40 years, provide for a gradual but certain satisfaction of both principal and interest. The Austro-Hungarian Bank is the chief of these Banks which carry on business in the interests of lenders. Besides doing the regular work of a National Bank, it has a real credit branch managed by a separate committee. In consideration of the special privileges of speedy execution of its claims, and exemptions from stamp duties conferred on it, the Government has a hand in the supervision of the management of this Branch. A Government commissary is appointed to this duty. The Bank issues bonds at 4 per cent. and charges $4\frac{1}{2}$ to $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. according as the period of amortization is long or short.

There are other Banks such as the Hypotheken Bank or the Credit Foncier, the Commercial Bank of Buda Pesth, and the Savings Banks, which do not enjoy any special privileges, but do a large amount of work.

A smaller Boden Credit Institute was founded in 1879 to help poor land-holders. The Government granted a subsidy of 500,000 florins to its Reserve Fund, and its other rules and privileges, and the powers of Government control are very much the same as those described above in regard to the bigger Institution. It has helped land-holders with loans amounting in all to one crore of rupees, secured on a total value of $2\frac{1}{2}$ crores, and has, in course of time, reduced the rate of interest from $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

All these Banks in Austro-Hungary have lately been empowered to advance loans for improvement purposes, and such loans are advanced at $4\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. including the sinking fund,

and the period for extinction of liability ranges up to 50 years. These advances are exempted from stamp duties and other charges, and the technical execution of their works which involve expenditure over a certain amount is entrusted to the State Engineers as a portion of their charge. Default or difficulty of collection rarely occurs as advances are by rule limited to half the value of the assets. In Austria, the Provincial Boden Credit Anstalten receive subsidies from the Provincial Governments, and in return the Governments exercise control and supervision through their commissaries.

To come next to the countries of the Latin Union, France Italy and Belgium, it is to be noted that the establishment of a Credit Foncier, or mortgage bank for lending money on the security of lands, forced itself upon the attention of the French people about the time of the Revolution of 1848. Inquiries made at the time elicited the fact that the usual rate of interest on mortgage loans was 9 to 10 per cent., and the idea of the promoters was to remove the difficulties in the way of finding capital on the credit of land felt by the peasant proprietors created by the French Revolution.

In 1852, three great institutions were founded in Paris and in two other places, but they were soon amalgamated into a Central Institution with its head-quarters at Paris, and with an exclusive right to operate throughout France. The object of such Institutions was laid down to be the advance of loans to small land-owners at moderate interest, and provide for the repayment of the principal and interest of the same in a long period of 40 or 50 years. The capital of this central Bank was raised to 60 millions of Francs, one half of which was paid up. In consideration of the exclusive privileges conferred on the body as the sole National Bank of real property

in France, Government has insisted upon retaining in its hands considerable powers of control and supervision. The Governor and two sub-Governors are appointed by the President of the Republic out of the larger shareholders, and there is a Council of share-holders. In 1860, the Credit Foncier was authorized to lend money to Communes and Departments, secured on Municipal and Local funds. The Credit Foncier cannot issue its bonds over and above the value of the mortgaged property, and it must keep a reserve of 20 p. c. of the total of the sum advanced. The capital of the Credit Foncier has been gradually raised from 60 millions to 180 millions.

The amount of its mortgage advances rose from 852 millions in 1852 to 2004 millions in 1888, and its loans to Communes rose similarly from 478 to 953 millions. The net profits realized were $7\frac{1}{2}$ million Francs in 1878, and $22\frac{2}{3}$ million Francs in 1889. No loan is advanced unless the property mortgaged yields a certain and durable return. It is not advanced beyond one half of the value of the property as assessed by the Bank's experts. The expenses of negotiating the loan and satisfying the Bank about the title deeds come to about 3 p. c., and are borne by the borrower. The interest charged is 4.85 p. c., and the period fixed for repayment may be either a short or a long term. The debtor may pay off the loans in anticipation. In all, 3400 millions of Francs have been advanced as loans since 1852, and default was committed only in respect of debts amounting to 18 millions, in regard to which the Bank found it necessary to buy the property itself. As a consequence of this improved organization of credit, the rate of interest has fallen throughout France from 9 or 10 p. c. to 5 p. c. The Government guarantees the Credit Foncier against competition and lends it the assistance of its officers.

France is pre-eminently a country of peasant proprietors with small holdings like those of India, and its agricultural interest is of considerable importance. Of course the French people are differentiated from our countrymen by their remarkable thrift, industry, and forethought, and their powers of organization and mutual help. These habits are, however, essentially the creation of the change that took place in the early part of the century, when the estates of the nobles and the bishops and monasteries were escheated to the State and parcelled out among the peasant farmers.

The accounts of the French peasantry in times which preceded this great change do not show that there was then any such advantage enjoyed by them over our people. The French peasant is besides the proprietor of his holdings, and has no land-tax to pay. Barring these differences of history and character, the conditions in France are like those of Western India. The French peasant is heavily in debt, more than half the land being mortgaged, but his debts sit lightly on him, because they represent improvements made in the land, which cannot be said with equal truth of the debts due by our peasants. The reorganized system of land credit which has worked these wonders in France, and Austria, and Hungary, may therefore be safely expected to achieve equal success in India.

In regard to Italy, these observations apply with still greater relevancy. In 1861 it was ascertained that the average rate of interest on mortgage loans was 8 to 10 p. c., and the amount of the debts charged on the land in Italy, excluding Venice and Rome, was 269 crores, while the net income was 40 crores, and the Government charge on the land was $11\frac{1}{2}$ crores. Deducting Government and other charges (12 crores), and the interest amount (14 crores), the

owners had only 14 crores of revenue at their disposal. With the increase in Government taxes and in the interest charges, the balance left in the hands of the landowners grew less each year, and this drew the attention of the Italian statesmen to the necessity of taking early action on the lines followed with such brilliant success in France.

In 1862 it was accordingly proposed to start a central Credit Foncier for the whole kingdom with a capital of four millions of £s. and invested with exclusive privileges, and helped by a Government subsidy of £400,000. It was not found possible to float the scheme in its huge proportions, and in 1866 a compromise was adopted by which the agency of seven existing Banks was utilized, and powers were conferred on them to operate exclusively within their defined zones, and deal in mortgage business. The rules of business were the same as those of the kindred institution in working order in France. Loans were to be advanced up to half of the value of the property mortgaged, and gradual liquidation of principal and interest was to be provided for. The interest rate was to be a uniform one, 5 per cent., and the Banks were to issue negotiable bonds, and withdraw them gradually as instalments were paid or satisfied. Between 1866 and 1885, 15 millions £s. were lent to 8355 borrowers. After 1885, the zone system was done away with, and any Bank or Association with a capital of £1,00,000. was permitted to transact mortgage business under the conditions mentioned above. The rigidity of a uniform rate of interest was also done away with, and discretion was allowed to charge 4, $4\frac{1}{2}$ or 5 p. c. interest according as the period was long or short; the rule of limiting advances to half the value was also relaxed, and loans were permitted up to $\frac{2}{3}$ th of the value. Under this new law, the national Bank of Italy

and seven other Banks carry on mortgage dealings in addition to their other business at Naples, Rome, Sienna, Lombardy, Bologna, and two other towns. The Municipal authorities of Sienna were the first to work the celebrated Monte Pia system of loans on pledges nearly 300 years ago. The Italian law allows to these Banks great facilities for the speedy and cheap recovery of mortgage debts, and the Government does not, as in France, exercise any active control in the management of the Banks' affairs. The Banks which issue these bonds undertake to sell them on commission; the bonds are made payable to bearer, and the holder has no claim against any private mortgagor, but only against the Bank. All the eight Banks cash each other's coupons.

In Belgium, the first institution of the kind we are now considering, called *Le Caissa Hypothecain*, was established in 1855 with a view to offer facilities to capitalists for investing their monies safely, and to borrowers for borrowing money at low rates, and enabling them to clear off the principal and interest amounts by instalments spread over a long period. The powers of the Bank were enlarged in 1886, and it has since taken the name of *Credit Foncier de Belgique*. There are other institutions which do the same business. The Belgian authorities had under contemplation the creation of a central Institution which was to have power to advance money on houses, forests and woods up to $\frac{1}{2}$ their assessed value, and on lands up to $\frac{1}{2}$. The borrowers were to pay $5\frac{1}{2}$ p. c. interest, which rate was to include the sinking fund and expenses of management and registration, and the period fixed for repayment was to be 41 years. The Bank was to issue 4 p. c. bonds fully covered by the value of the property mortgaged, and the Belgian Government agreed to undertake the work of collecting the

instalments due by the Bank's debtors through its Treasury agents, and in case of arrears special facilities were to be allowed for realizing the monies due, the Bank's debts being allowed a priority over all other debts, and the transactions of the Bank were to be exempt from all taxes and duties. The Bill was passed by the Lower House, but before it received the assent of the Senate, a political crisis occurred, and no further action was taken in the matter. The concessions proposed and accepted by the House of Representatives deserve, however, to be specially borne in mind, as they indicate the extent of support which Continental Governments are prepared to give in the work of reorganizing credit.

The Federal States of Switzerland furnish equally interesting examples of this same liberal policy. In these States, private capitalists seldom lend money on their own account. The mortgage and savings Banks virtually monopolize the business. These mortgage Banks are either purely State institutions, or of a mixed character. The mortgage Bank of the Canton of Berne is a State Institution, and is the most important institution of its kind in Switzerland. These State Institutions are more successful than private or mixed Banks. Of course the State Banks do not satisfy all demands, and there is thus full scope for private enterprise. The State Institutions have this advantage over private Banks that they do not screw up the rates of interest, while their ample means enable them virtually to regulate the rate of interest all over the country. The Berne Bank has reduced its rate of interest within the past 15 years from 5 to 4 p. c., and has thereby doubled and trebled the volume of its business. The deposits have increased from 1,119,629 £s. to 3,032,389 £s. and the loans from 1,600,000 to 3,200,000 £s. Most of the Swiss

Cantons have each their separate mortgage Bank, and though Savings Banks which deal in personal credit are generally private, yet in many parts of the country the Communes assist even these Banks by taking a certain number of shares. Swiss mortgage Banks lend by way of first charges only, and compel borrowers to discharge all previous claims. The amortization arrangements enable the indebted agriculturists to pay off their debts, and free their lands from incumbrances with certainty and ease. Under the direct system of lending, creditors exercise a moral tutelage or dominion over the debtors who sink in dignity. The relations between a private debtor and creditor have a tendency in course of time to develop mutual misunderstanding and bitterness. The emancipation of the population from this source of moral degradation by the interposition of the Banks has proved of the highest value as an agency for the education of the people in the best virtues of citizenship. The Bank's relations to its debtors are of the simplest character and involve no useless expense. The men who have money, and want to invest it safely, find that they have not to hunt after their debtors, inquire into their solvency, and go to law to test the result. The man who has saved money which he wants to lend goes to the Bank, pays down his money as a depositor, or buys the bonds of the Bank, and when the six-monthly instalment falls due, he signs the coupon, and cashes it. An immense waste of power, time, and money is thus saved to him and to the debtor. The business becomes specialized like any other business all risks are avoided, and all the benefits of a secure investment and cheap loan are secured to the monied and needy classes. These Swiss mortgage Banks furnish perhaps the best example of genuine cooperative effort, that is seen in any part of th

world. Farmers club together for the purchase, in a joint way, of agricultural cattle, of seeds, of manure, pasture lands, cheese dairies, or for draining marsh lands and constructing country roads, and the Banks help them to do so on very easy terms.

This principle of co-operation for common purpose, was first worked out in Germany on lines formulated by Raiffaisen, but they have been developed most widely and beneficially in Switzerland. Each member contributes a fixed sum per month or year, and the Association also receives deposits. Out of the collections and deposits, loans are made to those who need them for buying cattle or seeds or manure. The Association has a charge on the cattle &c. so bought, and the Swiss Law provides that if any one of the members breaks his engagement to the Association, and sells the cattle, the act is not only a civil but a criminal offence, of which a magistrate takes instant cognizance. The engagement has in this case to be executed before the magistrate so as to avoid all future complications. These small Associations receive help from the State Governments, and in return their accounts are open to inspection by State officials.

This completes the summary I proposed to give of the most recent history of the re-organization of credit in some of the principal Continental countries of Europe. The present circumstances of this country demand that the efforts made by the statesmen of so many countries, and which have been attended with such success, should be carefully studied by us with a view to practical action. There can be little doubt that if similar attempts had been made in England, the rulers of India would not have failed to take up on their shoulders the

work of reorganizing credit on these lines in India long ago. The circumstances of England are however peculiar. The vast mass of her population consists mostly of wage-earners, and possess neither lands nor houses nor appliances to their own. The rich Capitalists and Landlords own the lands, and houses, and machinery, and factories, and being intelligent and well-organized, need no special help. It is these peculiar circumstances which have made it supererogatory for the statesmen of England to devote their attention to these matters. They are naturally disposed to take care of their wage-earning classes, to feed, clothe, and house them properly, to provide for smaller hours of work, to arrange for the compulsory safeguarding of the comforts and conveniences of factory hands. These traditions impel them also to turn their philanthropic attention to factory legislation here, which, though reasonable in its way, affect, but a drop in the ocean of humanity in India. (Our agricultural and artizan population are not wage-earners. They own their lands and houses, and implements of trade, and their small shop, and factories, and their cattle and carts. They mostly work on their own account, and if they have no store or savings of their own, as they generally have not, they must borrow money, and repay it as they best can. The necessity of reorganizing credit transactions is thus not confined to agriculturist classes. It is a general necessity created in this country by its circumstances and habits, and measures which tend to rescue this business from its present chaos, and restore certainty and honesty in it, are sure to put new life and energy in the body politic. The question of credit, as observed above, does not concern agriculturists alone. It equally concerns spinners and weavers, carpenters, smiths, dyers, potters, brass and copper, silk and embroidery workers, shopkeepers, carriers, and all the trades and professions that

are now practised in this country. It will have been seen from the summary given above that the statesmen of Europe have realized their duties in this matter of affording facilities for the reorganization of credit, and given it practical effect in various ways, (1) either by lending the help of its officials for control or management or inspection work, (2) or by subsidies or (3) by undertaking collections, or (4) by giving a monopoly of business, or (5) by facilitating the work of recovery, (6) or by exempting their business from all stamp duties and income tax and other charges. The circumstances of India furnish strong grounds why the Government here should help this work of re-organizing credit in all these ways according a local difficulties or aptitudes may suggest or justify. An effort was made in this part of the country to start an Agricultural Bank on the lines laid down above. The scheme was well supported by the Local Government, and by the Government of India also, acting under the advice of Sir E. Baring. It was, however, shipwrecked when sent to the India Office. No blame need be laid at the door of any body for this untoward result. The English rulers in India are brought face to face with the specialties of Indian life, and realize their responsibilities. In England the authorities have not this touch with actual life, and their English traditions naturally predispose them to regard that the State, as such, has no functions or responsibilities in this connection. The promoters of the Agricultural Bank desired that Government should sanction the experiment in one Taluka by undertaking an inquiry into the previous debts of the agriculturists, which, when ascertained, were to be paid off by the Government, the Bank undertaking to make good the sum so paid on conditions of its being allowed a first charge on the mortgaged estates of the Ryots so benefited. The Bank undertook

to charge very low rates of interest, and to recover them in instalments fixed with the approval of Government officers. To prevent all disputes, it agreed to leave this work of collection of instalments due in the hands of the village authorities, who were to realize the instalments as they now realize the assessment of Government or its Tagai advances. Lastly, the Bank prayed that assessments within the area so dealt with should not be raised so as to disturb the arrangements they might enter into, and that their transactions should be exempted from all taxes and charges. In consideration of their undertaking to finance and work the concern, and charge low rates of interest, the Government was to help them to obtain speedy and cheap execution. It will be seen that none of the special privileges and concessions asked for were without their precedent in the Credit Fonciers and land mortgage Banks subsidized and helped and controlled by the European states. The scheme, however, fell through then, for reasons which it is needless now to relate. The difficulties of Indian life are however too serious and peremptory to be satisfactorily disposed of in any other way, and the question is sure to force itself soon upon public attention. Already we hear that the Madras Government has appointed a special officer to inquire into the subject, and the time, therefore, seems opportune to press the matter once more upon the attention of Government. State help is needed for the very cogent reason that state control and supervision are necessary to inspire confidence. No other organization in the country has such a diversified, intelligent and widely diffused agency at its disposal. The interests of the state also are materially involved in the matter of the well-being of the most numerous and least helpful classes of the taxpaying population.

The State need not expend its funds. The funds will be

forthcoming to any amount if it only promises to organize the agency, and set it at work. The Post office and savings Banks deposits are ready to hand. All that Government has to do is to organize district or city Committees of Indian capitalists, to empower them to receive deposits at fixed rates and lend them at slightly higher rates to the borrowers on the security of lands, or houses &c., the excess rate providing for a gradual amortization of the debt in a definite period, as also, insurance charges and working expenses. The loans of these district committees should be allowed priority over all other debts, and exempted from all duties, and certain and speedy execution should be permitted to them. The experience of the working of similar bodies in Europe, and it may be noted in Egypt also, justifies the hope that the losses will be very trifling, and the benefits incalculable. What holds true of agriculture holds equally good in this country about every other trade and industry. The recuperative powers of nature and art are limited, and cannot stand the dead weight of prohibitive rates of interest, made necessary by disorganized credit, and the uncertainties and delays and expenses of civil proceedings. Remove these difficulties and hindrances, and credit returns to its natural and healthy level. The glories of peace are far nobler than those of war and policy. The whole country is looking up with wistful eyes for a statesman who will guide its destinies in this great struggle, and help it to win the race of life, and revived health, and national well-being.

THE ANTI OPIUM ALLIANCE MOVEMENT.

The Anti-Opium Alliance movement headed by his Lordship the Bishop of Bombay, and supported by the Christian missionaries of all denominations throughout India, represents a great principle, and as such it ought to command the approval of all who have faith in the ultimate triumph of righteousness and the moral government of this world. The poet says,

The mills of God grind slowly.
But they grind exceedingly small.

And no better illustration of this great truth can be furnished than by the progress of English and Indian public opinion on this opium question during the past few years. As long as the English abolitionists confined their agitation to the Chinese aspect of the question, people in India very naturally felt they were not greatly concerned in the issue. They felt that the Chinese were the best judges in regard to their own interests, and if they saw no evil in the existing condition of the opium trade, it was not incumbent on the Government of this country to sacrifice the large revenue it obtained from China, and which was to some extent a make weight against the burdens of the tribute India had to pay to England on account of Home charges. The leaders of the abolitionist party clearly saw the weakness of their position. They found that, notwithstanding the signal success they obtained in the House of Commons on 10th April last, when 160 members voted that the opium trade with China, as at present conducted, was morally indefensible,

their prospect of practical victory was as far off as ever, because the Chinese Government during the past ten or twenty years, since it began to grow its own opium, has ceased to be very anxious to stop the trade in opium. The key of the situation was in India, and the plan of the campaign was accordingly changed, and instead of wasting their energies in a practically hopeless conflict with China, they resolved to fight the battle nearer home on ground of their own choice, where the position was less defensible, and the chances of success more certain. The responsibility of the Government of India in respect of the domestic consumption of opium is no less direct than its responsibility for the China trade, and the principle at issue in both these aspects of the question is the same. As a question of strategy, there was an evident advantage in dealing with the smaller evil before grappling with the bigger iniquity. Mr. Samuel Smith has made no secret of this change of front. In a speech he delivered at the Anti-Opium Convention held in London in March 1891, he observed :—

“ I did not come here to-day to address this meeting, but rather to sympathize with you in the great work which you are carrying on, and to get my own sympathy warmed and stimulated so as to be encouraged to go on fighting this extremely arduous battle. I have worked at this subject now for about twenty years, and, like many others, the more I have studied it the more I have been impressed as to the extraordinary difficulty of the contest in which we are engaged. This is not exactly the place to go into those difficulties, because we are not met here to discourage one another, but rather to encourage one another ; and I quite share the feelings which have been expressed by many speakers that nothing is too hard for God, and that these tremendous difficulties

which we have to face are no reason why we should relax our efforts to do away with what is a very great national sin and crime.

One point which has weakened our hands very much I may just mention to this meeting, as we are met to gether for practical instruction as well as for stimulating each other's feelings on the subject. That difficulty is the absence of any response on the part of the Chinese Government to our action in the House of Commons. One of the strongest weapons which we had at one time to assail this traffic was our ability to state that we had forced this traffic on China against its consent, which is perfectly true. But, unhappily the Chinese Government for some reason or another—I am afraid partly because it has become utterly hopeless of grappling with the question, and partly because the Chinese people have become so thoroughly addicted to the use of this drug, and, perhaps, even more, because they have become accomplices in the revenue derived from the drug,—have ceased to give us any help or comfort in our agitation.

That Government will not now take the position which it once did of stating that it was still desirous of suppressing the trade. That meets us at the very threshold of our agitation in Parliament. We are told that if we deprive India of this large revenue it would be of no advantage to China, because she would simply fill up the void by growing a little more herself. Well, that is not an argument which will weigh with such persons as are gathered here to-day, but it is one of the things which in Parliament we have to face; and it has been impressed upon me of late years that another line of attack may be taken by us more advantageously, namely, that we must attack more vigorously the action of the Indian Go-

The Anti-Opium Alliance movement.

vernment in spreading this vice in India and in Burma. There the whole responsibility rests upon ourselves, or upon the Government which we have delegated to act in our name in India.

The Under-Secretary for India admitted in a question which I put to him a day or two ago in the House of Commons, that we have licensed 10,400 opium shops in India. There it stands in black and white. And I have further asked him whether, seeing that in this country the sale of opium is limited to druggists and chemists registered under an Act of Parliament, requiring them to label opium as poison, he would not apply the same law to India. The answer I got was "No." Now, here, I think, we have clear logical ground on which we can stand. The Government of this country protect the people of this country against the use of a poisonous drug called opium, but the Government of India, who are our agents acting for us in India, are selling this drug wholesale all over the country, and I am afraid are gradually and steadily increasing its consumption simply for the purpose of revenue. There is no doubt that in Burma they have widely spread the consumption of late years, and I am very much afraid that they are doing the same in India.

"Now, I think that we here stand upon very solid ground, because no one can doubt that the people and the Parliament of this country are, in the last resort, responsible for the Government of India and of Burma. Our future efforts should be to convict our Government in India of the great sin and crime of spreading this horrible vice amongst the subjects of the Crown; and I think that evidence is rapidly accumulating as to the enormous injury done in India. A great deal has reached me in the last two or three years. Amongst the

rest there is the evidence of our friend Mr. Caine, who has travelled in India. He has brought a great amount of evidence to bear both upon the question of the consumption of opium and upon the question of the drink traffic. I believe that in India enormous evil is done from both causes.

"As most of you know, we carried a resolution through the House of Commons two years ago, condemning the actions of the Indian Government in fostering the sale of strong drink. The result of that resolution was that in one district of India, the Madras Presidency, 7,000 liquor licenses have already been cancelled. Three thousand more are to be cancelled this year—ten thousand in two years. And in Bengal instructions have gone forth to put an end to what is called the "out-still system"; and there is no doubt that a very considerable check has been given to this deadly branch of the upas tree.

"Now, this ought to encourage us in dealing with the opium trade. If, in the same manner, we could carry a similar resolution through Parliament, condemning the action of the Indian Government in sowing temptations throughout the country in the direction of the consumption of opium, we might see the same result. I think that we ought, at all events, to concentrate our efforts at present upon this branch of the subject or, in fact, make it a very large part of the question, instead of solely dealing with the question of China. Unhappily that of China has become an intensely difficult one from the cause that I have named; first of all that the Chinese Government expresses itself perfectly willing to be an accomplice in this shameful trade; secondly, that China now grows probably three or four times as much home opium as it imports from India; and, thirdly, that the opium revenue is still a large branch of the Indian revenue. For these reasons we

are confronted with tremendous difficulties in dealing with the Chinese branch of the question. I do not mean for one moment that we, as Christian people, can acquiesce in the Chinese branch any more than the Indian branch. They are both, I think, utterly indefensible, and our duty is to attack this question root and branch at every point. But just looking at it merely as a question of strategy, and considering what is most likely to succeed, I think that upon the whole, we perhaps stand upon firmer ground in attacking the action of our Government in dealing with our fellow-subjects, where, undoubtedly, the question is wholly under our own control. It is, undoubtedly, in the power of the Indian Government, if it choose, to cancel every opium license in India and in Burma. It would do so with the consent of nine-tenths of the people of those countries. If we were to consult the wishes of the people of India and Burma, I believe that nine-tenths—perhaps ninety-nine-hundredths—would vote to-morrow for the entire extinction of the trade."

We have here the whole situation laid bare, and there can be no doubt that as far as the people of India are concerned, this change in the plan of the abolitionist campaign should commend itself to public opinion here. The Christian missionaries who have now thrown themselves heart and soul into this new phase of the struggle deserve well of this country, and the large and enthusiastic meetings which have been held in various parts of the country, where the appeal has been made by the leaders of the Anti-Opium Alliance movement, show satisfactorily that the appeal has not been made a day too soon.

It is very necessary at the outset to state exactly the proportions of the evil against which the Anti-Opium Alliance

committee have raised their protest. In the absence of detailed information, people are apt from indifference to think that after all there is no great reason to stir themselves up, as the habits of opium eating and smoking are confined to but a very small part of the population of this country. Speaking roughly, about 5000 chests or 680250 lbs. represents the consumption of opium in India. This quantity is no doubt very insignificant by the side of the 86000 chests exported to China in 1889-90. But in itself the quantity is very considerable, seeing that the legitimate use of opium for medicinal purposes is satisfied by the quantity represented by seven chests, which, it may be noted, are separately prepared. The drug which is intended to satisfy the debauched cravings of those addicted to the vice here or in China has to be specially adapted to the tastes of the unfortunate consumers. It has been estimated that a dose of 4 grains of opium is a poison dose, and kills the person who is not addicted to the use of opium. The quantity represented by 5000 chests, each chest being equivalent to about 136 lbs. or 5440 Tolas, or nearly $2\frac{1}{2}$ lacs doses of 4 grains each, is thus enough to kill outright five times the whole population of India.

It will not be fair to blame the Government for the existence of this craving for opium. The responsibility of Government hinges upon the action it takes either to check or stimulate the evil. The Christian missionaries of the Alliance have collected a considerable amount of information on this subject, and they have formulated the charge that the action of Government, so far from checking the spread of the evil, has tended to encourage it everywhere throughout India. It has been authoritatively stated that there were 8913 licensed opium dens in India in 1887, and this number rose to 10400 in 1890,

each license often times covering many shops, and one shop alone in Burmah paid $1\frac{1}{2}$ lacs as license fee.

To descend to details, and taking up our own Presidency to begin with the following table contrasts the annual average for 3 years ending in 1885-86 with actuals for 1889-90.

Weight of opium sold in sixteen districts only
of the Bombay Presidency.

	Annual Average for three years ending 1885-86.	1889-90
	LBS.*	LBS.*
Bombay	13,225	20,194
Ahmedabad	23,800	28,061
Kaira	11,929	16,108
Panch Mahals	2,690	3,063
Surat	4,068	4,113
Kbandesh	10,372	16,434
Ahmednagar	7,772	10,797
Sholapur	6,767	7,862
Satara	3,004	4,373
Dharwar	571	696
Bijapur	342	418
Rutnagiri	199	259
Kolaba	558	763
Karachi	3,911	5,023
Hyderabad (Scinde)	7,170	10,738
Shikarpur	2,439	3,200
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	100,817	150,097

* These are nominal pounds of 40 tolas each (see clause 21 of Bombay Presidency license); 40 tolas is equal to 6,558 grains apothecaries weight. Every single "lb." in the above list, therefore, would poison 1,634 men, women, and children, who had never tasted the drug before.

The increase has been 30 per cent. in 16 Districts. Seeing that a single lb. can poison to death 1634 lives with 4 grain doses, this increase of 30,000 lbs. in 5 years represents certainly a very heavy bill, not of mortality, but of vice, which ultimately leads to poverty, emaciation, and death. The increase of population is less than one per cent. per year in the best of seasons, and the 30 per cent. increase is thus inadequately accounted for by the 5 per cent. increase of population. When we bear in mind that in Great Britain and Ireland, under the Pharmacy Act of 1868, sale of opium is strictly prohibited by law under heavy penalties except by qualified medical men, chemists and druggists, and even these are required to use a label marked with the word poison, the liberty allowed in this country cannot be defended on any rational or moral grounds.

In Bengal the revenue from opium sold for domestic consumption has risen from 13 lacs in 1875 to nearly 21 lacs in 1889, being an increase of 50 per cent. in 15 years. In Madras the increase in opium excise revenue in one single year was 24 per cent. In Lucknow there were 12 shops in 1863-84. These shops were reduced in numbers to 6 in 1885; and to 3 in 1887. The consumption of opium however rose from 36,000 Tolas in 1883 to 41,000 Tolas in 1885, and 64,000 Tolas in 1887. Notwithstanding the reduction, Rev. Mr. Evans has stated that he could count 10,000 opium dens in the United Provinces.

As regards Lower Burmah, Sir Charles Aitcheson represented the evils of opium smoking, and in his time some steps were taken to stop the sale of opium to the Burmese population. Sir Charles Aitcheson was moved to this course by the strong protest made by the people of Akyab, who offered to pay increased land revenue to compensate Government for the loss

of any income it might incur by the total stoppage of opium sales. The average consumption of opium had risen from 88 grains per head per year to 135 grains in Arakan, from 88 to 200 grains in Pegu, and 120 grains to 169 in Tennasserim. Struck by this state of things, the Government of India ordered a reduction of shops from 67 to 37, and this led to a diminution of consumption from 46,000 to 37,000 lbs. On the retirement of Sir C. Aitcheson, the strictness of Government action was relaxed. In Upper Burmah there were no licensed opium or drink shops before 1886, the country being under native rule. After the conquest, this restriction was removed. The missionaries however protested, and in deference to their protest, it was ordered that the licensees should sell opium to Chinamen only, and not to Burmans. The Secretary of State appears not to have approved of this restriction, and the provisions of the law have been since evaded with impunity by the Burmans both men and women.

It might indeed be urged that mere statistics of increase cannot justify the serious charge which the missionary leaders of the Anti-Opium Alliance have brought against the Abkari policy of the Government in the matter of its excise revenue from opium. A variety of circumstances may account for the increase in consumption. A larger population, or increase of prosperity, may lead to larger totals without the department being any way responsible for the increase of revenue. The case however against Government is not confined to mere statistics of increase. It has been authoritatively stated on behalf of the Alliance that the Government of India actually brought pressure to bear upon the Bombay Government to introduce the cultivation of the drug in Sind. The Government of Bombay, it is reported, indignantly replied :—

“ The Government considers that there are very strong objections to the introduction of an industry so demoralising in its tendency as opium cultivation and manufacture, into a province where, at present, it is unknown, and, so far as His Excellency in Council is aware, not asked for by the people. If opium cultivation were allowed in Sind, it could not, with consistency, be prohibited in the rest of the Presidency. It has already been tried at Gujerat, and the result was widespread corruption and demoralisation. On the ground of public morality, therefore, His Excellency the Governor in Council would strongly deprecate the granting of permission to cultivate the poppy in Sind or any other part of the Presidency.”

It is well known that before the Parliamentary Committee of Indian Finance, Sir C. Beadon, as representing the Government of India openly avowed that moral considerations had no weight with the Government, which only regarded opium as a means of obtaining revenue, and that the sale of opium in India, as in China was adjusted to obtain the utmost revenue possible. Being definitely asked whether it has been the wish of the Government not to encourage the consumption of opium among its own subjects, Sir C. Beadon replied that “ he did not think that consideration had much weight with the Government.” In the debate in Parliament, Sir R. Temple, as the advocate of the Government policy, is reported to have stated that the opium system of the Government of India was morally defensible. Sir J. Strachey, a good representative of the same school, deliberately proposed that most energetic measures should be taken with the object of extending the cultivations in the N.-W. Provinces in which canal irrigation is available. Though the Bombay Government

nobly protested against the extension of opium cultivation to the Province of Sind, it is to be noted that in the adoption of the farming system with the minimum guarantee clause, it has belied its own protests. Its license, provides that many shops may be opened under one license. Section 12 of the license empowers and almost requires the licensee to open and maintain new shops immediately on receipt of the Collector's order. Above all, the licensee undertakes not to sell less than the minimum guaranteed quantity, and in case of default, he has to pay a fine at the rate of Rs. 5 per lb. of deficient sales, which sum is remitted if the deficiency is made good next month.

In the face of these administrative measures and official confessions, it is not open to the defenders of the Abkari policy of Government to urge that the increased consumption is not due to any action on the part of their officials. It has indeed been urged that after all opium eating is not so deleterious as intoxicating drinks, and that it is not a little provoking that the missionaries should wage war against opium when the drink traffic is spreading all over the country in gigantic strides. We admit the force of this argument. To our minds the Anti-Opium Alliance should make common cause with the Temperance movement. Their hands will be greatly strengthened, and their appeal will meet with a more ready response from the people of this country. The Christian missionaries themselves are not unaware of this weakness of their position. They console themselves with the reflection that the vice of drunkenness is an inveterate English vice, and there is but little chance of any success in their efforts if they disturb the vested interests concerned in the manufacture and sale of drink. This argument has some force when appeal has to be

made to English constituencies, but here in India, both these forms of intemperance are new, and as yet they have not struck deep root, and the campaign against vice might well be made general.

Sir J. Pease observed in this connection :—

“ I have often had the argument brought up before me, “ Why should you deal with opium, when you cannot wash your hands of the drink stain at home ! ” I have never seen the force of that argument. I am as much opposed to the drink stain at home as I am to the opium abroad. They are two monstrous evils.”

This should be the motto of the Alliance. Of course there is some force in the consideration urged by Dr. Maxwell at the London convention when he was called on to explain why the agitation was directed against opium more energetically than against drink. As a medical missionary, Dr. Maxwell discussed the relative strength of the two poisons for mischief.

Dr. Maxwell said :—The “question is a very proper one. Perhaps it will take longer to answer than friends might expect. Opium has not the effect of bringing about immediately, rapid degeneration. It begins its work, but it carries it on slowly : and if people are in a condition of plenty ; so that they can have abundance of food, and can drink stimulants, the fact of their being opium-eaters or opium-smokers is not so quickly perceived as if they were working men. With the working man, it is perceived comparatively quickly ; and, as he earns only perhaps, two hundred cash a day, amounting to about eight pence, he spends, perhaps a half, or, in the first instance a third of that sum upon opium. The moment that he is put into any straits, he cannot give up his opium, and

on the other hand, his wages are diminished, and at once, he is in difficulties. These difficulties show themselves, first, partly on his family and partly on himself. He goes down much more quickly just because of these little difficulties, and in a short time, you recognise in the case of a working man that he is a pronounced opium-smoker. You see it on his face by its emaciation, and by the colour of it, and by the other marks which are always recognised in an opium-smoker. But even a working man may go on for years and years as an opium-smoker. On the other hand you have to remember this—that we are guided, as missionaries, very largely by the Chinese themselves.”

“The Chinese say that the moral character of a Chinaman who begins to take opium is broken. We are guided by the Chinese in this—that we can admit no opium-smokers into the Church, because our Chinese brethren will not allow it. They say “You are doing wrong if you admit an opium-smoker into the Church. He has taken upon himself a habit which inevitably blinds his moral perception.” Now that, by itself, is about the strongest thing concerning opium that can be said. We should not dare to say that with regard to alcohol, Some of us hold very strong views with regard to the effect of alcohol, but we should not like to go the length of saying that in the forms in which it is taken in this country, it necessarily blinds the moral and spiritual perceptions of men.”

Dr. Pringle, another authority, has thus delineated the evil consequences which this habit of opium eating has produced in the ruin of some of the finest races of India.

“After the very practical observations we have had, I felt that what we wanted was some words from one who has seen the effect of this terrible opium in the country where

it is used. But there is one way in which we can all look at it, and most solemnly and seriously; and, if we view it in the light of comparison, it will come home to every heart. We can compare what opium has done in China with what alcohol has done for portions of India and for our own beloved land. Who in the world would dare to stand up and say that our revenue from alcohol has been a blessing? Look at the revenue from opium in India in the same light, and I have not the least hesitation in saying that it has been an absolute curse to the country, just like Achan's wedge of gold."

I went to India in the year 1854. I have lived to see a terrible change in India. A terrible change came over that country, and I have no hesitation in saying that that change has come over it because God is withholding His blessing. He must do it. Think of the sums of money that have been spent there in mission work, and then think of how little return has been made. Think of how God, notwithstanding our unfaithfulness and wickedness, is opening up India by women, through the women; and yet here we are standing quietly by, when a revenue is being collected from the country, which is not only degrading to vast populations of the country itself, but to the people of another country. The two countries, China and India, cannot be taken up on the same lines at all, and I am glad that they are now distinctly separate. As regards India, we are absolutely, each one of us, individually and personally responsible. That is not the case with China in the same sense. It is quite possible for such a power to be brought upon the Government as to put a stop to the cultivation of opium, except as necessary for medicinal purposes; and if that were done, I consider that there would not be the least

cause for anxiety with reference to the people themselves. I know that country as well as most people, and I am perfectly prepared to prove on any professional platform that to suppose that opium is necessary in any single, solitary condition of human existence, even in that country, is as false in physiology as it is in my experience. You go and see the victims of Opium. Look at the fine Rajpoots that we have heard about. Who cannot tell the opium-eating Rajpoots? Look at the Sikhs. Who cannot tell the opium-eating Sikhs? Who cannot tell the opium eating Mahometan in India? The man betrays it immediately. What is it? It is that there is gradual vitiation going on in the whole of the man's system until, at last, he is a perfect wreck. When they are struck down with fever of the most fearful, fatal type, what is it that these poor creatures ask for? Some would make you believe that opium is a febrifuge. I have never seen it and known it act in that way in the very least. As a medicine, combined with other drugs, it is one of the most powerful remedies you can use for relieving the system by means of the skin and perspiration. That I fully admit and allow. But I never heard of any native stating that he wanted a little opium, and I have lived and I have laboured in the districts where opium is made. The smallest quantity of quinine is better than the biggest ball of opium."

We hope we have quoted enough. There can be little doubt that the only way to deal with the evil is to stop poppy cultivation altogether, and treat opium as a poison to be sold only by qualified persons for medical purposes. No mere enhancement of duties will ever check the consumption of an article so easy to smuggle. This is the plain duty of Government, and we make no doubt, when by the efforts of the Alliance, it is made to realize its responsibility in this connection, the prohibition

suggested above will be strictly enforced. In the meanwhile the Alliance has its work cut out, and the people of India have reason to bless the band of missionaries who are leading this noble struggle. Steady perseverance under Providence must ensure success. In the words of Sir J. Pease—

“Who is this uncircumcised Philistine that he should defy the armies of the living God?” David’s God was a living God. He was a God who nerved David’s arm, and gave him the skill to select the pebbles out of the brook, and the strength to sling them. He is the same God now, and He will nerve our arm, and will direct our choice of the pebbles that we throw; and give us force to sling them home into the head of the giant evil which we think is a disgrace to our Christianity, our morality, and our politics.”

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SABHA

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE BOMBAY GOVERNMENT (REGARDING THE PERSONNEL OF THE LAND- INDEBTEDNESS COMMISSION.

No. 338 of 1891.

Sarvajanik Sabha Rooms,
Poona, 24th November 1891.

To,

THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT,
Judicial Department,
Bombay.

Sir,—In further continuation of our letter No. 317, dated 30th September 1891, we have been directed by the Managing Committee of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha to submit for the favourable consideration of Government the following suggestions in regard to the Commission, which the Government of India has been pleased to constitute for the purpose of enquiring into the general question of Land Indebtedness and the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act. As the Managing Committee of the Sabha are of opinion that some of their suggestions and observations might, with advantage, be brought under the notice of the Supreme Government, we shall deem it a favour if the Bombay Government forward this representation to the Government of India for the latter's favourable consideration.

2. The Managing Committee of the Sabha have as yet received no official reply to their previous representation, but they are glad to find from newspaper reports that the prayer contained in para 9 of

their former letter has been, to some extent, anticipated by the Government of India which has resolved to refer the question of the economical results of the working of the Relief Act and the larger question of Land Indebtedness to a Special Commission of experienced officers chosen from the different provinces.

3. The questions, which the Commission has to consider, do not concern one province or relate to one interest only. The committee of the Sabha gather from the newspaper accounts that while the local Government has moved the Government of India to secure a modification of the Relief Act, the Governments of the Punjab and the Central Provinces have been pressing for a relief measure based upon the chief provisions of Act 17 of 1879 and the Government of the N. West Provinces has also been contemplating the creation of Honorary Civil Judges for the disposal of petty cases on the model of those appointed under chapters 5 and 6 of Act 17 of 1879 in four districts of this Presidency. The Commissioner of Sind is also reported to have recommended the zemindars of that province to apply to Government for special legislation on the lines of the Relief Act. Under these circumstances, this question assumes a very complex character which demands that the best possible guarantees should be provided for to make the enquiry as complete and satisfactory as the nature of the circumstances permits. No merely official enquiry will furnish these guarantees to the satisfaction of the varied and oftentimes conflicting interests involved. Under these circumstances the Committee of the Sabha would respectfully urge upon the attention of both the local Government and the Government of India the great desirability of the Commission being of a mixed character, composed of official and non-official representatives from the several provinces, in which the question of the indebtedness of the agricultural classes has forced itself upon the attention of Government. During the past twelve years the Government of India and the Local Government have appointed Commissions of enquiry on various subjects and as a rule these Commissions have been of a mixed character, comprising at least a minority of non-official gentlemen associated with official experts. It is not necessary to refer in detail to the constitution of these Commissions, but we only state here the fact that the Famine Commission of 1873, the Education Commission of 1882, the Finance Committee of

of 1886, the Factory Commission of 1890, all appointed by the Government of India, contained both official and non-official representatives. In our own province the Deccan Riots Commission, the Forest Commission, the Abkari and Boiler Commissions were all similarly constituted. The Committees of the Sabha have therefore to confess to a feeling of disappointment, that the Supreme Government has not been pleased to recognize and give effect in the present case to this practically established principle in the nomination of members representing the Central Provinces, the Punjab and the North-West Provinces. The choice of appointing two members to represent the Bombay Presidency has, however, been left by the Government of India with the local Government, and the Committee of the Sabha trust that his Excellency the Governor-in-Council will be pleased to so make this choice as to give the Commission the mixed character that it would otherwise lack, and that is so essential for securing the confidence of the general public.

4. There should be on the Commission at least two non-official gentlemen, one to represent the interests of the sowkar or money lending class and the other, of the ryots or money borrowing class. A mixed Commission of this sort will ensure a full deliberation and a fair hearing for all the conflicting interests involved. Without such assistance, a purely official Commission will always find considerable difficulty in viewing the matters under enquiry in the light in which they strike the non-official classes, and to that extent their enquiries, however laborious, will fail to give satisfaction. The Government of India having already nominated members for the other provinces, it rests entirely with the Bombay Government now to secure to the Commission the benefits of non-official representation pointed out above. There is no reason to suppose that there will be difficulty in finding out suitable native gentlemen to work in association with the official representatives in this matter. As far as the enquiry relates to the working of the Relief Act in this Presidency, the names of the Hon'ble Rao Bahadour Krishnaji Laxuman Nulkar, the Hon'ble Javerilal Umashankar Yajnik, Mr. Dinsha Edulji Wacha, and Rao Bahadour Vishnoo Moreshwar Ehde will, no doubt, suggest themselves to the Government as those of persons from among whom a

suitable choice can be made. The Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act has now been in operation in this Presidency for the last twelve years, and much valuable information will be supplied to the Commission by native experts in regard to its character and its results. Such information proceeding from non-official experts, founded as it will be, on direct and personal knowledge of the continuous variations in the status of both the sowkars and ryots of this presidency, will enable the Commission to grasp the question in a more practical manner than would otherwise be the case. It might be added that the association of non-official representatives with official members will not sensibly add to the cost of the enquiry.

5. Under these circumstances the Committee of the Sabha request that their prayer that the two members who would represent Bombay on the Commission, should be non-official native gentlemen, will meet with the approval of the local Government. The interests involved in the settlement of the question proposed to be enquired into are so vast and varied that the Sabha trust that there will be nothing wanting to make the enquiry exhaustive and final and to clothe it with an authority which will leave no ground for complaint.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

G. K. GOKHALE,

K. P. GODBOLE,

Secretaries, Sarvajanic Sabha Poona.

No. 6637 of 1891.

Judicial Department.

Bombay Castle 12th December 1891.

From

A. C. LOGAN ESQUIRE,
Acting Under-Secretary to Government,
Bombay.

To

THE SECRETARIES,
Sarvajanjik Sabha,
Poona.

GENTLEMEN,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 338, dated the 24th ultimo, submitting for the consideration of Government, a suggestion of the Managing Committee of the Sabha, for the appointment of two non-official members on the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act Commission and requesting that the Sabha's representation may be forwarded to the Government of India.

2. In reply I am directed to intimate to you, for the information of the Sabha, that the personnel of the Commission had been practically settled before the Sabha's letter reached Government, and that as their wishes had been partially anticipated by the nomination of the Hon'ble Mr. Nulker as a Member of the Commission, the Governor in Council presumes that the Sabha will not desire their letter to be forwarded to the Government of India.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

A. C. LOGAN,

Acting Under-Secretary to Government.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE BOMBAY GOVERNMENT
REGARDING THE IMPENDING FAMINE.

No. 852 of 1891.

SARVAJANIK SABHA ROOMS,

Poona, 18th December 1891.

To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
BOMBAY.

SIR,

With reference to your letter No. 5484, dated 12th August 1891, informing the Sabha in reply to its previous letter No. 275, dated 23rd July 1891, that Government, as then advised, saw no cause for anxiety regarding the state of the crops and did not deem it necessary to publish any further details concerning the condition of the crops than were already supplied in the weekly summary, we have been directed by the Managing Committee of the Sabha to submit this fresh representation on the subject of the urgent necessity under existing circumstances of keeping the public well-informed in regard to the several districts that are at present beyond doubt threatened by scarcity, and we request that Government will be pleased to take such further steps as they may deem necessary to allay public anxiety. The summaries for the past few weeks leave no room for doubt that so far at least as the Districts of Nasik, Belgaum, Nagar, Dharwar, Poona, Bijapoor, and Satara are concerned, the people are confronted by a serious crisis, and there is little hope of any improvement taking place. In all these districts the Kharip crop has been more or less a failure and the expectations about the Rabi crop have been cruelly disappointed. The last summary published in the *Gazette* shows that prices are rising everywhere, that the supply of fodder is growing scarcer in most parts of these districts, that water supply also is greatly deficient in many of them, that cattle are being removed elsewhere, and that in some places even the migration of the labouring classes has already commenced. As observed in our letter of 23rd July, the conditions of 1876-77 are thus being repeated over an area larger

than that affected in that calamitous period. The Rabi crops are withering everywhere for want of moisture and in parts of Bijapur even the official reports admit that they are entirely ruined. And now that there is not the faintest prospect of any late rains coming to the help of the agricultural classes, the Committee of the Sabha would respectfully submit that the time has come when Government should adopt practical measures to face the impending famine which, it is feared, will tax all the available resources of the country to enable the people to tide over the crisis.

2. In view of the critical condition of the season, the Committee of the Sabha desire to state that they have organized an agency of their own to obtain reliable information about the condition of the distressed Talukas in these seven districts and hope to be able to submit periodical summaries of the accounts received from their agents and correspondents for the information of Government on the plan followed by them during the last great famine. Such private information will necessarily be defective in several respects. It will not naturally be, in many points, as accurate and full as the agencies available to Government can gather. At the same time the official summaries will naturally reflect the opinions of the District officers, who, from a laudable anxiety to avoid panic, almost invariably take a more hopeful view of the situation than circumstances justify. When the information obtained from private and official sources is collated together and published every week in detail, not for the district as a whole, but for each Taluka separately, it may be relied on as a safe basis for the measures that will have to be adopted for coping with the crisis. And it is with this view that we repeat our request that the weekly summary published by Government should be supplemented with additional information on the following lines. Part of the information asked below has to be given only once, while the rest will have to be supplied week after week in the summary.

1st. It is desirable to have detailed figures regarding the rainfall in each Taluka during the present season and the deficiency of the rain-fall as compared with the average of the past 5 years.

2nd. The extent of the land in each Taluka over which

Proceedings of the Sabha.

the crops have failed should be stated, as also how far this failure is partial or total.

- 3rd. The different proportions of the estimated yield of the kharip-crops, which by this time have all been reaped and harvested, should be published for general information.
- 4th. The extent of protected area by reason of the land being under the command of Irrigation works or tanks or private wells should be specified.
- 5th. Statements about the imports and exports of grain from and into each Taluka by Railway or by ordinary roads should find a place in the weekly summary. The Traffic returns of the Railways and the returns from Toll and Octroi stations will supply this information which will be very important to enable Government to judge how far the activity of private trade may be depended upon in this crisis to afford adequate relief.
- 6th. Variations in the prices of the staple articles of food, as also of fodder for cattle should be published every week.
- 7th. The condition of the available water-supply for men and cattle, which must necessarily diminish every day, should be noted in the summary. This information should be given in detail separately, so as to enable Government to judge of the wants of the several Talukas, as they become more pressing from week to week with the approach of summer. This information will also enable the Local District Committees to suspend expenditure on other works temporarily and devote their spare funds to the improvement of water supply.
- 8th. The official summary shows that cattle are being removed from certain districts. From private sources the Committee of the Sabha are given to understand that large numbers of cattle are being brought for sale

to the great market-towns and are being sold for nominal prices and bought by butchers. Detailed particulars from week to week regarding the Talukas from which cattle are being removed, as also those to which they are being removed, and full information about these sales will be very valuable to Government at a time like the present.

9th Similar information about the migration of the labouring classes is also necessary, although this will be more difficult to obtain. But as such migration is inevitable under the present circumstances, it will be necessary to secure this information regarding each Taluka as the season advances, to enable Government to choose the places where the relief-works will have to be started so as to be, as far as possible, within reach of the distressed classes.

10th Information about cattle diseases and epidemics and the general health of each Taluka should also be obtained and published.

11th Similarly information about property-offences, such as thefts, robberies with violence, dacoities &c. should be published from time to time. These offences are generally an important test of the acuteness of the crisis and would be of use to the Government to judge of the distress prevailing in the different parts of the Province.

3. The Committee of the Sabha are anxious that the mistakes unfortunately committed in 1876-77 should not be repeated by reason of absence of information on the points noticed above. Weekly bulletins of this detailed information regarding each Taluka will enable Government to deal with the crisis in such a way as to minimise all chances of panic, and give a sort of confidence to the public mind. The Sabha feel assured that Government is fully alive to the gravity of the situation and that it is anxiously concerting the necessary measures for affording relief to distressed people. The first necessity,

however, in such a crisis is for Government to take the public into its confidence and it is with this view that the Committee of the Sabha have ventured to submit the suggestions made above.

4. Besides the information on the points, specified above, Government will have to consider the necessity of postponing the collection of its land revenue at least in part in the distressed Talukas. The season for collection in the Kharip Talukas has already commenced and in the Rabi districts the instalments become due in March and April next. The Sabha learn that even in the Kharip districts, the crops in many places have proved a partial failure and that the Rabi-crops will prove a total failure over a large area. The Government of India has already framed rules for the suspension of the land revenue and it will be desirable to give effect to them in all Talukas or parts of Talukas where such relief is badly wanted. Inquiries will have to be instituted with this view without delay. The Committee of the Sabha need not add that stringency in collection at such a time will add to the difficulties of the distressed people, and aggravate them to an extent which no subsequent liberality will remedy.

5. The Irrigation Department may also be required at such a time as this to reduce its rates wherever the water-supply can be depended upon, so as to encourage a larger resort to this help than is now possible. The Sabha learn with regret that considerable difficulties are placed in the way of those who would otherwise apply for water by reason of the existing rules of the Irrigation Department and Government will therefore see that it is necessary to relax the stringency of these rules at the present time.

6. The Forest Department, the Committee think, ought to be able to render considerable assistance at such a crisis as this. Restrictions in regard to closed and unclosed areas, useful in ordinary times will become not only inconvenient but oppressive under existing circumstances. It is therefore a matter for the consideration of that department, how far it can provide free grazing for villages close enough to protected and reserved tracts. The enhanced fees charged for non-agricultural cattle and for agricultural cattle from other Talukas under recent rules should not certainly be insisted upon at

present, especially as this cannot involve any serious loss to Government revenue.

7. The Public Works Department is, we understand, ready with schemes of works, proposed to be taken up during famine years. In respect of these works the Committee of the Sabha think that in preference to road-making, works likely to increase the supply of water should be undertaken. The works undertaken during the last famine have proved of great benefit and the attention of the Department should therefore be directed to give preference to this class of works. The Famine Insurance Fund which has not been much drawn upon in this Presidency cannot be turned to better account than in the way suggested above. The large Local Fund balances in the hands of Government, which, the Sabha understand, are larger than the strict rules require, may be at once placed at the disposal of the District and Local Committees, so that wherever relief works are necessary, no delay may be caused in beginning them at once.

8. The Committee of the Sabha feel sure that many of these suggestions must have been anticipated by Government in the various departments concerned. The Sabha however think that much cannot be done to cope with the situation adequately, unless a Special Famine Relief Department is organized and a qualified officer placed in charge of it on the plan followed in 1876-77. In this connection, we are directed to observe that the services rendered by General Kennedy during that crisis were invaluable and the same concentrated control will be found to be absolutely necessary to make all the various departments work in consort and avoid unnecessary delays and conflicts of authorities.

Hoping that the above suggestions will meet with favourable consideration at the hands of Government,

We beg to remain,

Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

(Sd.) G. K. GOKHALE,

(Sd.) K. P. GODBOLE,

Secretaries, Sarvajanic
Sabha, Poona.

Proceedings of the Sabha.

No. 103 of 1892.

Revenue Department.

Bombay Castle, 7th January 1892.

To

The Honorary Secretaries,

Poona Sarvajanic Sabha.

Gentlemen,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 352, dated the 18th ultimo, and to state that the representation therein made will receive the consideration of Government.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant.

Under Secretary to Government.

No. 293.

Revenue Department.

Bombay Castle, 14th January 1892.

From

T. D. MACKENZIE ESQUIRE C. S.

Chief Secretary to the

Government of Bombay.

To

THE HONORARY SECRETARIES,

Sarvajanic Sabha,

Poona.

GENTLEMEN,

In continuation of my letter No. 103, dated 7th instant, I am desired to inform you that your letter No. 352, dated 18th December

1891, has been laid before His Excellency the Governor-in-Council by whose directions I am to observe that the Sabha will, as regards much of the Statistical information suggested, no doubt recognize that its collection, even where possible, would entail enormous additional labour on Government officials, who have already plenty to do in making preparations to meet the demand for employment, which is likely to present itself on the return of the population from harvest operations elsewhere.

2. I am also to point out that in several ways Government have anticipated the recommendations of the Sabha. The prices of grain at various market-towns will be published weekly in the Bombay newspapers ; forests have been thrown open for grazing ; extra establishments in the Revenue and Public Works Departments have been supplied ; and enquiries have been set on foot as to the possibility of introducing pressed fodder into the affected districts. As regards expenditure on relief works from public funds, the Government of India has advanced for takavi all that has been represented as requisite at this season ; and thus Government is prepared to engage all who need employment on the public works which have been opened in the affected area.

3. I am to add that the Governor-in-Council acknowledges the spirit which prompts the address of the Sabha, and will be glad to receive such information as they may supply.

I have the honour to be
Gentlemen
Your most obedint servant
T. D. MACKENZIE,
Chief Secretary to Government.

COMPULSORY VACCINATION IN THE BOMBAY PRESIDENCY.

The question of compulsory vaccination has come up for discussion before the local Legislature, and as the principles involved in the extension of this coercive measure beyond the limits of the town and Island of Bombay and the city of Karachi, where the system is now in force, to all parts of the Presidency at the discretion of the executive Government, have a larger scope and a more permanent value in the settlement of similarly circumstanced social and economical problems, we think that it will not be out of place to consider them in some detail at this juncture and help the public to judge for themselves how far the province of private liberty can be *encroached upon* in the legitimate protection or advancement of abiding public interests of health and sanitary well-being. The principle of social liberty has in modern times found no clearer exponent and defender than the late John Stuart Mill who laid down that 'mankind or society at large, including therein the state organization, "are warranted in interfering *individually* or collectively with the liberty of action of any one of their number only when the end is self-protection. The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised by one over another against his will is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or to *forbear* because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because in the

2 Compulsory Vaccination in the Bombay Presidency.

opinion of others to do so would be wise or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him or reasoning with him or persuading him or entreating him, but not for compelling him or visiting him with any evil in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him, must be calculated to produce evil to others. The only part of the conduct of any one for which he is amenable to society is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is of right absolute. Over himself, his body and mind, the individual is sovereign." This line of argument has been worked out systematically to its logical consequences in Mr. Mill's great work on Liberty, and nothing can surpass the statement given above in clearness and precision. When the great social controversy raged high some time ago, this oracular declaration of this Apostle of Liberty was always relied on by some as a final reply to the argument on the other side that the functions of the State might under conceivable conditions be legitimately exercised in a gentle repression of some overgrown abuses of the social system in this country. Perhaps the same cry might be raised in defence of Voluntaryism and *laissez faire* in matters of public vaccination and sanitation. In reading works like those of Mill or Spencer, or Lecky, Bentham, Amos and their school, Indian readers are apt to forget that these writers have always in view the conditions of modern Europe even when they propound general maxims; and that they are not prepared to counsel the application of their rules to countries outside the pale of European civilization. In Mr. Mill's case, he has expressly laid down that "despotism is a legitimate mode of Government in dealing with barbarians, pro-

vided the end be their improvement, and the means justified by actually effecting the end. Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the times when mankind have become capable of being improved by free and equal discussion. Until then there is nothing for them but implicit obedience to an Akbar or Charlemagne if they are so fortunate as to find one." The feeling expressed in these plain words by Mr. Mill underlies all European speculation of the advanced type on moral, political and social subjects. We do not of course accept it as a correct statement of the assumed difference between European and Asiatic populations. We are rather disposed to question the correctness of the principles themselves when they are accompanied by such a qualification. There is hardly a country in the world where equal and free discussion exercises such an important influence upon the formation of opinions as to dispense with other extraneous helps. We are rather inclined to the view that both in Europe and Asia, both persuasion and compulsion have their legitimate and well-marked-out spheres, subject to nearly the same conditions and guarantees.

What are these conditions and guarantees which mark off one sphere of individual and collective action where persuasion alone has play from the other sphere where compulsion of some sort or other—it may be social, religious or political, may be resorted to legitimately, is a question of great importance which cannot be disposed of off-hand without a full view of local circumstances of time, place, urgency, and developments. It may, however, be safely laid down that these circumstances of time and place &c. being postulated, the distinction between the spheres of

4. *Compulsory Vaccination in the Bombay Presidency.*

persuasion and compulsion does not rest on the self-regarding or altruistic character of the action contemplated. There is no social, religious, political or sanitary problem which can be regarded as strictly self-regarding in its character. Man in society influences his neighbours and his neighbours influence him in a variety of ways. Taking the question of vaccination, it will at once be conceded that the negligence of parents in their duty to their children concerns not the parents so much as the child to be protected, and it is not the parents or the child alone who are concerned in the consequences of the act or omission. If a disease is of an epidemic character as small-pox is known to be, negligence of one may affect the well-being of other families in the locality, be it large or small. Even according to Mr. Mill's own maxims, therefore, the question has to be considered from a general point of view and the act or forbearance cannot be regarded as entirely self-regarding.

Even if it were otherwise, it may fairly be contended that no man has a right to commit suicide, which, in one sense, is, however, a typical self-regarding action. The law punishes suicide as an offence, because no one individual in a society has a right to make away with his own life at his own sweet will. It is hardly necessary to mention that his relations and duties to his family, his wife and children in respect of their marriage, education and support fall under the same category. The province of persuasion is distinguished from that of coercion on grounds other than those of the so-called self-regarding or altruistic character of our actions. One concerns the inward feelings, the other regulates outward actions. Whenever the question relates to an outward act which affects others, and the end aimed at is a decided good,

and when the means, by which it is sought to accomplish it, are definite and effective for the purpose aimed at, and the good can be achieved without an inconveniently excessive sacrifice or counterbalancing disadvantages, they who prize the end and have the power and means, are bound to bring gentle pressure by persuasion and in urgent or hopeless cases by coercion to attain the end. These limitations are all important. Wherever state or social action threatens to be meddling and invades the sanctity of the higher relations of life or is based on imperfect knowledge of facts or one-sided information or the end aimed at is very much higher than what the moral consciousness of the people sanctions, where the probabilities of definite success are outweighed by the risks of utter failure, or the trial of experiments threatens to produce worse evils in other directions, persuasion is the only method which should be resorted to, and coercion by State or caste or profession ought to have no place. These limitations have their cogency under all circumstances of time and place, and are not limited to any particular state of civilization. It is these tests which we should apply whenever any proposal of organized reform comes up for discussion. Judged by these tests there can be no doubt that in the case of vaccination, the end aimed at is decidedly good, the means sought to be used have a definite and proved capacity to attain that end, the proposed action is not meddling or vexatious and does not encroach upon the privacy or the sanctities of life, and the advantages preponderate overwhelmingly over the risks run. If we can make out a case on all these lines, we think public feeling has no cause to be alarmed at the mention of compulsion in a sphere of collective action which is decidedly not self-regarding in its effects.

6 *Compulsory Vaccination in the Bombay Presidency.*

Vaccination as discovered by the researches of Dr. Jenner is hardly a century old ; in 1780 Dr. Jenner's thoughts were turned to this subject, and in 1798, he published the results of his enquiry into the causes and effects of the *variola vaccinae*. Within five years from that time, the matter came up before Parliament, and the Royal Jennerian Institution was founded in 1803, and overcoming much opposition and religious controversy and professional pedantry in 1807, the Royal College of Physicians deemed it to be their duty to recommend strongly the practice of Vaccination. It was ascertained by a careful inquiry into the death statistics of Austria, Prussia and the rest of Germany, Italy, Sweden and Denmark that whereas in the pre-vaccination period ranging in different provinces from 25 to 50 years, the deaths from small-pox had been some 65000, in the vaccination period 1810-1850, these deaths had dwindled down to less than 7000 over the same areas. The saving of life had thus been nearly 90 per cent. In London the bills of small-pox mortality had been 3000 to 5000 in the 18th century. In the seven years 1847-55, these deaths had shrunk to 340 per year. This proportion had a tendency to further reduction with the more general use of vaccination. In course of time it was discovered that when owing to the use of bad lymph or other causes, the present operation had not been very successful and there were eruptions of vaccinal small-pox, these eruptions took a very mild form and that in such cases re-vaccination was a very effective preventive. It was found that in one place out of 3000 persons protected by vaccination, 2,000 had small-pox in a very malignant epidemic year, but only 20 suffered therefrom ; while out of 8000 unprotected persons, 4000 had the attack and 1,000 succumbed to it. Out of

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some 96,000 cases observed in different European countries, it was found that while the death rate in an epidemic year of unprotected persons ranged from 15 to 60 per cent., the deaths in the case of vaccinated patients ranged from 2 to 12 per cent. only. The higher death rates were directly traced to the badness or insufficiency of vaccination. From such an extensive survey of these statistics, it was determined that while the mortality from small-pox in unprotected cases is as high as 350 per thousand, its fatality in protected cases is not higher than 70 per thousand, and that according as the vaccination is badly or properly performed, the rate ranges from 150 to 5 per thousand. Periodical re-vaccination further lessens this rate and gives almost a perfect security. These results have thus been summed up by a great medical expert examined before the Parliamentary Committee on Vaccination in 1887:

(1) That fatality of small-pox has been diminished to a very small fraction of 4 or 5 per cent. of what it used to be prior to the general use of Vaccination.

(2) That this small proportion of failures is due chiefly to bad manipulation.

(3) That infant vaccination gives the best protection against natural small-pox through life to most persons.

(4) That a very small proportion of vaccinated persons recover their susceptibility to the poison as they approach adult age.

(5) That this tendency can be checked by re-vaccination.

(6) That even when there is no re-vaccination, the attack is of a very mild form, and the rate of fatality $\frac{1}{10}$ th of unprotected persons.

8 *Compulsory Vaccination in the Bombay Presidency.*

(7) That if vaccination were made universal, death by small-pox would disappear.

So much for the results of the experience of European countries. To turn to our own Presidency:— Those who are sufficiently advanced in years to remember what the ravages of the small-pox scourge, even when not epidemic, have been in the past, and who know how the scourge has been by judicious and timely action almost deprived of its sting, need no figured statistics to convince them of the immense benefits, not so much in the decrease of deaths by epidemic small-pox only, but in the prevention of the blindness, disfigurement and life-long debility of many thousands of valuable lives each year, directly due to the precautions taken in the shape of timely vaccination. It will however be of interest to note a few figures by way of illustration. The Sanitary Department's Reports for several years past have established the fact that on an average the registered deaths, about 450000 on an average of eleven years, due to all causes in this Presidency, verge upon 28 per 1000, and the birth rate, at least of the registered births, about 650000 on an average of several years, is close upon 38 per 1000. The last census enumeration confirms these figures, for it shows an increase in a ten years term of tolerably good years of about 15 p. c. of the population which means that the births exceed the deaths by about 1.5 p. c. each year. Of course, as might be expected, the births preponderate in rural over urban areas, being about 28 per thousand in urban as against 40 per 1000 in rural areas, and the deaths preponderate in urban as against rural areas, being about 30 against 28 per thousand. Of the children born each year, as many as 21 p. c. or about a lack, die before they reach the first year,

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and another lack or 21 p. c. die between 1 and 5 years after their birth. This is the penalty we have to pay for the luxuries of early consummation and bad sanitation and unscientific mid-wifery treatment. The actual number of deaths by small-pox for some years past does not present a very heavy total, ranging as it has done for several years between '2 to '5 per 100 on the total deaths. There are however epidemic years when the scourge is very violent in its rage. The numbers of deaths from small-pox since 1877 will be gathered from the following statement. It may be noted that compulsory vaccination was first introduced in Bombay in 1877-78.

1877	.....	27369	1883	.....	13404
1878	.....	4475	1884	.....	14438
1879	.....	1156	1885	.....	2646
1880	.....	940	1886	.....	876
1881	.....	539	1887	.....	3753
1882	.....	1630	1888	.....	3117
			1889	.....	7066
			1890	.....	2377

This gives an average of 6000 deaths, being about 1 p. c. upon the total deaths as due to this cause in a cycle of good and bad years. The violence of the epidemic is sensibly diminishing year after year. Every seventh year, the epidemic appears to be periodical but the loss of life has dwindled down from 23000 to 14000 and again to 7000 in 21 years. Out of the total number of deaths from small-pox, about 25 p. c. take place before the first year is reached; 50 p. c. take place between 1 and 12 years and less than 25 p. c. after the 12th year. The disease is generally at its maximum in the first quarter of the year and at its lowest in the autumn months. During the past 11 years, the number of primary vaccination opera

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tions performed has been rising steadily and sensibly as will be gathered from the following statement :—

1879—586501	1885—854387
1880—642505	1886—855992
1881—729323	1887—879755
1882—792206	1888—896394
1883—826965	1889—900232
1884—802207	1890—885260

On an average of years, 95 p. c. of these operations are successful. Add to this the number of re-vaccinations which has averaged over 50000 during the past 3 years; and about 62 p. c. of these operations are successful.

We have a grand total of about $9\frac{1}{2}$ lacks of vaccination operations registered by the Sanitary Department officers last year. The chief point of interest in regard to these figures relates to the inquiry about the proportion of new births and primary vaccinations of children below the age of one year. The following statement gives these proportions for the past three years.

	1888.	1889.	1890.
Children born	634693	600489	641115
Deaths registered of children be- low one year... }	99792	107724	98401
Available children...	534901	492705	542714
Vaccinated under one year..... }	386308	391511	401904
Unvaccinated	148593	101264	140810

These figures show that about 75 p. c. of the children are protected by vaccination under the present optional system. In other words three out of four parents recognise their duty in this connection and exercise their liberty without any sort of constraint. The advantages attendant upon vaccination cannot be regarded as imaginary when the present permissive system produces such a result. If the recalcitrant 25 per cent. parents neglect their duty from indifference or ignorance, it cannot certainly be regarded as an encroachment on their liberty, if the public represented by the 75 p. c. majority insist in their own interests as also in those of the minority that this protection shall be universal. The proportions are really much more valuable than these figures represent. The Vaccination Reports for 1889 and 1890 show that out of nearly nine lacks of primary vaccinations, in as many as $6\frac{1}{4}$ lacks of cases, the children vaccinated were under one year; in about $2\frac{1}{2}$ lacks cases, the children were between 1 and 5 years, and it was only in less than 2 p. c. cases that the children were above 5 years old.

It might thus be said without being open to the charge of exaggeration that nearly all parents and guardians are disposed to allow their children to be vaccinated and the minority which requires coercion is really a very insignificant minority.

It might indeed be urged with some force that if the voluntary system has worked so well, there is no special occasion for introducing a compulsory law in its place. The statistics of European countries furnish the best reply to this objection that can be given. They show for instance that while under the optional system deaths of children under 5 were 1617 between 1847-53, this number fell to 817

12. *Compulsory Vaccination in the Bombay Presidency.*

between 1854-71 when the system was obligatory but not properly enforced, and it went down to 242 between 1872-1887 when the compulsion was general and effectively enforced. There is, however, a considerable body of experience which shows that in the town and island of Bombay, as also in Karachi, the change has done great good. The report on Vaccination for 1889-90 gives information about the working of the compulsory system in Bombay for 12 years after Act I. of 1877 was brought into operation. The outbreaks of small-pox in Bombay before 1877 had been specially virulent, as many as 1854 children having succumbed to it in 1872 and 2717 children dying in 1876 from the epidemic in 4 months. Since the introduction of the Act, the ratio per hundred of the excess of births over deaths of children under 1 year successfully vaccinated has risen from 87 p. c. to 162 p. c. Over the entire number of children available at the rate of 31 per 1000 of the population, the ratio of protected children has risen from 33 p. c. to 59 p. c. in 12 years. Similarly in Karachi during the last 10 years, this latter proportion has risen from 90 to 153 p. c. of the available children at 31 per mille. Taking all these figures into consideration, no reasonable doubt can be left that the system of compulsion has ample justification in the voluntary acceptance of it by an overwhelmingly large proportion of the public and in the decided improvement which has attended the change both in Bombay and Karachi. The end is good, the means intended to be employed to attain that end have proved amply effective as measured by results and popular approval. The only question which practical men need, therefore, consider in this connection is whether there are any attendant evils which would be too great a price to pay

for the benefits thus secured. It has been indeed urged in certain quarters that the general use of vaccination has raised the general proportion of the death rate from all causes or at least transplaced the heavier death rate from children to adults. The registered experience of European countries, however, furnishes no foundation for such a charge. The general death rate in London has fallen from 350 per 1,000 in the last century to 250 per 1000 in the present century. In Denmark it has fallen from 800 to 300, in Sweden, from 289 to 200. There has also been no transplacement of the heavier death rate from one period to another. It was also feared that deaths from fever and scrofulous or tubercular diseases were multiplied by reason of general vaccination. The statistics of the London hospitals furnish, however, no ground for such a conclusion. While the death rate from small-pox has diminished in these hospitals from 304 to 30 per 100,000 people, deaths from fever have fallen from 530 to 385 and from phthisis and pneumonia have diminished from 1468 to 1210. The same observation holds good of syphilitic poison. It has been proved by these researches that susceptibility to the small-pox poison bears no discoverable relation to the other disorders. Nay, more, it has been shown that vaccination indirectly prevents tubercular as also non-tubercular scrofula. When the vaccination operation is properly performed, not only is the system protected against small-pox, but it is not rendered more susceptible to other disorders. When the operation is badly performed, it may lead to cutaneous eruptions and glandular swellings and this circumstance suggests the necessity of great care in the choice of lymph and proper adaptation of the operation to the condition of the patient.

14 *Compulsory Vaccination in the Bombay Presidency.*

We hope thus to have shown that as the protection given by vaccination has been proved to be an undoubted blessing, and as the means adopted are well calculated to meet that end, and do not involve any other risk which need be considered as of any material importance, the duty of Government is clear and there is ample justification for the compulsory provisions of the Act. It is true, even under the existing system nearly 75 p.c. of the population are protected, but the remaining 25 p.c. who are unprotected constitute a standing menace to the health of the rest, for small-pox epidemics are admittedly infectious and the universal adoption of vaccination is the only sure method of minimizing this risk.

While therefore we approve the present proposal to empower Government to extend compulsion generally, there are one or two minor considerations of detail which do not appear to us to have been sufficiently considered by the authorities who have moved in this matter. The Bill, as now framed, commits Government to a threefold compulsion. There is first the general compulsion to vaccinate children, about which there is, as we have shown above, no room for a difference of opinion. The two other compulsions, however, sought to be legalized stand on a different footing. If the Bill is passed in its present form, it will involve compulsory taxation of local bodies without their consent; and it will also involve the compulsion of arm to arm vaccination in those cases where animal lymph cannot be procured without unreasonable delay. As regards the compulsory taxation, it deserves notice that at present the cost of the Department comes to nearly 3' lacks, out of which Government contributes out of Provincial Revenues about 107000 Rs. The Local and Municipal Boards contribute 125000 and the Native States about 62000 Rs. Leave

ing these States aside we have the Provincial and Local Boards contributing to the cost in the proportion of 40 to 60 Rs. per 100 Rs. The average cost for each vaccinated child is at present 5 annas. In the town and Island of Bombay where compulsion has been in force for more than 12 years, the average cost is Re. 1 1 anna or nearly 3 times as much as in the Mofussil. At the lowest estimate, therefore, the present cost will be trebled, *i.e.* the Local and Municipal Boards will be required to put nearly 5 lacs of Rupees in place of $1\frac{1}{2}$ lacs now paid by them. This will be a grievous burden to impose on their resources and it is but fair that Government should not put the heavy expenditure on these bodies without their previous consent. This course was adopted both in Bombay and Karachi. The Municipal executive bodies in both these places were persuaded to pay larger contributions before the compulsory measure was introduced in these localities. And it is but proper that the same consideration should be shown in the introduction of the present measure. This caution involves no breach of the principle of the law. It would only require at the hands of Government that they should not exercise the power which will be vested in them before obtaining the consent of the Local and Municipal Boards to the increased expenditure. A slight change in the procedure by which Government would only be authorized to move in the matter on the application or with the consent of the local bodies will practically remove all inconvenience. As regards the other compulsion of requiring vaccinated children to be brought again to the vaccinator to allow him to remove the lymph for the purpose of renewing his stock, the Bombay and Karachi may be noted, permit no such discretion in any parent or guardian can always require that his child

16 *Compulsory Vaccination in the Bombay Presidency.*

shall only be operated upon by animal lymph. Animal lymph is actually in use in many of the larger towns even at present, notably *Surat, Nager, Belgaum* and other places. The relative advantage of animal over human lymph as a protecting agent has been universally admitted by medical experts. The human lymph has a tendency to deteriorate in quality when it is taken from arm to arm. There is the risk, remote though it be, of diseased children propagating their disease to other children. Above all popular prejudice on this point is very strong and deserves consideration. The annoyance of taking children twice to the office is a real grievance. Government should, therefore, remove all cause for complaint by following the older Acts in this matter and leaving full discretion to its Departmental Officers. With these alterations the proposed measure will be found in actual work to be a great blessing and people will soon reconcile themselves to this necessity as one imposed upon them in their best interests.

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THE POONA SARVAJANIK SABHA.

Established for representing the wants and wishes of the inhabitants of the Deccan, being appointed on a popular elective system under rules framed for the purpose.

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2 *Cotton Manufactures in the Bombay Presidency.*

the art of weaving was carried from India to Egypt and Assyria. Ptolemy mentions seven places near Thana which carried on the foreign trade of India with Egypt, and goods were carried from the top of the Sahyadri eastward in wagons across the Deccan to Paithan and from Paithan ten days further east to Sagar—the greatest mart of Southern India. Goods from ports on the coast of Madras, and the coast of Bengal also collected at Sagar.* Ptolemy also mentions Massolia, which can be no other than the modern Masalipatam, near the mouth of the Krishna as a place where the finest muslins were made. The trade in cloth between Masalipatam and Thana was kept up till modern times. It was not until the thirteenth century that the cotton plant was introduced into southern Europe where its wool was first used to make paper. † Its manufacture into cloth in imitation of the fabrics of Egypt and India was first attempted by the Italian States in the thirteenth century.

From the States of Italy, the art was carried to the low countries and thence it passed over to England in the seventeenth century. About the middle of the seventeenth century, it appears that chintzes and other cloths from Masalipatam passed through Golkonda by Chandor, Nasik, and the Thal pass to the Thana ports. About the time, Masalipatam is described as a very populous city where the trade of Europe and China met, and where there was a great concourse of merchants from Cambay, Surat, Goa, and other places on the West Coast. What is at present known as Pandari turbans, made of dark spotted cloth, and now worn by Bombay Prabhus,

* For Sagar, see page 423, note, Mrs. Manning's *Ancient and Mediæval India*.

† *The Industrial Arts of India* by Sir George Birdwood.

Musalmans and Parsees, is Masali Bandari cloth, which was probably adopted by these classes from the old Hindu Thana traders. The establishment of the East India Company and the Company's exports of cotton cloth into England resulted in the supply of a large quantity of Indian cotton goods for the use of the higher and middle classes of Englishmen. In 1611, attempts were made to turn out 'Manchester cottons' made of wool in imitation of Indian cottons. But Manchester did not succeed in attempting to compete successfully with the printed calicos of India on free-trade principles. Gradually the wearing of Indian chintzes became so general in England that it drew the attention of the woollen and flaxen manufacturers. DeFoe, in a number of the *Weekly Review*, January 1708, expressed the common opinion of the time in bitterly lamenting the large importations of Indian goods into Great Britain, exactly after the manner in which the imports of Manchester and English manufactures of all kinds have been viewed in India.*

The famous looms of Dacca have produced and still produce that exquisite texture which even English machinery of the nineteenth century has not been able to rival. Muslins are chiefly of three qualities, varying according to the degree of fineness. † They are known as Malmut Khas or King's Muslin.

* He remarked that 'the general fancy of the people runs upon East India goods..... It has crept into our hands..... It has crept into our houses, bed-chambers, curtains, cushions, chairs, and at last beds themselves were nothing but calicos of Indian stuffs; and, in short, almost every thing relating to the dress of the woman or the furniture of houses was supplied by the Indian trade. About half of the woollen manufactures was entirely lost, half of the people ruined and all this by the intercourse of the East India trade.'

† The first quality of Dacca Muslin is known as 'Woven Air.' The second quality is Ahrasan, or 'Running water' and it is related

Their usual price is £ 1 per yard. * Dacca, however, is not the only place for fine muslins, though its position in the moist climate of the Sunderbuns places it at an advantage. Chandranagar is another place for fine manufactures. There the work of weaving is all done in under-ground shops for the sake of moisture. Some persons do not believe in the influence of climate and ascribe the superiority of Dacca muslins to skill, but skill without climate will not do much. In the dry air of the Deccan, the yarn is spun in closed cellars, of which the floors are continually watered.

For a long time the idea had taken hold of Native capitalists in Bombay and other cities in Gujara't that cotton spinning in India by the aid of machinery imported from England must turn out profitable. Raw cotton in pressed bales exported from Bombay was made into yarns and cloth in Lancashire and re-exported in manufactured goods to India. In spite of all charges for freight, insurance, commission on raw and manufactured goods shipped to and from England, the price at which Manchester goods sold in India left a sufficient margin to cover all charges. If this could be done,

that in the time of Nawab Aliavardy Khan, a weaver was turned out of Dacca for his neglect in not preventing his cow from eating up a piece of this muslin, which he had carelessly left upon grass. The third quality is called the 'Evening Dew' and when spread upon the grass can scarcely be distinguished from the dew. See Mrs. Manning, Vol. II., page 300.

* The Hindus consider the Jāma or loom-figured to be their *Chef-d'œuvre* in muslins. £ 31 is said to have been the price of that manufactured for Aurangzeb; while in 1776 these muslins reached the extravagant price of £ 55 per piece. Comparing these fabrics with those manufactured in Great Britain, Dr. Watson finds the yarn finer than any yet produced in Europe, while the twisting given to it by the Hindu hand makes it more durable than any machine-made fabric. Mrs. Manning's India, Vol. II., page 300. . .

they argued, while the raw material was carried across seven thousand miles, to and back from England, why should not the manufacture of cotton in India pay? Cotton was at the Indian mill-owner's door; labour, though less skilful, was cheap. The saving in the conveyance of raw cotton to England and its re-conveyance to India in the shape of twist and piece-goods was a decided advantage. But though the advantages in favour of cotton spinning in India greatly preponderated, yet no serious attempt was made until about the year 1845, when an enterprising Hindu gentleman, Mr. (now Rao Bahadur) Ranchorelal Chotalal, C. I. E., the present successful mill-owner of Ahmedabad, conceived the idea of putting up a small cotton spinning factory at Ahmedabad. But Mr. Ranchorelal had no information before him on which to proceed. He knew, however, of one gentleman who took interest in all matters of industrial enterprise. This was Major Fulljames, Commandant of the Gujrat Irregular Horse. Of his own accord, Major Fulljames obtained a detailed estimate of the first cost as well as of the out-turn and working charges of a moderately sized mill through his brother. In a letter he wrote to Messrs.

* The letter states that 'a Company of Natives are anxious to establish a cotton spinning and weaving manufactory and have begged me to write to you on the subject, as they wish before ordering out the machinery to ascertain the terms on which you will supply the same as well as guarantee that the machinery you send out will, when erected in India, under the superintendence of the European machinist you may select, perform the full amount of work stipulated for. These native gentlemen being totally unacquainted with machinery, either theoretically or practically, it becomes a matter of the greatest importance to them, when embarking in such an undertaking that they should possess a guarantee that the machinery supplied will perform all that it is stated it is capable to do and for this purpose they would wish that the price of the machinery should be deposited in the Oriental Bank, the Bank of

Bryan Donkin and Co., of London, Major Fulljames described who the promoters of the concern were, and on what terms the machinery was to be ordered out and the mill completed. Major Fulljames was for many years

Bombay, or any other respectable Firm in India until the machinery has been erected and put to work and has turned out the quantity of work stipulated for in a given time. They would agree to pay for the loss of interest of money so long as held in deposit and to allow you to select such European Superintendents as may be necessary for the erection of machinery as well as for working it after completion. The Company will undertake to erect a suitable building for the machinery to any plan you may send but it should be borne in mind that land is very cheap in India so that there is no necessity to have other than ground floor buildings. Upper stories are very unadvisable and expensive in India. The Company are in possession of estimates you furnished my brother, Mr. Thomas Fulljames, on the 28th July 1847, for a Company at Surat, who after much discussion abandoned the scheme. The present parties are anxious to know the exact amount for which, with the prices therein, you will agree to supply the best machinery and the quantity of work such machinery will turn out under a guarantee as above detailed. The machinery they expect will combine the latest patents and best improvements and that the Europeans selected should be industrious, well-behaved and sober men who have been well instructed in weaving and spinning &c.; for the success of the scheme will depend on their skill and good conduct. The indentures these machinists should subscribe to ought to be very concise and I would suggest that their salary should increase annually up to a certain sum—the average not exceeding what you formerly mentioned, but should there be any difficulty on this point, your former terms may be fixed. The parties should be requested to serve not under three years. The Company is only answerable for their wages while in India in the Company's service. In the event of continued sickness, and the parties unable to perform their duties, or gross misconduct, the parties should be liable to discharge from the Company's service. On the order being sent you for the machinery, one half the cost will be deposited in Bombay in the hands of the firm selected and the other half on the bills of lading being received in India that the machinery has been despatched, from which date the Company will agree to pay interest, or, if preferred, a certain fixed sum in addition to the prime cost of machinery. It is proposed to erect the machinery near the banks of the Nerbudda river and in the immediate neighbourhood of extensive cotton growing districts. Wood fuel will be used for generating the steam, coal, at present being very expensive in India and to be had with difficulty.

Commandant of the Gujarat Bheel Corps, called by the natives, 'Bheel Pultan.' From this post he rose to the position of Commandant of the Gujarat Irregular Horse. When young he was employed by Government to examine the geological strata of Gujarat. He had a turn for practical science, and was especially fond of practical mechanics. By Natives he was called 'Sardi Saheb' from his frequent handling of *Sardi* or boring machines. His practical sagacity was evinced in his construction of the sluice gates in the Khari river near Mehemoodabad in the Kaira district of Gujarat and utilizing the river water in irrigating rice fields in the Jayatalpur subdivision of the Dushkroi paraganas. He also induced certain native gentlemen in Ahmedabad to construct a tramway from Dhollera to the Khoon Bunder. He got up a Joint Stock Company for the purpose and became its Secretary till he went to Baroda to assume the office of Political Agent, Rewa Kantha. Whilst at Baroda he induced the Gaikwar authorities to construct sluice-gates in the Vishwamitri river. This enabled the people to enjoy the benefit of the river water all throughout the year. In his tours through the Rewa Kantha territory, he took notes of all he observed of the geological features of the country, and submitted valuable reports to Government, embodying the results of his geological researches. His survey of the district led him to discover the existence of iron ore in three places in the Rewa Kantha districts:—(1) in Leemodra in the Rajpreepla State, (2) in the Narwote puragana, and (3) in Shivrajpur near Pavagland. He also pointed out localities containing coal deposits.

It was proposed to erect the Mill on the banks of the Nurbuda at Broach in the heart of one of the best cotton growing districts of Gujarat. Messrs. Bryan Donkin and Co. stipulated that if

the inquiry did not result in an order for machinery, they would charge for their trouble. And so it turned out that Major Fulljames had to pay Messrs. Bryan Donkin and Co. from his own pocket. The estimate they sent showed that cotton spinning and weaving would, if well managed, pay. In 1849, Mr. Runchorelal sent from Baroda a Gujarati version of the above estimate to be published in a vernacular weekly at Ahmedabad—the *Vartaman Patra*, and requested Mr. Bhogilal Pranvallabhdas, Head Master of the English School at Ahmedabad, to explain the matter to the rich capitalists and traders of the city. Mr. Bhogilal made some efforts, which, however, proved unsuccessful. He at last wrote to Mr. Runchorelal to say that the Shettias of Ahmedabad feared to embark their capital in an untried industry, remarking that if cotton-mill was a paying industry, it was not likely to suffer for want of patronage, but was sure to obtain all the necessary capital from the shrewd and business-like people of Bombay. No further attempt in the direction of starting a cotton mill was made until the end of 1851, when Mr. Runchorelal Chotalal had an opportunity of bringing the subject to the notice of Mr. James Landon—an American gentleman who had established a Steam Cotton Ginning Factory at Branch. Mr. Runchorelal was introduced to Mr. Landon by Rao Bahadur Jagjivandas Khushaldas, the late pensioned Deputy Collector of Surat, and Rao Bahadur Umedram Runchoredas, until lately, District Deputy Collector of Surat. Mr. Runchorelal sent to Mr. Landon the estimate obtained by Major Fulljames and asked his opinion on the subject. In reply, Mr. Landon said he was not personally acquainted with cotton spinning but

would refer the matter to friends in England for their opinion after the ginning season was over. This Mr. Landon did.

After a few months Mr. Landon got a reply from England. He wrote to Mr. Runchorelal to say that he was satisfied the project was a promising one, and that if Mr. Runchorelal could get half the capital required, he would arrange for the other half. He said he would also undertake the contract to erect the building and start the machinery for a specific sum, and would also manage the mill on certain terms. He concluded by saying that he would give a good security for the due performance of his undertaking. On receipt of this proposal, Mr. Runchorelal tried and succeeded in getting the consent of certain respectable persons to subscribe half the capital. Among the gentlemen who promised to help the formation of the company were the well-known firms of Gopalrao Mairal and Samal Bechar of Baroda, the Raja of Rajpepla, and the late Mr. Gowrishankar Udayashanker, C. S. I., of Bhavnagar.

As a test of his faith in the concern, Mr. Runchorelal induced his father to take shares in it. Thus the requisite capital was subscribed on the faith of Mr. Landon undertaking the contract for building the mill and putting up the machinery for a specific sum, and upon his arranging with a respectable firm in Bombay to stand as security for the due performance of the contract. Mr. Landon offered to get Messrs Leckie and Co. of Bombay to guarantee him. Accordingly a Memorandum and Articles of Association were drawn up. The capital of the company was to be Rs. 500,000, divided into shares of Rs. 5000 each. On the execution of the guarantee by Messrs. Leckie and Co., the money was to be paid to

Mr. Landon or Messrs. Leckie & Co., and Mr. Landon was to go to England to purchase the machinery for the Mill. Thus all was ready and the shareholders consented to sign the deed of partnership provided the guarantee stipulated for by them was forthcoming. Mr. Bunchorelal, accompanied by the Munim or Agent of the Firm of Samul Bechar of Baroda, went to Broach and inquired for the security or guarantee of Messrs Leckie and Co. All, however, that Mr. Landon was prepared to produce was a letter from Messrs Leckie and Co., informing the shareholders that the money paid by them would be handed over to Mr. Landon in London for the purchase of machinery, but if the money was not required by Mr. Landon, it would be returned to the shareholders. This letter did not look like security for the due performance of the contract. Mr. Landon indeed urged that Mr. Bunchorelal and the Baroda shareholders 'can certainly have no reasonable excuse for further delay, as Messrs. Leckie & Co. have expressed their entire willingness to guarantee the performance of my contract, if they were not prohibited from doing so by the terms of their own deed of partnership. This is in effect the same as if they had so guaranteed it, as my own transactions with the House have been from first to last to nearly five times the amount of the whole of the stock of this Company and therefore from their knowledge of me, what they say would be equivalent with any reasonable persons to any guarantee that would be given. Under no circumstance will it be consistent with my own character to offer any further assurance, and I may add that it is only the Baroda shareholders that have required even *this* from me.' * The Baroda

* Mr. Landon's letter to Mr. Bunchorelal, dated the 22nd April, 1853.

shareholders, however, stuck fast and insisted upon a proper guarantee being given for the safety of their money.

Mr. Landon once more urged upon Mr. Runchorelal * to get the Baroda shareholders to pay up their money, but these shareholders held that they would be risking the funds until they had a clear guarantee from Messrs. Leckie and Co. as to the safety of the money. Major Fulljames too did not consider it desirable for the shareholders to leave the funds entirely in the hands of Mr. Landon without a full assurance as to their safety. There was also another clause in the deed of partnership of the Company which required modification. It related to the

* I wrote you a note yesterday morning by a Cossid, under a sense of the injury that would be done to me, the other shareholders, and still more to the best interests of this country by the refusal of the Baroda shareholders to sign the deed and pay up their shares to the Company on the alleged ground of not having sufficient security for the performance of the contract on my part for the supply of the machinery, buildings &c. In their demand for further security in this behalf, they seem to leave out of sight altogether the facts that I am myself the largest shareholder in the Company, that nearly one-fifth of the entire cost of the machinery and buildings are to be paid for with *my own money*; that in addition to this my own unincumbered property *here* is of more value than one half of the amount of the whole contract, and that I am to have the management of the concern when in operation, and last, though not least, my own character is vouched for by one of the first Houses in Bombay. And these facts combined are and would be to any but the most stultified and prejudiced mind a sufficient guarantee for the faithful performance of any contract. Nor can I understand why they should be deemed insufficient by your friends (as they have proved satisfactory to all the other shareholders) if you have brought them properly to their notice. They have gone so far in the matter that they cannot recede without giving a death-blow to all enterprises of the kind for at least many years. As I have not yet heard their final decision, I write this to request that you will make another effort to induce them to fulfil their engagements, and thereby enable us to carry out one of the most important objects for the promotion and development of the prosperity of this country. Mr. Landon's letter, dated Broach 28th April 1853 to Mr. Runchorelal.

sale of shares in the Company. The clause provided that no sale of a share or shares could be effected without the sanction of the Manager. This could not be allowed to pass into agreement. The Manager, so thought the Baroda shareholders, should have no power of this sort. He should be considered the servant of the Company and should, as such, have no power to prevent any one selling his share, if he thought fit to do so. He was in fact, as the deed of agreement put it, the shareholders' master. This was sure to give rise to misunderstanding. The result was that Mr. Landon had to give up the Native proprietary and look for help as regards capital from other quarters. But Mr. Landon persevered and at last established a Cotton Mill at Broach.

The Broach Mills started with 17000 spindles but no looms. In 1863, the Mills were registered under the Limited Liability Act with a capital of Rs. 400,000 divided into 800 shares of Rs. 500, each paid up. But while Broach was thus provided with a cotton mill, Bombay did not long remain without one. An enterprising gentleman, Mr. Cowasji Nanabhoj Davar, started the first cotton mill in Bombay on the joint stock principle. It was called the Bombay Spinning and Weaving Company. The capital of the Company was Rs. 500,000 divided into 1000 shares of Rs. 500 each. Mr. Cowasji Nanabhoj Davar, as the original promoter of the concern, was the first Manager of the Mill. He received a commission of 5 per cent. on the proceeds of yarn sold. The Mill began to work in February 1856. About 500 persons were employed upon it under the direction of three Europeans. The mills began work with 29,000 spindles but no looms. The capital consisted of 100 shares of Rs. 5,000 each fully paid up. At this time Indian operatives were entire-

ly new to the work and it was not until many months after that the hands got trained to the various processes in the scutching, blowing, carding and spinning rooms. Hence it was nearly two years after that that the shareholders were able to get a first dividend of Rs. 600 per share. The second dividend was for Rs. 400 for the half year (January to June) of 1859, the dividend for the remaining half of the year being for Rs. 600, making up a total of Rs. 1000 or half the amount paid up of each share returned to the shareholders in one year.

This was enough to tempt capitalists to launch into fresh concerns of the kind. Accordingly the Oriental Spinning and Weaving Company was formed in 1856 with a capital of Rs. 20,00,000 divided into 800 shares of Rs. 2500 each. The year 1860 witnessed the starting of two other mills, the Bombay Royal Spinning and Weaving Company and the Cooria Mills.

In 1861 came out the Ahmedabad Spinning and Weaving Mills, in 1862 the Bombay United S. and W. Company; in 1864 the Maneckji Petit Mills, the Alliance Spinning and Weaving Company and the great Eastern Mills; and in 1865 the Albert Mills.

Initial difficulties.

Though it was generally felt by capitalists that investments, in cotton mills would yield a fair return on capital, the task of starting and working a mill was by no means so easy in 1856 as it appears to be in 1892. The first difficulty was in respect of raising the necessary capital. To capitalists the field of industry was wholly new. Ordinary men of business could scarcely be induced to take shares in a

mill concern, for it was at first doubtful when the investor would get a return in the shape of a dividend. Wealthy capitalists alone could afford to wait till the period when the mill began to earn profits. When, however, the difficulty in regard to the raising of capital was got over by the wealthy promoters of a mill coming forward by the hope of commission to contribute largely to the capital of the concern, the next question arose as to the building of the mill and ordering out the necessary machinery from England. Mill architecture was little understood in Bombay thirty years ago. Working plans by professional draughtsmen could indeed be got ready, but the work of building a mill could not be proceeded with until the detailed plans for the engine and boiler houses and for the blow, card, mule, and throstle rooms, and for the loomshed were approved of by the machine-makers in England. And since communication with England in those days by the Cape route took 60 days, delay in the building of a mill was in many respects unavoidable. It was considered fortunate if the vessel loaded with mill machinery passed the Cape of Good Hope and arrived safely in Bombay, as otherwise the loss of the ship often added to the delay. In certain cases, mishaps of the kind did occur, and though the goods were insured, the delays from such accidents proved intolerable and the tale of misfortune to impatient shareholders at annual meetings was a sore disappointment to them. When at last the machinery did arrive, the serious work of fitting up the mill began. Care was, no doubt, taken to send out from England the requisite staff of fitters and mechanics to fit up the machinery but they needed the help of trained hands. This aid could not be given and the result was loss of time so much so that it took in an average-sized mill of, say, 15000 spindles and 200 looms

from two to three months or treble the time it does at present in Bombay.

Want of skill in the mill-hands was the most serious drawback a mill-owner had to contend against in those days. The hands needed training and that training was only to be got by constant work in the mill. This took time and as long as the requisite skill and dexterity in handling the machinery was not attained, full production could not be secured. Thus even if the mill began work, it was not until after several months that it reached the point of full work with the full number of spindles. And where the entire number of spindles was in full work, it was not until the hands had acquired the requisite skill and dexterity that the normal production of 4 ounces per spindle per day of the standard No. 20s yarn was reached.

Drawbacks.

So far for initial difficulties ; but the drawbacks to the Indian mill-owner, which are more or less of a constant or recurring nature, are deserving of notice, as they counter-balance more or less the advantages of cheap labour and tell heavily on the cost of production. The first and foremost among these drawbacks is the one in regard to coal, which has to be supplied to Bombay mills all the way from England. In this respect the Lancashire Mills have a decided advantage and since coal is an item of recurring charges, the rise and fall in price of coal tells sensibly on the cost of manufactures turned out by India's mills. Another equally important drawback is as regards machinery. To replace breakages and prevent the mill from stopping, mill-owners are driven to the necessity of keeping on hand double or triple sets of machinery. Accidents to the mills, although not of frequent occurrence, are

sometimes very serious, and where the spare machinery is not in stock, a mill must stop work until the necessary piece of machinery arrives from England. Of late, however, iron-founderies and workshops have come into existence in Bombay to meet the growing wants of the mills for renewals and repairs, and Messrs Richardson Cruddas, Messrs. Fraser and Miller, Messrs Sorabji Shapurji of Khetwadi and others are doing fair and remunerative business in the iron trade; but yet it is a fact that the repairs or renewals of the heavy portions of mill machinery cannot be done in India.

But while the initial and other difficulties at this period were so great in Bombay, the drawbacks in the case of up-country mills may be more easily imagined than described. Speaking of the Ahmedabad Cotton S. and W. Company, Mr. Runchorelal Chotalal, one of the earliest pioneers of cotton mill industry in this Presidency, remarks:—"The foundation of our Mill was laid down in 1859 and the quantity of machinery ordered was only 2500 Throstle Spindles. Our Agent in England was Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, to whom I was introduced by my lamented friend, Mr. Merwanji Nassarwanji Bhowmagri. At the time we established our Mill at Ahmedabad, there was no railway communication and we had to bring all our machinery, engines and boilers to Cambay by boats, whence we brought the whole stuff by country bullock carts. The people in Ahmedabad did not know at the time what a steam engine or a cotton machine was and we had to teach and train up every body. At that time there was no skilled labour available at Bombay and so we had to struggle with our local resources the best way we could. We had the first consignment of our machinery from England lost in the sea, and the first European Manager we brought from England

was carried away by cholera. Notwithstanding all these difficulties, we were able to commence cotton spinning in 1861 and through the favour of Providence, I think, we have succeeded beyond our sanguine expectations. ”

In spite of these and other initial drawbacks, cotton industry made a steady progress. Mr. Vernon Smith, the Indian Secretary of State, in his Budget statement before Parliament, called the attention of the House to a ‘curious’ experiment. He spoke of improvements in the ginning of cotton at Broach effected by Mr. Landon, and of the establishment by the same gentleman of a Cotton Factory at Broach, as having been attended with ‘signal’ success, & the yarns made there from the exclusively short staple Broach fetching 10 per cent. more than Manchester yarn of the same description, and orders being received sufficient to keep the factory in continuous work for months. Mr. Vernon-Smith expressed a wish that Mr. Bright was present to hear the increased attention paid to cotton cultivation in India in which he (Mr. Bright) had taken so much interest. People in England at that time hardly dreamt of

* Mr. Vernon Smith thus expressed himself :—Mr. Landon, a merchant who has settled in Broach for cotton purposes, has established in that district a factory for making and preparing the saw-gin machinery. He has also erected a cotton factory—an experiment which appears to have been attended with signal success. For, it is stated, the yarn made at Mr. Landon’s factory, ‘exclusively of short staple Broach’ fetched in the market ‘nearly ten per cent. more than Manchester yarn of the same description,’ and that orders had in consequence been received sufficiently to keep the factory in constant work for some months.

Again he was sorry the Hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Bright) was not in his place, as he had ever taken a deep interest in this question, and would no doubt have been gratified to learn that something was being done towards increasing the cultivation of an article,

Indian or Bombay competition with Manchester, and smiled at the simplicity of any projector venturing to spin 'twist' in India, and, least of all at Broach, a place 'a thousand miles distant from a supply of coal' in competition with Glasgow and Manchester. But happily we have seen that even with capital borrowed at 10 per cent., and labour—skilled labour—far less efficient than that of Manchester, cotton manufacture has succeeded, not at Calcutta, where it was tried under more auspicious circumstances, but at Bombay and throughout the Bombay Presidency where the prospects were thought to be less cheering.

the production of which he had been most anxious to promote. (Hansard, XLIII, third series, page 1131.)

* The London Examiner of July 26-1856, referring to Mr. Verne Smith's Indian budget speech, remarked as follows:—The President of the Indian Board described at much length the steps taken by the Indian Government for improving the quality of the Indian Cotton which still stands, as it has always stood, at the bottom of a scale in the English Market of some varieties. But then by way of compensation a certain Mr. Landon—an enterprising Briton—has established a manufactory of saw-gins at Broach, and also a manufactory of yarn at the same place and he is underselling the yarns of Glasgow and Manchester. The President expressed a wish that the Hon'ble Member for Manchester, Mr. Bright, had been present to hear this prosperous tale; but we fancy we can tell the Right Hon. gentleman what its effect would have been on Mr. Bright. He would have smiled at the simplicity of the sanguine and simple projector who proposes to spin 'twist' in competition with Manchester and Glasgow, in a place one thousand miles distant from a supply of coal with machinery imported from a distance of 12000 miles, with capital borrowed at 10 per cent. and with artisans, four of whom would not make one of Lancashire. Under far more favourable auspices the project had been tried and failed at Calcutta.

(To be Continued.)

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THE POONA SARVAJANIK SABHA

Established for representing the wants and wishes of the inhabitants of the Deccan, being appointed on a popular elective system under rules framed for the purpose.

WALEKAR'S WADA, DANE ALI.

LIST OF OFFICERS.

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Vice-Presidents.

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| H. H. Ramchandrarao Gopal alias Appasaheb Patwardhan, Chief of Jamkhindi. | H. H. Harharrao Vinayek alias Daji Sahab Patwardhan, Chief of Kurundwad. |
| H. H. Gunpatrao Harihar alias | H. H. Toolajee Raja Bhosle, Chief of Akalkote. |

MANAGING COMMITTEE FOR 1891-92.

Chairman - RAO BHADOUR VISHNU MOHESHWAR BHIDE.

Members of the Managing Committee.

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HONORARY Secretaries.

PROFESSOR GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE B. A.

SHIVRAM HARI SATHE ESQR.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SABHA,

THE DISTRICT VACCINATION BILL,

No. 40 of 1892.

SARVAJANIK SABHA ROOMS,
Poona, 16th February, 1892.

To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF
Bombay, Legislative Department,

BOMBAY.

SIR,

We have been directed by the Managing Committee of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha to submit this representation for the favourable consideration of His Excellency the Governor and other members of the Legislative Council in regard to the Bill No. 3 of 1891, which proposes to make vaccination compulsory in the whole Presidency at the discretion of Government and about which the Select Committee, appointed by the Council on the 22nd ultimo, has recently submitted its report.

2. The Committee of the Sabha are glad to observe that they are in entire accord with Government in regard to the general principle of the Bill. The fact that, though vaccination is not at present compulsory outside the limits of the town and island of Bombay and the City of Karachi, its protection is sought by no less than 75 per cent. of the population in the Presidency, is a conclusive proof that its beneficial character is properly appreciated by an over-whelmingly large majority of the people. This being so, Government has undoubtedly the right to insist that the minority of the remaining 25 per cent. must not by their negligence or indifference or prejudice en-

danger the health of the general public, small-pox being an admittedly infectious disease.

3. But though the Committee of the Sabha thus approve of the general principle of the Bill, they cannot regard without apprehension the provision that requires arm-to-arm vaccination. The success that has attended compulsory vaccination in the town and island of Bombay and the City of Karachi is, in the opinion of the Committee, in a large measure due to the fact that the Bombay and Karachi Acts require the use of animal lymph alone in vaccination, and, as printed out by the Hon'ble Mr. Javerilal Umiyashankar Yajnik in his minute of dissent, appended to the Select Committee's report, if the present measure is to work smoothly and successfully, it must be modelled on the lines of those older Acts. The Committee believe that the best medical opinion of the present day regards arm-to-arm vaccination as decidedly inferior to vaccination by animal lymph. But this is neither the only nor the main objection which the Committee would respectfully desire to urge. "Arm-to-arm vaccination, as can indeed be easily seen, is attended with very considerable risk, inasmuch if the lymph happen to be taken from the arm of a child, suffering from some disease, there is the danger of the disease being widely propagated. The Committee of the Sabha are aware that the Select Committee appointed by the Council has tried to partially meet this objection by suggesting to provide "that lymph shall not be taken from any child who does not appear to be in good health and free from taint of a disease transmissible by vaccination." But this provision will not, it is to be feared, be found of much use in practical operation. The qualifications required in a vaccinator cannot naturally be of a nature to ensure a correct judgment from him whether a child is "in good health and free from all taint of a disease transmissible by vaccination." A child might, for instance, have inherited from its parent the germs of syphilis or such other disease, and these germs might be lying in an undeveloped state. It is likely that such a child might at the time of vaccination present the appearance of one who is "in good health and free from taint of a disease transmissible by vaccination." But it is clearly not safe to use for vaccination purposes the lymph extracted from the arm of such a child. The provision, therefore, suggested by the Select Committee, is quite inadequate as a safe-

guard against propagating disease by vaccination. The prejudices of the people are also strong and deep-rooted in this matter, and deserve to be taken into consideration by Government. The extraction of lymph from a child's arm is regarded by many as highly objectionable and vaccination by means of lymph taken from a child of a different caste or creed is regarded by them as little short of pollution. The Committee of the Sabha, therefore, pray that the Council will be pleased not to sanction arm-to-arm vaccination, which, besides being admittedly inferior to vaccination by animal lymph, is, as has been shown above, attended with very considerable risk and opposed to the instincts and prejudices of the people. The resources of Government are large, and the Committee think that if proper care be taken in the matter, the contingency of animal lymph being "not procurable in any vaccination area without dangerous delay" ought never to arise.

4. When the present Bill passed through the first reading stage His Excellency the Governor was pleased to assure the public that the question of the increased expenditure on vaccination, which would be necessitated by this Bill passing into law, though a matter of executive detail would receive the attention of the Select Committee. The Committee of the Sabha regret that from the Select Committee's report, it does not appear that the question was considered by it. We are directed to point out that if the Bill be passed in its present form, it will virtually lay a heavy burden on the Local bodies without their consent. The cost of the Vaccination Department is at present nearly 3 lakhs of rupees, out of which 1,07,000 is contributed from the Provincial Revenues, and 1,25,000 is borne by Local and Municipal Boards, the remainder coming from the Native States. Whether this same proportion of expenditure is to be kept up, when this Bill passes into law, is a serious question, and in the opinion of the Committee, it should not be left to be decided by Government in its executive capacity, but should be considered and disposed of by the Legislature itself. The average cost for each vaccinated child in places, where vaccination is not at present compulsory, appears to be about 5 annas, while the same in the town and island of Bombay, where vaccination is compulsory, is over a rupee and four annas per child. At the lowest estimate, therefore, if the present proportion be kept up, the Local and Municipal Boards will have to increase their expenditure to 4 times

what it is at present, *i. e.* they will be required to expend about 5 lacks of rupees where they at present expend 1½ lacks. The Committee of the Sabha submit that these bodies might legitimately ask to be consulted before such a heavy burden is imposed upon them. The Committee would point out that such a procedure was adopted in the case of the town and island of Bombay and the city of Karachi, and they would therefore respectfully urge that a provision to make it incumbent upon Government to obtain the consent of Local and Municipal Bodies in regard to increased expenditure, before vaccination is made compulsory within their areas, should be included in the present measure.

5. Section 23 provides that "if a Superintendent of vaccination shall give information in writing to a Magistrate that he has reason to believe that any child within a vaccination area, under the age of 14 years, is an unprotected child and that he has given notice to the parent or guardian of such child to procure its being vaccinated and that the said notice has been disregarded, such Magistrate may summon such parent or guardian to appear with the child before him." The Committee of the Sabha would suggest a slight addition here, *viz.* that the notice to be given by the Superintendent to the parent or guardian should allow the latter a period of at least two months from the date of the serving of the notice for getting the child vaccinated.

6. The Committee of the Sabha believe that if the Bill be modified on the lines suggested above, its operation will be attended with the same measure of success as in the case of the town and island of Bombay and the city of Karachi, and they therefore earnestly hope that their suggestions will be favourably considered by the Council.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servants

G. K. GOKHALE,

S. H. SATHE,

Hon. Secretaries, Poona Sarvajnik Sabha.

THE FAMINE IN THE DECCAN.

SARVAJANIKA SABHA ROOMS,

Poona, 24th February 1892.

To

THE SECRETARY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF BOMBAY,

BOMBAY.

Sir, — With reference to your letter No. 293, dated 14th January, 1892, we have been directed by the Managing Committee of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha to request you to convey to his Excellency the Governor in Council the respectful thanks of the Sabha for his assurance that he appreciates the spirit which prompted the last representation of the Sabha in regard to famine matters, and that he would be glad to receive such information as the Sabha may from time to time supply.

2. When the Committee of the Sabha made suggestions for additional statistical information, they were aware that it was not advisable to add materially to the labours of the district officials at such a time as the present. At the same time they were and still are of opinion that these labours of the district officers cannot be properly directed and economised unless their attention is drawn by Government to the points noted in our previous letter, and that the superior authorities, who will have to guide their operations, will not be in a position to judge correctly of the condition of the several districts affected, unless they secure periodical reports from the district officers concerned in regard to the principal indices of the pressure of famine, as it increases from month to month. The publication of such information from time to time is also a means of giving the public a fairly correct idea of the real state of things, and it will, the Committee think, be readily admitted that the best way to minimize the chances and risks of panics is to keep the people well informed.

3. With reference to the 2nd para of your letter, the Committee of the Sabha acknowledge with gratitude that on this occasion Government has in various ways shown its readiness to properly face the situation and do all in its power to alleviate the hardships of the population in the affected districts. H. E. the Governor's tour in the worst affected parts has inspired confidence in the public mind in regard to

the attitude of Government. The Committee of the Sabha learn from their correspondents that forests have been thrown open for grazing, where, in the opinion of the authorities, this could conveniently be done. Large Tagai grants have been sanctioned and orders for starting relief-works, where necessary, have been issued, and current prices of staple grains and fodder are now published in the weekly *Gazette*. In all these matters, the Committee of the Sabha are glad to find that the action of Government has been in entire accord with the suggestions of the Sabha.

4. The notification issued by Government in the last *Government Gazette*, recognizing officially the prevalence of famine in the whole of the Bijapur District and parts of Belgaum and Dharwar, is also emphatically a step in the right direction, and Government is entitled to the thanks of the public for this high and courageous resolve to face the situation as it is, without trying to unduly underestimate its magnitude. The Committee are also glad that, as suggested by them in their previous representation, a separate Department to deal with famine matters has been opened at the Secretariat, and a special officer placed in charge of it.

5. There are, however, one or two points in connection with these recent orders of Government, about which the Committee of the Sabha deem it necessary to submit a few further suggestions. In regard to the Tagai grants it will be very desirable if the orders issued by Government in this matter could be published more widely than through the official channels. In the recent inquiries made by the Land Indebtedness Commission in the Bhamthadi Taluka, it was elicited that the poor ryots, who are anxious to obtain the advantages for digging deeper existing wells or for constructing new ones, were quite ignorant as to the intentions of Government in this matter. If the particular grants sanctioned for each taluka were made more widely known than seems to be the case at present, this difficulty would be, to a large extent, removed. One additional advantage, which is likely to be secured by liberality in the matter of Tagai advances in the present crisis, is that the people in the affected districts will find work near their homes, and on their own responsibility, and this work will again be of a character to be a permanent protection against the pressure of famine hereafter.

These advantages cannot evidently be ensured by opening ordinary relief-works in the shape of repairs or construction of public roads. Another point in connection with these Tagai grants is that though the sums now sanctioned are very liberal, judged by the ordinary expenditure on this head, yet the wants of the people in this matter are such that any money that Government can set apart for this purpose will always prove inadequate. The Committee of the Sabha are, however, in a position to state that large capitalists in Poona and Sholapur and other places are prepared to supplement the Tagai grants of Government with their own private advances to any amount that Government may deem reasonable, and they will be, moreover, prepared to undertake the work of distribution and ensure Government against any loss of its own money advanced through them, in return for their being permitted to have the help of the revenue agency in the work of realization. As at present managed, the work of advancing Tagai is left entirely to the officials who are not easily accessible and are also not in a position to judge well of the solvency or honesty of the persons who seek the Tagai money. In consequence of this uncertainty and distance necessarily existing between the district officials and the ryots, the Tagai agency fails to reach the classes sought to be benefited. The officers of Government naturally hesitate to make advances to persons whose credit is not of the very best kind. This diffidence on the part of the officials, however natural under the circumstances, interferes with the usefulness of this agency. The difficulties experienced will be removed by the employment of respectable sowkars, singly or joined together as syndicates for this purpose. The Committee of the Sabha are persuaded that if encouraged in this way, private effort would be forthcoming to help Government on this occasion.

One more point in this connection that the Committee would respectfully urge is the great desirability of making Tagai grants for the purchase of fodder. The Sabha understands that this point was pressed upon the attention of Government by the Collector of Satara, but that Government was not pleased to sanction the recommendation. The Committee, however, would submit that though the case of fodder might not be covered by the strict letter of the existing rules, yet there can be no doubt that their spirit sanctions help in so useful a

direction. It is, therefore, hoped that Government will be pleased to reconsider their decision on this point.

6. In addition to the points already suggested, the Committee from their experience of the past famine, are led to think that weekly statements should be obtained of the number and value of small silver ornaments brought to the banks or to the mint for melting. This feature of the shrinkage of private resources was a very marked one in the worst period of 1876-78. And though for some time a large portion of such ornaments will not find their way to banks or the mint, but will be melted by goldsmiths on private account, still when the pressure increases, this resource will be found to fail. The suggestion, if acted upon, will enable Government to fairly mark the deepening shadows of the situation.

7. With reference to the recent notification issued by Government declaring Bijapur and parts of Belgaum and Dharwar to be famine areas, it appears to the Sabha that the reasons which have led Government to issue that notification hold equally good in the case of Sangola and Malsiras in the Sholapur district, Man and Khanapur in the Satara district, and Bhimthadi and Sirur in the Poona district. The Committee of the Sabha, therefore, request that Government will be pleased to officially recognize, as in the case of Bijapur and parts of Belgaum and Dharwar, the prevalence of famine in Sangola, Malsiras, Man, Khanapur, Bhimthadi and Sirur.

8. In a previous letter the Committee of the Sabha promised to furnish Government from time to time with summaries of accounts received from their correspondents in the affected districts. And accordingly we beg to submit this brief account of the present situation of the affected districts, in the hope that it will receive proper attention at the hands of the district officers concerned. While reading this summary, it will, the Committee request, be remembered that we are now only on the threshold of the danger, that when people are thrown out of employment by the end of the winter season a month hence, the pressure will greatly increase, and that Government will then have to meet a situation of no ordinary gravity.

POONA DISTRICT.

From the Poona District, the Sabha has received accounts from a large number of correspondents from selected villages in all the

Talukas. It appears from these that grain prices have not been very seriously affected in this district, the result being obviously due to the increased facilities of railway communication. The price of fodder, however, is not governed by this circumstance, and it therefore ranges from 3 to 9 rupees per hundred sheaves, according as the failure of crops has been total or more or less partial. In the southern part of Purandar on the Neera side, the failure of crops was complete and the prices of fodder are in some villages as high as 8 to 10 rupees. The same observation holds good of the Deshi villages in the Khed Taluka. Junner and Indapur fare better this year. The idea of Government to introduce pressed fodder will, therefore, have to be largely given effect to here, to avoid the threatened loss of an enormous number of cattle. As regards the supply of water, it appears that one village, Koutha, in the Sirur Taluka has been already a serious sufferer from want of drinking water which has to be brought from the river Ghodnadi, from a distance of four miles, in carts. This want is more or less felt also at Valhe in the Purandar Taluka, and the Sabha's correspondent from that place suggests that the existing wells should be dug deeper, and the dried up dams, which are 22 in number in that village, should be repaired. The deeper digging of wells is also suggested in the Khed Taluka. The same difficulty is felt in the Deshi portion of the Junner Taluka and the same remedy suggested. In the Bhimthadi Taluka 57 villages are protected in this respect by the three rivers, Neera, Bhima, and Karha. But 73 villages, not so protected, suffer more or less on this account. A tank at Deulgaum is suggested as a convenient work which might be undertaken with advantage. In the Bhimthadi and Indapur Talukas, the villages along canal sides are protected, but in other places the digging of wells on private account has already commenced, and the Local Board authorities are here showing considerable activity in this respect. Next to the supply of fodder, the improvement of the supply of drinking water for the men and cattle is likely to cause the greatest distress, if not looked after in time. From all the talukas the postponement of the second instalment of the land-revenue collections has been suggested as an absolute necessity and pressure on this score at such a time is likely to aggravate the crisis. The recent orders of Government about free grazing do not seem to have been given effect.

to in parts of Purandar and Khed Talukas, and in the Bhimthadi Taluka cattle are being sold for nominal prices and purchased for the Bombay market. Generally speaking, the condition of the Poona District up to the present is not as bad as it was during the past famine, and except in a portion of Sirur and Bhimthadi, it is not apprehended that there will be any occasion for starting relief-works and even in these, relief-works will not be wanted till the commencement of the hot season.

SHOLAPUR DISTRICT.

From the Sholapur District also the Sabha has received reports from a considerable number of villages in all the talukas. Unlike the Poona District, the Sholapur District seems to be, owing to the difficulty of railway communication, suffering in certain places, especially on the Sangola and Malsiras side, from an insufficient grain-supply, in addition to the scarcity of fodder and water. The Sabha's correspondent in Sangola reports that already poor people are roaming about in search of work and food, and he says that though the insufficiency of grain-supply may not be felt very seriously just at present, very shortly it will cause much misery and suffering. As regards the supply of water in this district, the cry is almost universal that it is very deficient, the towns of Sholapur and Pandharpur alone reporting that they are well off in this respect. Almost every place seems to have its wells, and a few have tanks, but they have very nearly dried up, and unless steps are taken to deepen the wells, it is difficult to see how the existing water-supply can be improved. The Karmala correspondent says that the wells and rivulets there cannot be depended upon much longer, and he strongly urges that Government relief-works should take the shape suggested by the Sabha in a previous letter, *i. e.*, they should tend to permanently improve the existing water-supply. The Sanand correspondent reports that the present water-supply has almost failed, but he assures the Sabha that if the relief works are directed towards its improvement, the deficiency may without much difficulty be removed. As in the case of water-supply, so with regard to fodder for cattle, the wail of distress comes from all quarters. Its price has already doubled, and in some places even trebled, while in Malsiras and Sangola no fodder can be had almost for any price. The condition of Sholapur appears, from the accounts

received by the Sabha, to be at this time less threatening than what it was during the famine of 1876-78 in respect of grain-supply. The water and fodder distress is, however, more severely felt, and Government should direct its efforts to improve every available source of supply. In the Sangola and Malsiras Talukas, present relief must be given by the remission of the land revenue and by starting relief-works in the worst affected districts.

BIJAPUR DISTRICT.

From the Bijapur District, information has been received from correspondents in the Indi, Badami, Bagewadi, Bijapur, and Bagalkote Talukas. From all accounts, both official and non-official, the distress in this district is of a more acute character than in the rest of the Presidency. And in the opinion of old people, who remember the last famine, notwithstanding the facilities of railway communication, the distress this year is likely to be soon more severely felt than was the case 15 years ago. In the district itself, judged by the test of the dearth of fodder, which is in most respects a more reliable test of famine-pressure than any other, the worst distress shows itself in the northern talukas. The fodder which used to sell for Rs. 2 cannot now be had for less than Rs. 10 or Rs. 12, quantity for quantity. Thus the rise in price in the northern talukas is about five hundred per cent. In Bagalkote, the most southern taluka, the rise has not been so considerable, being only double the old rates. If the suggestion of Government about introducing pressed hay can practically be carried out, this form of relief will be most welcome in this district. As regards water-supply in the talukas of Badami and Bagewadi, there is great distress. The tanks have failed, and drinking water cannot be had for men, much less for cattle. Some improvement may be effected by digging out the mud from wells and tanks. In several villages in Badami, poor women have to watch and wait for hours together by the side of wells to take their turn, and have often to go a distance of four or five miles for fetching water. In the Bagewadi Taluka eight or ten villages on the banks of the Krishna have good supply, but the northern and western portions of this taluka are less favourably situated. In the Indi Taluka there is at present no serious difficulty felt on this account, but apprehensions are entertained about deficiency when the hot season sets in. In the Bagalkote Taluka the villages watered

by the Ghatprabha and the Krishna are tolerably well off, but the tanks have failed everywhere. Altogether next to the supply of fodder, the convenience of drinking water must be chiefly attended to. And the general opinion of the district seems to be that small relief-works intended to improve tanks and wells already in existence should in all respects be preferred to road-making or road repairing. As a consequence of the deficiency of fodder and water supply, the distressed condition of the ryots' cattle is intensified to such an extent that cattle by hundreds are being removed or sold for nominal prices, chiefly, to butchers. Unlike the other districts, where the postponement of the collection of the land revenue will be confined to select areas, not exceeding three or four talukas at the most in each district, the postponement, if not actual remission, will become necessary over the whole area of this district. Government has already sanctioned large amounts for Tagai advances here, but even these large amounts will be found inadequate to meet the necessities of the population, and it seems necessary to adopt some method of supplementing them, as suggested in para. 5 of this representation. Government has also, the Committee learn, sanctioned relief-works in the shape of two new roads, but owing to the low rates of wages offered, people refrain from going to the relief-works. Till the pressure becomes intense, it will be, in the opinion of the Committee, desirable to keep the men near their homes by undertaking small works for the increase of the water-supply.

A better idea of the state of the district will be formed from the information supplied by a special agent sent by the Sabha to that district. This agent visited 22 villages in the Badami Taluka, 13 villages in the Indi Taluka, 8 in Bagalkot, and 17 in Bijapoor. The 22 villages in the Badami Taluka had a population of about 15,000 inhabitants, and the number of cattle owned by them was about 11,000. The kharif and rabi crops were in some places nil, while in the rest of the taluka they were, on an average, less than an anna in the rupee. About 600 people had already left their homes, and about 3,000 heads of cattle had been either dead or removed and sold out of the taluka. The price of grain was 23 lbs. per rupee, being about two hundred per cent. higher than the usual rate of 56 to 64 lbs. at the harvest time. The rainfall, which was on an average for the past three years about 33

inches, was only 17 inches last year. The 13 villages of the Indi Taluka had a population of about 17,000 inhabitants, owning nearly 15,000 heads of cattle. The kharif crops were almost nil, while the rabi crops were, on an average, four annas in the rupee. Between two and three hundred people had left their homes, and about 3,200 heads of cattle had been either swept away by death or removed and sold for nominal prices. The agent reports that in some villages, such as Anjntgi, Cheekbennur, Jeur, Burdol, Kunchnal, and one or two others, the supply of food-grains was very deficient at the time of his visit, while the scarcity of fodder was such as to cause the greatest anxiety and distress. The 17 villages in the Bijapur Taluka had a population of over 23,000 persons, owning about 12,000 heads of cattle. The kharif crops had been absolutely nil, while the rabi crops were on an average half an anna in the rupee. About 700 persons had left their homes and about 3,000 heads of cattle had disappeared. The supply of water was generally deficient, one village named Sarwad being absolutely helpless in the matter. The eight villages of the Bagalkote Taluka had a population of nearly 18,000 persons, the heads of cattle being about 10,000. Both the kharif and rabi crops had been on an average about an anna in the rupee. The water-supply was on the whole deficient, but no men had, till the time of our agent's visit, left their homes. Twenty-five hundred heads of cattle had, however, disappeared. The price of food-grains had risen over two hundred per cent., while fodder was extremely scarce. The inhabitants of a village named Samikeri in this taluka informed our agent that they had some time previously made over to the Local Board Rs. 1,100, raised by private subscriptions, for the purpose of constructing a large good well. The Board, however, had not provided for the work in the current year's budget, and thus the sum was practically locked up. Government will see that it is only an act of justice and fairness to the people concerned that the money should be spent at this critical time in the way desired by them. Our agent's general impression about this district is that, so far as food-grains are concerned, there are to all appearances large stocks stored up from the harvests of previous years. The hardship, however, suffered owing to the scarcity of fodder and water is extremely great. The poorer classes also suffer from want of work, and very shortly the evil will become much greater.

People do not resort to the relief-works by reason of the wages being insufficient for subsistence purposes for the labourers and their families.

AHMEDNUGGER DISTRICT.

From the Ahmednugger District, the Sabha has received accounts from select villages in the Nagar, Parner, Sheogaum, Kopergaum, Akola, Sangamner and Rahuri Talukas, from which it appears that, as in other districts, so here, though less seriously for the present, people are suffering principally from the scarcity of fodder and water. The price of fodder in the villages of the Nagar and Kopergaum Talukas has risen a hundred per cent. A Parner correspondent suggests that if the existing wells be dug deeper and new ones constructed in some places, the cause of anxiety might partially be removed. A correspondent from Pathardi in the Sheogaum Taluka suggests the great desirability of having a tank there in which water may collect itself from the valleys on the southern side. The account from Rahuri is that wells having almost everywhere failed, inhabitants of villages dependent solely upon wells are consequently suffering great distress in the matter. All the correspondents from Nagar express the fear that throughout the taluka the existing supply of water will fail in the hot season, and urge the advisability of relief-works taking the shape of works for water-supply. Correspondents from Parner, Sheogaum, Kopergaum, Akola and Sangamner ask the Sabha to press upon the attention of Government the great necessity of throwing open to cattle the reserve blocks of Government forests. Kopergaum and Rahuri also pray for the postponement, if not partial remission, of the land revenue.

SATARA DISTRICT.

From the Satara District, the Sabha has received communications from villages in the Satara, Khatav, Man, Khanapur, Wai, Tasegaum, Karhad, Koregaum and Patan talukas. It appears from the accounts that in the eastern talukas the scarcity of fodder is very great; the average price has risen by over three hundred per cent., and in one village, called Sheogaum, in the Khanapur Taluka, the rise is as high as six hundred per cent. The water difficulty is also in this district as great as in any other. A correspondent from the town of Satara writes that if water-works be opened in convenient places, the supply

of water will considerably be improved. One-half of the Khatav Taluka appears to be well off in this respect, owing to the tanks, constructed at the time of the last famine, but the remaining half is seriously suffering. A correspondent from a village near Mayani says that people are leaving their homes owing to the impossibility of procuring water. The prayer from Sheogaum is that a well should be constructed out of the Local Funds, as the water-supply of the place has altogether failed. Karhad and Koregaum, however, appear to have a sufficient supply, and the correspondent from those talukas expresses no anxiety on this score. The general opinion of the district seems to be that relief-works projected by Government should be directed towards improving the supply of water. Only from one taluka, viz., Tasgaum, the prayer has come for the postponement of the second instalment of the land revenue, while the state of things in Vitth and Man is reported to be so serious that the necessity of total remission will have to be considered in their case without delay.

THE REMAINING DISTRICTS.

The information which the Sabha has up to the present received from the remaining districts is not of a character to enable the Committee to submit any statement about them. In a short time, however, we hope to receive fuller accounts, a summary of which will then be duly sent to Government.—We have, &c.,

G. K. GOKHALE,

S. H. SATHE,

Honorary Secretaries, Sarvajnik Sabha, Poona.

No. 1541 of 1892.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT,

Bombay Castle, 2nd March 1892.

To

THE HONORARY SECRETARIES,

POONA SARVAJNIK SABHA.

GENTLEMEN,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 45, dated the 24th ultimo, and to state that the representation therein made will receive the consideration of Government.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

W. DODERET,

Special Under-Secretary to Government.

No. 3,692 of 1892.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT,
Bombay Castle, 27 April 1892.

To

THE HONORARY SECRETARIES,
Poona Sarvajanic Sabha.

Gentlemen,

In continuation of my letter No. 1,541, dated the 2nd ultimo, I am directed by His Excellency the Governor in Council to inform you with reference to the statement in your letter No. 45, dated 25th February 1892, that the inhabitants of a village named Sanikeri in the Bagalkote Taluka of the Bijapoor District informed the Agent of the Sabha that they had some time previously made over to the Taluka Local Board a sum of Rs. 1,100 raised by private subscriptions for the purpose of constructing a large, good well but that the Board had not provided for the work in the budget for the year 1891-92, that the Collector of Bajapoor to whom the statement was sent for enquiry reports as follows:—

Previous to 1871 the villagers contributed some money for the repairs of the village well and in 1871-72 the whole of the money supplemented by contribution from public funds was expended, and the well in question repaired. In 1887-88 the Taluka Local Board of Bagalkote entered a sum of Rupees 1800 in the budget to repair the well which is a step one and to turn it into a draw-well. The villagers objected to the conversion and suggested that the step well should remain as it was and that an additional draw-well should be built. The Board refused to comply with this request as it thought that the people were certain to use the step well in preference to the draw-well as long as the former remained, and the Board therefore reappropriated the money to other works. No contribution was at that time given by the Sanikeri villagers or has been given since the subscription previous to 1871, which was then expended."

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

W. DODERET,

Special Under-Secretary to Government.

POONA'S FAREWELL TO MR. A. O. HUME.

In response to repeated requests of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha, Mr. A. O. Hume, General Secretary of the Indian National Congress, paid a flying visit to Poona on the 20th March last. Great preparations were made by the Sabha for his reception and the greatest enthusiasm was to be witnessed everywhere in the city on that day. Mr. Hume arrived at the Poona station by the 5-30 P. M. train and was received on the platform by over two hundred prominent gentlemen of the city and the Cantonment, including Sirdar Bahadur Gopalrao Hari Deshmukh, President-elect of the public meeting convened to do honor to Mr. Hume, Shrimant Sirdar Bala Saheb Raste, Shrimant Sirdar Aba Saheb Purandare, Rao Bahadur V. M. Bhide, Chairman of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha, Rao Bahadur Kupoo Swami Moodliar, Rao Bahadur Narayen Bhai Dandekar, Shrimant Bhaoo Saheb Natu, Shrimant Aba Saheb Natu, Rao Saheb B. B. Thadake, R. B. G. G. Gokhale, &c. There were also present on the platform delegates from Satara, Sholapur, Nasik and other districts of the Deccan, who had come specially to Poona for bidding farewell to Mr. Hume. From the station Mr. Hume was taken direct to the Hirabag, the place of the public meeting. The reception was a most cordial, enthusiastic, and loving nature. At the Reay-Market about 2,000 persons were awaiting the arrival of Mr. Hume's carriage and directly it came up, they walked in front of it in procession from the Market to the Hirabag. The public meeting was attended by over 5,000 persons, all the prominent citizens of Poona being there on that occasion. No written address could be presented to Mr. Hume, for he had agreed to come to Poona on the distinct and express condition that he would not be asked to receive any written address. After some students of the Fergusson College and of the Gayan Samaja had chanted odes of welcome, Rao B. V. M. Bhide proposed and Sirdar Abasaheb seconded that Sirdar Bahadur Gopalrao Hari Deshmukh should take the chair. Mr. Deshmukh briefly expressed the thanks of the people of Poona to Mr. Hume for the trouble he had taken in complying with their wishes and then called upon Mr. G. K. Gokhale, Hon. Secretary of the Sarvajanic Sabha, to address Mr. Hume on behalf of all assembled.

Mr. Gokhale began by saying that it was a high privilege

to be asked to offer welcome to so eminent a benefactor of India as Mr. Hume, and the welcome that he offered was offered not only on behalf of the people of Poona but in the name of the entire Deccan, representatives from the various Districts of which had thought it their duty to be present on that occasion. It was impossible for him to adequately express how deeply grateful they all felt to Mr. Hume for the immense sacrifice of personal comfort and convenience at which he had snatched, in his indifferent state of health and after a very fatiguing journey, a few hours to gratify their dearly cherished wishes and honour their city with that visit. The speaker, however, wanted to say that no one was surprised at the trouble Mr. Hume had taken; because his conduct in that matter was only in keeping with that absolute disregard of self which had all along been the guiding principle of his life. Mr. Gokhale was aware that nothing was more repugnant to Mr. Hume than any demonstration or even an expression of the feelings by which he was regarded by the people of the country; but he would ask him to remember that when the gratitude of the heart was deep and strong, it gave an irresistible impulse to the tongue to speak. And if, therefore, in what little he intended to say, he appeared not to act quite in accordance with Mr. Hume's wishes, he trusted Mr. Hume would excuse him on the ground that what he wanted to say came straight from the heart and there was no art about it. Any one, who compared the India of to-day with what she was seven or eight years ago, would at once realize the enormous nature of the services rendered by Mr. Hume to the country. All that the Indian National Congress had done during the seven years of its existence was principally Mr. Hume's work. What it was exactly that the Congress had achieved it was unnecessary for the speaker to state at length, firstly because that question had been repeatedly dealt with in an infinitely abler and more eloquent manner than any he could ever hope to attempt by successive Presidents of past Congresses, and secondly, to speak of that in the presence of the father of the National Congress was something like holding up a candle-light to the face of the eternal and glorious source of all light. Mr. Gokhale, however, wanted briefly to refer to four results which were principally due to the Congress. Firstly, the Congress had welded together all the influences in the country which were struggling scattered to create throughout India a sense of

common nationality. The influences had not been created by the Congress. They had come into existence along with British rule in this country and they had been tenderly nursed by the wise and large-hearted policy of successive generations of statesmen, and notably that of the Marquis of Ripon. But although the influences were already in existence, it was reserved for the Congress to unite them together and produce a result owing to which the heart of Bombay throbbed to-day in unison with that of Bengal or Madras in matters of national welfare. The Congress had also made public opinion in India more enlightened and more influential. The movement had spread far and wide in the land a considerable knowledge of the main political questions, and the result was that public opinion was better informed now than before. It also carried more weight with Government and no more eloquent testimony on the point was required than the fact that Lord Lansdowne himself had recognized in the Congress the Liberal party of India. Then owing to the Congress movement, the main political questions of the country were advancing, some slowly, some rapidly, but all of them advancing towards a state of satisfactory solution. And lastly, the Congress supplied a ready machinery to those English politicians who realized their vast responsibilities in connection with India and who were anxious to do their duty by the people of this country. One peculiarly glorious circumstance connected with British rule, according to Mr. Gokhale, was that this country had never lacked distinguished, disinterested advocates of her cause in England. The speaker mentioned the services rendered by Edmund Burke to this country a century ago, and said that it was for such services that the names of Bright and Fawcett and, last but not least, Bradlaugh had become household words with the people. The four results mentioned by the speaker were the work of the Congress and as such they were principally the work of Mr. Home's hands; and surely it was not given to a single individual to achieve more. Mr. Home's path, again, had not been smooth. He had to work amidst the repeated misunderstandings of well-meaning friends and the unscrupulous attacks of determined enemies. But as though those difficulties had not been sufficient, it had pleased Providence to send him more trying orisons. In the space of the past two years a domestic affliction, sad and heavy at all times, but peculiarly sad and heavy in old age when the mind of man is rather conservative in its attach-

ments, had rendered his home desolate and his hearth cheerless, while his public life was embittered by the sad and untimely loss of his best and most eminent co-worker in England and his most beloved and trusted collaborator in India. The difficulties and misfortunes mentioned by the speaker were more than sufficient to break the spirit of most men; but Mr. Hume continued, in spite of them all, to walk firmly and unshaken in the path of duty, chosen by himself. When the people of India contemplated all that, naturally their hearts overflowed with feelings of gratitude and admiration and veneration and love. For Mr. Hume had enabled India, for the first time in her history, to breathe and feel like one nation by bringing together men of enlightenment and patriotism from the various parts of the country to work in a common cause. He had tried to steady their faltering foot-steps and turn their weak accents into firm speech. He had toiled for them in the midst of calumny and contumely of every kind, amidst the wicked attacks of avowed enemies and the more wicked stabs of false friends. For their sake he had denied himself the comforts which old age demanded and to their service he had devoted his time, his energy, his talents, his purse, his all. Above all, he had set them a high and glorious example as to how they should labour for the regeneration of their motherland. Such had been Mr. Hume's services and they were above any memorial or reward. Rather their own reward they were, and in themselves they constituted a memorial more lasting than brass and more enduring than marble. In conclusion, Mr. Gokhale expressed the great regret of all assembled there that Mr. Hume was not coming out for the next Congress. The melancholy circumstance of Pandit Ajudhyañath's death rendered it, in the speaker's opinion, necessary that the next Congress should have the guidance of Mr. Hume's hand. However, as Mr. Hume's decision had been already finally made in the matter, they had to bow to it as meant for the best. Mr. Gokhale was also very sorry that Mr. Hume's stay in Poona should have been so extremely short that they had to blend their welcome and their farewell together. But as even in that matter Mr. Hume had already made final arrangements, nothing remained for him but to wish Mr. Hume and his daughter a happy voyage and a very happy time in England and to bid him farewell in the words which he himself had used in the case of Lord Ripon :—

Farewell, farewell, a nation's love
A nation's prayers watch o'er thee :
Nor space nor time can part thee e'er
From hearts that here adore thee.

Mr. Hume, who was most enthusiastically received, expressed his gratification at the very cordial manner in which he was received and thanked Mr. Gokhale for the very kind manner in which that gentleman had been pleased to speak of him. He had listened with great pleasure and thankfulness to Mr. Gokhale's speech because, though the eulogy was really very extravagant, it was evident that everything he had said had proceeded from the kindness and affection of his heart for him (Mr. Hume). Mr. Hume loved India and loved her children and so far as that firmly-fixed love had enabled him to be of any assistance to them, he had not spared himself. But he had not done all that he was said to have done. He who had been at the helm knew how cheerfully and well the crew had worked. He had trusty captains, lieutenants, and sailors around him and it would be a shame if he allowed them to give him credit for the work of others. It was not possible for him to have done all the work ; the people of the country themselves had done it ; he had merely given them the initiative. They should therefore take the credit to themselves and persevere. Their fault as a nation was that they were very enthusiastic to-day but forgot everything on the morrow. He asked all present to remember that if they would show any gratitude to him, they should stick to their own cause. He said that it was not to save himself any trouble that he was not coming to the next meeting of the Congress, but the simple reason why he had made up his mind not to come was this. Those who were opposed to them said that the Congress was all Mr. Hume, and that if Mr. Hume was not here, there would be no Congress. After seven Congresses he thought it was now time that they should show their opponents and enemies that even if he (Mr. Hume) were not here, there would be a Congress all the same. He had therefore quite made up his mind not to attend the next Congress. He would leave them to "boss the show" themselves, and he knew that they would be able to "boss it" well enough by themselves. He then asked them all to strive to become better citizens day by day, to become more thoroughly awake to

the duty they owed to themselves and to their countrymen. That was the lesson he would beg every man to write in his heart; they should try to live mere altruistic lives. He would also ask them to try to put aside that feeling of timidity of authority which seemed to him to dominate their whole conduct. There was no one, he said, whom an Englishman despised more than one who bowed down to him. There was no one an Englishman respected more than the man who was able to stand up to him and fight him. They should not be afraid to express their own views but in doing so they should be respectful and courteous. If they told the Government "we are very sorry to have to differ from you but we think these arrangements of yours are rotten," no one could be offended. They should not abuse individuals, but might legitimately attack principles and systems. Independence of character was, it appeared to him, very much wanting in this country. His Bengali friends were not able to draw the line between impudence and independence. He would ask his hearers to distinguish between the two. They might be independent without being aggressive or offensive. They should carefully consider and then make up their minds as to what they thought was right. Having done that they should stick to that, no matter who liked it or who disliked it. That was an attitude which every ruler would respect. Some people in other parts had come to him and told him one thing and then told quite a different story to the authorities. Mr. Hume wanted them to be honest and true in all their dealings. The Government was not as bad as many supposed it was; the Government was bad because it was ignorant, and it was the fault of the people that their Government was so ignorant, for the people did not honestly speak out their views. How could the Government hope to get at the truth if the people did not honestly state their needs and their views? As for the Indian papers, Mr. Hume thought that with the exception of "The Tribune" at Lahore and "The Hindu" at Madras, none of the other native papers were sufficiently well conducted to carry much weight with the Government. They should state, in a respectful but firm manner, all their grievances to those whom Providence had placed over them. By so doing they would be giving fair play to themselves and to the Government. In conclusion Mr. Hume referred to the difficulty which had been experienced in collecting Poona's contribution to-

wards the Congress work. He hoped the people of the Deccan would now be stirred up to more activity. He was aware the fault was not that of the Deccan in general but of those few among them whose duty it was to collect subscriptions, and he was afraid most of those present there were not even perhaps aware of their liabilities. There was such a large crowd present there that evening that if each one gave but four annas, more than the whole sum required could be made up. He then bade them all good-bye and thanked them for their great kindness in receiving him as they did on that occasion.

Mr. K. G. Natu then proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Hume; this was seconded by Mr. Karandikar (from Satara) and supported by Mr. Bhat (from Belgaum), a Mahomedan preacher from Junnar, and Mr. Nagpurkar from Sholapur. Mr. Hume was then garlanded and quite a shower of white scented flowers was thrown upon him. The meeting terminated with the singing of the National Anthem and with three enthusiastic cheers for Mr. Hume.

The meeting over, Mr. Hume was entertained at an "Evening Party" in the Town Hall itself. The building and its spacious grounds were brightly illuminated for the occasion. Fruits of various kind and *pancupari* were distributed among the guests. Mr. Hume was again garlanded, and when he left the building at the close of the entertainment, he was loudly and enthusiastically cheered; a native band playing "Auld Lang Syne."

Mr. Hume left for Bombay by the 10 p. m. train the same night.

THE NEW MHOWRA BILL.

If we are now to go to Mhowra, we may next go to dry dates and sugar juice and such other articles. It seems to me as if the Abkari Department, having exhausted its pills, wants us now to swallow the loz, and for my part I decline to do so.—*The late Rao Sahib V. N. Mandlik on the Mhowra Bill of 1862.*

I cannot help, therefore, viewing with disavour any repressive enactment such as this Bill embodies, which would place in the hands of ill-paid or inferior instruments a power of harassing the poor dumb ignorant population inhabiting the forest tracts of the country—a population, who, as inquiry has shown, are dependent on the mhowra for subsistence for themselves and their cattle, and on its barter for the means of supplying the commonest human needs. *I cannot imagine that any increase of the Abkari revenue would compensate for the injury that would be inflicted on the very poorest classes by depriving them of an article of sale or barter, which has been provided for them by the bounty of nature and which they have freely collected from immemorial time.*—*Mr. S. D. Sassoon on the same.*

The injury which the measure now proposed is calculated to inflict, especially on the poorer classes, is so great that wise legislation would not purchase revenue at such a sacrifice.—*A leading article in the Bombay Gazette, 1862.*

There is now no doubt that the Abkari autocrat, whose name has for a long time been associated in the public mind with much of the hardship and suffering inflicted by the Abkari Department on the people is determined this time to make a desperate effort to pass into law a measure on which he has set his heart these ten years. Sir Charles Pritchard is admittedly a man of great ability; but more remarkable perhaps than his ability are his entire defiance of public opinion

and his inordinate love for the fancied interests of a Department which he justly and naturally regards as specially his own. Every one knows that Sir Charles was the real parent of that ill-starred bantling of 1882, to which Lord Ripon declined to stand as sponsor, and which had to close its eyes even before it had opened them. The fate of the Mhowra Bill of 1882, though a matter of great joy and relief to the people in general, must naturally have greatly grieved and humiliated Sir Charles; and it seems he has carefully nursed those feelings. Evidently Sir Charles was, 'biding his time.' Lord Ripon had made it plain to him that as long as *he* was the Viceroy of India, no Mhowra Bill could have any chance of receiving his assent. The departure of that nobleman might have been a signal for Sir Charles to renew his efforts; but fortunately for the people, the retirement of Lord Ripon was almost simultaneous with a change in the *personnel* of the Bombay Government, Sir James Fergusson being succeeded in the Governorship by Lord Reay. Lord Reay, though not free from blame in the matter of his Abkari administration, was an exceptionally enlightened and high-minded Governor; and he certainly never regarded it a virtue to carefully shut himself from all non-official light. A Bill, therefore, which was twice discredited by the Government of India, which bore on its very face the print of oppression and which required for its justification to be looked at solely through the spectacles prepared by the Abkari Department, could have no chance with him. With Lord Harris now at the head of the Administration, the case is different. His Lordship has the reputation of being a straightforward gentleman. But one serious mistake that he has made since he took charge of his high office has been this; that he has, by his conduct and occasion-

ally by his words, studiously deprecated all non-official assistance in the matter of a right understanding of the various administrative problems of the Presidency and that he has all along been attaching too much weight to the views of his Secretaries and of the 'Departments.' No wonder then that his Lordship, misled perhaps by the statements and representations of Sir Charles Pritchard, declared the other day in the Legislative Council that the evil of the illicit distillation of Mhowra flowers had grown to be an intolerable one and that it was absolutely necessary to resort to the strong arm of legislation to put it down! But it is not in the Governor and the Viceroy alone that Sir Charles is fortunate. The additional non-official members of the Legislative Council appear also, with one exception, to be men just after his own heart. What a sad contrast between these sleepish gentlemen and those who made such a powerful stand against the Mhowra Bill of 1882? Altogether the chances are entirely in favour of Sir Charles Pritchard's measure passing into law and the people of Thana and Kolaba must prepare themselves the best way they can for this impending misfortune!

It would be well, before examining the merits of the present measure and the grounds on which its introduction is sought to be justified, to give here a brief *resumé* of the previous efforts of the Bounlay Government in this matter. It was stated by Mr. Ashburner on the occasion of moving the first reading of the Mhowra Bill of 1882 that when the Atkari Act of 1878 was introduced, it had been represented by certain officers that it would be necessary, for the effective prevention of illicit distillation, to regulate and control the transit and trade of Mhowra flowers, from which spirits were distilled, although such a step would render necessary some

interference with the Bheels and other wild tribes who sought a living by collecting the flowers. But, as stated by the late lamented Rao Sahib Mandlik, no papers, containing any such representations, were placed before the Legislative Council, when the Abkari Act of 1878 was under discussion. We may, therefore, well take it that at the time of passing Act No 5 of 1878, it was not contemplated by Government to attempt at some future date the regulation and control of the traffic in Mhowra flowers by legislation. The first Administration Report of the Abkari Department, as constituted by the Act of 1878, i. e. the one for the revenue year 1879-80, submitted on 25th March 1881, also *did not contain one word* about the illicit distillation of Mhowra flowers. It should be remembered that this was the only Report of the Department under the new system before the public when the Bill of 1882 was introduced in the Legislative Council, the Reports for 1880-81 and 1881-82 not having been written till the 10th of July 1882 and the 24th of August 1883 respectively, and the first reading of the Bill of 1882 having taken place on the 21st June of that year. Mr. Pratt, who wrote the Report for 1879-80, so far from uttering the least complaint about any illicit distillation, actually seems satisfied with the state of things as it then existed. Speaking of Thana, he says:—"Thanks to the energies of Messrs. Jervoise and Mullock, who have successively acted as Collector of the district during the last three years and by means of whose untiring efforts and determined will, *all obstacles have been surmounted*. Government have had the satisfaction to see the Abkari system of Thana *placed on a sound and permanent footing*." (The italics are ours) Again the Report quotes the following extract from a note by Mr. Mullock, the Collector of Thana, on the moral

effect of the operation, of the Abkari Department :—“ And now leaving on one side the pecuniary part of the question, I must mention the benefits resulting to the people under the new system and from the enhancement of the price of liquor. My Assistants, Mamlatdars, Patels, Talatis &c. are unanimous in their praises of it, and having been some time in the sea coast Talukas, I can corroborate their opinions in every respect. One no longer sees the general drunkenness of former days and the reason is very clear, it now requires four annas to get drunk, while three years ago, it only required one anna. Even the rayats themselves, while grumbling at its being hard on them that they cannot get the cheap liquor they formerly got, will admit that they are happier without it and that the ‘zor,’ as they call the influence of the liquor-vendor, is now gone, and no more land is mortgaged to him in liquidation of his bills.” Of course, Mr. Mullock speaks in the foregoing extract of the coast talukas especially, but the absence of all unfavourable reference to the inland talukas is remarkable and justifies the assumption that neither in the opinion of the Abkari Commissioner nor in that of the Collector of Thana were things so bad in 1881 in the inland talukas as to call for special repressive legislation. One more passage from the Report for 1879–80 deserves to be quoted. Speaking of the general results of the new system *all over the Presidency*, Mr. Pratt says :—“ The revenue, on the whole, has increased fairly in proportion to the increase in the general prospects of the country, and in those instances in which it has not increased, it is believed that the decrease is due to less consumption of liquor, partly owing to the bad seasons that have been of frequent occurrence, the increased price of the liquor and the less encouragement given to drinking under the new system. *It is believed*

that the smuggling and consumption of cheaper and untaxed liquor has not acted, at any rate to any appreciable extent, in affecting injuriously the Government revenue." (The italics are ours.) And yet within eight or ten months after the above had been penned, the Mhowra Bill of 1882 was sprung upon the public by the Bombay Government or rather by its Abkari Department on the ground that the illicit distillation of Mhowra flowers was rife, especially in Thana and Kolaba ! It is true that the Reports for 1880-81 and 1881-82 make mention of the illicit distillation of Mhowra flowers, but their value is discounted by the fact that both of them were written after the passing, through the local Legislature, of the Bill of 1882, which they expressly and eagerly support and welcome as a proper solution of the problem.

As has been already observed, the first reading of the Mhowra Bill of 1882 took place on the 21st of June 1882. The statement of Objects and Reasons was published on the 25th of May and was of a very meagre character. Honestly enough, however, it put the revenue consideration in the forefront. "Owing to the prevalence," the public was told, "of the practice of illicit distillation of spirits in portions of the Thana and Kolaba and other Collectorates, causing material loss of Abkari revenue to Government and encouraging lawless conduct on the part of the villagers, and the facilities afforded to such illicit manufacture by the absence of any provision in the Bombay Abkari Act restricting the collection, import, export, transport, sale and possession of Mhowra flowers which are openly sold and used for the purpose of illicit distillation, it has been found desirable to amend the said Act by introducing a section after section 14 of the Act which will empower Government to make necessary rules for regulating

and prohibiting the traffic in Mhowra flowers and thereby check the illicit distillation of spirits." But meagre as this statement was, the speech of Mr. Ashburner in moving the first reading was more meagre still. From the report of the proceedings published in the *Bombay Government Gazette*, it would seem that the hon'ble gentleman did not speak even for five minutes and all that he cared to lay before the Legislative Council during that short time was extremely superficial, vague and unsatisfactory. "When the Abkari Act of 1878 was introduced," Mr. Ashburner said at the outset, "some officers represented that it would be necessary to regulate and control the transit and trade of Mhowra flowers from which spirits are distilled, but this would render necessary some interference with the Bheels and other wild tribes whose business it was to collect this substance. I among others objected, because these people are so ignorant and rude that it is very difficult to make any rules applicable to them which are not liable to abuse, and it was hoped, therefore, that we might work the Abkari Act without making any rules with reference to Mhowra. At any rate, it was determined to give the Act a trial, and it has been tried now for three years, but the hope that we could dispense with such rules has not been realized." This necessary recantation was followed by the statement, (which, by the way, the hon'ble gentleman did not care to support by any facts or figures) that smuggling was widely prevalent and that the Police were constantly in collision with the smugglers. Mr. Ashburner mentioned an affray which had occurred some time before in Thana and which had resulted in loss of life. The speaker then went on to anticipate the objections, which, in his opinion were likely to be urged against the Bill. The most important objection, he thought, would be that Mhowra was an important article of food.. He,

however, would meet that objection by stating that it was not an important article of food. It was no more an article of food than were black-berries in England or *Karinda* and other jungle fruits in this country. "A Bhoel," Mr. Ashburner, went on to say, "may eat a handful of Mhowra, but as to its being an article of food, it is nothing of the kind and if it were so, as we are permitted to regulate the trade in spirits which are far more important than the raw material, it would be our duty to face the difficulty and take care that our rules are so framed as not to interfere necessarily with an article of so much importance." It would be seen from this sentence that although the hon'ble gentleman had asserted as positively as he could that Mhowra was not an article of food, he himself doubted his own statement, and feeling perhaps that the contention of the people might be right, thought it necessary to give the assurance that if Mhowra was "an article of so much importance," as it was alleged it was, the rules of Government would be so framed that there would be no interference with its use as food. Mr. Ashburner concluded with a brief reference to the other amendments of the Abkari Act which he had proposed, but which had no connection whatever with the Mhowra question. Mr. Ashburner's speech was followed by a discussion in which all the non-official members, namely Rao Sahib Mandlik, Sir Jamshetji Jijibhai, Mr. W. M. Macaulay, Mr. S. D. Sassoon and Rao Bahadur G. H. Deshmukh, as also the President (Sir James Fergusson) took part. It is indeed refreshing to read the speeches of the non-official members on that occasion. With remarkable unanimity, they plainly gave Sir James Fergusson and Mr. Ashburner to understand that if in the passing of that oppressive measure, they in any way expected to have the support of the non-official element in the Coun-

cil, they were doomed to grievous disappointment. The opposition was led ably and vigorously by the late Rao Sahib Mandlik, who went the length of opposing even the first reading of this Bill. "I regret," said he, "I must oppose the first reading of the Bill. It is based entirely on a wrong principle. The Elphinstone Code left pure *toddy* untouched. The last Abkri Act erred exceedingly in selecting for taxation an innocent article of food which does not inebriate people, and which in its unfermented state should never have been taxed. We are now asked to add to that error. For as regards the Mhowra flowers, I may mention that it is not the Bheels and other wild tribes alone that use them, but they are used as common vegetable food by others and chiefly by poorer classes. They are also used as fodder for cattle." The Rao Sahib knew that liquor was distilled from Mhowra, but so was it distilled from the date fruit, from the juice of the sugarcane or any other plant, and if the Mhowra flower was to be placed under the penal law, Government might, the Rao Sahib concluded, with equal propriety deal in the same manner with any other articles of food. Referring to Mr. Ashburner's statement that none could be said to live on *kariyaa*, Mr. Mandlik wished he could agree with him, but unfortunately it was not possible, because he actually knew a great many poor people in Konkan using *Lirioda* as an important article of food. Mr. Ashburner, in his speech, had alluded to affrays. The Rao Sahib was of opinion that it was the Abkari Act of 1878 and the manner of working it that were responsible for the affrays. After referring briefly to the very heavy enhancement in the tax on *toddy* and other trees and to the grievous hardship inflicted by it on the people, Mr. Mandlik thus concluded:—"The tendency of the undue severity of the Abkari laws is to increase the consumption of spirituous liquors and

decrease the consumption of those that are comparatively harmless. The Government of India have laid down in a despatch to the Secretary of State for India that when special or heavier assessment is laid on a plantation or lands growing valuable produce—such as cocoanut and other trees,—no extra taxation should, as far as possible, be levied on the fruits of those trees. Whilst the excise laws must always be maintained with proper severity, it ought still, I think, to be the object of the Legislature, as far as possible, not to deal severely with ordinary articles of food, and also to restrict the use of spirituous liquors. If we are now to go to Mhowra, we may next go to dry dates and sugar juice and such other articles. It seems to me as if the Abkari Department, having exhausted its pills, wants us now to swallow the box and for my part I decline to do so. *I shall therefore vote against the first reading." Mr. Mandlik was followed by Sir Jamshetji Jijibhai, who at that early stage of the Bill only wanted to observe that, in his opinion, the principle of the Bill was somewhat open to objection and that unless a case of urgent necessity was made out, a measure calculated to interfere with the freedom of trade ought not to be resorted to. The Hon'ble Baronet was sure that Mr. Ashburner himself was as alive to the importance of preserving the freedom of trade as any one else; but he desired to be satisfied of the extreme necessity of the proposed measure before he could see his way to vote in its favour. The speaker was prepared to allow that if a clear case was made out of flagrant and wide-spread violation of the Abkari laws, necessitating absolutely the restriction of the trade of Mhowra flowers, there was no resource but to submit to the necessity. "At the same time," Sir Jamshetji went on to say, "it is useful for the executive authorities to consider why the practice of illicit distillation

should become so prevalent and rampant; why a hitherto law-abiding people should become lawless, notwithstanding all the preventive measures and all the Inspectorial establishments instituted by Government, and all the watchfulness of the Abkari farmers themselves, and more than all, the legal and penal sanctions and magisterial terrors of the law that are being daily enforced. There is great reason to fear that the manufacture and sale of spirits is exceedingly over-taxed and that this over-taxation has, moreover, been introduced all too suddenly. The lawlessness and loss of revenue complained of in the Statement of Objects and Reasons are due, I fear, to this inordinate taxation. If any relief from this excessive taxation were afforded to the people, there would scarcely be any occasion for the resort to such an extremely coercive measure and one destructive of free trade, as has now been brought forward before the Council." The Hon'ble Baronet also expressed the opinion that any restriction placed on Mhowra flowers might become the means of exercising much oppression on the ryots. He further protested against the vesting of large and general powers in the Executive Government as the Bill proposed and concluded by once more telling Government that unless a clear case of indispensable necessity was made out, he would not be prepared to interfere with the liberties of the people in the matter. Mr. W. M. Macaulay, who followed with a vigorous speech, also expressed his inability to support the Bill. "It is no doubt very desirable," said he, "that illicit traffic should be stopped, but I consider the Abkari Act of 1878 is sufficient for that purpose. The confession that the practice of illicit distillation is prevalent does not of itself prove that the existing law requires amendment; it rather suggests inefficiency in carrying out the Act." Referring

to a proposal in the Bill of 1882 to make the mere tapping of a toddy-producing tree penal, Mr. Macaulay earnestly asked the Council not to agree to the proposal because it was manifestly unfair and was calculated to entail great hardship. "The proposal," the Hon'ble gentleman said with much feeling, "does not affect Europeans nor does it affect the wealthy native; it is the very poor alone who will be sufferers. Fresh toddy is largely consumed by the poor agriculturists, who are not represented here: and it is on their behalf I appeal to you not to carry this amendment." Then turning to the general Abkari policy of the Bombay Government, Mr. Macaulay observed:—"Instead of making more stringent laws, a relaxation of the laws now in force is loudly called for. There is no doubt they are vexatious and oppressive and it must not be thought, because the people endure them quietly that they are not oppressive. It seems to me the Abkari Act of 1878 and the Bill now before us have been framed with the one object of increasing revenue. It is possible to be over-zealous in that direction and the desire to make a department pay should not justify fresh legislation. If the Act be passed in its present form, and the result should be to bring some extra rupees into the treasury, they will be dearly purchased if they are extracted from the pockets of the poor royts who are too ignorant to understand the necessity for new regulations such as the Act contemplates." The speaker gave full credit to Government for good intentions but they had, he submitted, to depend upon their subordinates for information, whose reports might be reliable enough, but might also be biassed, and might only look at the questions concerned from a departmental point of view. He therefore asked Government to cause an exhaustive inquiry to be made into the whole matter, not from the officials merely but from

independent Native gentlemen in the Presidency also, and then, be felt sure, the results of the inquiry would bear out his statement that the Abkari laws were oppressive and required to be modified, Mr. Macaulay thus concluded:—"As regards the application of the Act to Mhowra flowers, all I need say is that such a proposal is un-called for. At times, especially in seasons of scarcity, Mhowra roots are eaten in Guzerath. I should say that it would be quite enough if the illicit distilling of liquor from Mhowra flowers were prohibited." Mr. S. D. Sassoon, who spoke after Mr. Macaulay, desired at that early stage of the Bill to remain neutral, but he sought information from the mover of the Bill on the four following points:—First, whether it was not a fact that the Mhowra tree grew extensively in many districts of Guzerath and in the Konkan and that the predatory tribes inhabiting those districts used the Mhowra flowers and berries as food, and whether they had not actually obtained subsistence from them during periods of scarcity; secondly, whether the Hon'ble member in charge of the Bill could furnish any statistical information showing to what extent illicit distillation had caused lawless conduct on the part of villagers and in what districts that sort of conduct had prevailed; thirdly, whether the Act could be safely extended and applied to districts in which, owing to their wildness, very little European supervision could be exercised; and lastly, whether the class of officers employed in carrying out the provisions of the Abkari laws could be safely entrusted with the powers which the Bill would vest in them without that degree of European supervision which the Police Administration supplied. Mr. Sassoon was followed by Rao Bahadur Gopalrao Hari Deshmukh, who made a characteristically neat little speech against the Bill which deserves to be quoted *in extenso*.

"The principal object of the Bill," said the Rao Bahadur, "is to place restriction on the trade in Mhowra flowers, but I am of opinion that the restrictions contemplated will press very hard on the poor and wild tribes who are generally engaged in the collection of Mhowra flowers. These flowers are used as food for men and fodder for cattle and also as medicine. Wild tribes—Bheels, Kolis, Katkaris, Warlis, Dublays, Thakars, &c.—rise at midnight and go to their fields to collect the flowers which fall on the ground. These they sell to Banias for grain or money, keeping a share for themselves. The Banias sell them to those merchants who deal in Mhowra flowers on a large scale, or convey to distilleries and other places. There are many other materials from which liquor is made, such as dates, gool, rice &c. If there is no provision against the sale of these, I do not see why Mhowra flowers alone should be subjected to restrictions. If illicit manufacture of liquor escapes the vigilance of the Police and Abkari officers, the collection of flowers also may. The Abkari Act, as it is, presses very hard on the people and no more restrictions should, I think, be placed on the flowers. I therefore concur with the Hon'ble Rao Sahib Mandlik." Mr. Ashburner, replying on the debate, observed that Mr. Mandlik was mistaken in regard to the extent to which Mhowra was used as food for either men or cattle. It might be occasionally eaten as blackberries and bilberries were in England, by the lower classes, but it was not an 'extensive article of food.' The Hon'ble gentleman allowed that it might be food for cattle, but that did not mean that it was food for men; and in regard to cattle too it was very unwholesome for them, and was said to produce blindness. With characteristic boldness, Mr. Ashburner claimed that the proposed Bill was calculated to encourage the use of toddy, be-

cause it would discourage the use of Mhowra! Referring to the contention that if Government interfered with the free traffic in Mhowra, they might with equal propriety interfere with dates and such other things also, because liquor could be illicitly distilled from the latter too. The Hon'ble gentleman said that spirits distilled from dates and other substances were already dealt with under the Act of 1878, but that if ever the trade in the raw material was exposed to the same abuse as Mhowra, Government would certainly interfere with and regulate that also. In regard to the demand for statistics made by Mr. Sassoon, Mr. Ashburner confessed his inability to produce any statistical information at that meeting, but promised to be prepared with it at the next meeting of the Council. Mr. Ashburner was followed by his Excellency the President, who spoke in a feeble and rambling manner, and whose speech concluded the debate on the first reading. His Excellency wanted to point out at the outset that it was a very exceptional course to take a division on the first reading of a Bill. Bills were read a first time in order that they should be circulated and it was very seldom indeed that any Legislative Assembly negatived the introduction of a Bill. Of course, His Excellency did not mean thereby that the remarks which the non-official members had thought it their duty to make were without any value, for the Hon'ble members had stated their grounds of objections very clearly, naturally regarding themselves as representing the public against the undue exactions which, in their opinion, would be the result of the proposed legislation. After some discursive remarks about sound principles of taxation, Sir James Fergusson expressed the opinion that within the short time he had been in India, he could see a decided diminution in the consumption of spirits, while at the same time an enhanced revenue was raised from the taxation of spirituous liquors. Referring to the restrictions to be placed

on the possession of Mhowra flowers, His Excellency observed: —“ There was certainly entertained by Government, in their preliminary consideration of this measure, an objection that the food of the people and the food of cattle might be diminished ; but the best advice Government could obtain showed there was no reason for such fear. *The cattle may browse on the Mhowra flowers and the people may use them, if they please, for food. But what this Bill will prevent is the collection and use of the flowers for illegal purposes.*” After reading these sentences from His Excellency’s speech, Sir Charles (then plain Mr.) Pritchard must certainly have wished that Sir James had not spoken. For they contain not merely an impossible promise but also an indirect admission that Mhowra flowers are used by the people as food for themselves and for cattle. And yet our readers will see how within only the short time of a week, Sir James, better coached up by Sir Charles Pritchard’s department, shifted ground and changed his view of the matter entirely. The President concluded his speech on the first reading with a strange statement, for which he was promptly and deservedly taken to task by the Government of India. Sir James told the Council that the Bill had been submitted to the Government of India who had examined its merits with their usual watchfulness and had come to the conclusion that objections such as those urged by the non-official members were groundless. How this remarkable statement was regarded by the Government of India will be seen later on.

The Bill came up for second reading on the 28th June 1882, and it was clear from the beginning that the Government had made up its mind to force the Bill through all its stages at that one sitting ! Indeed the conduct of Government on that occasion was of a very extraordinary nature from first to last. At the very beginning, the President took the unusual course

of taking the Bill out of the charge of Mr. Ashburner and proposing the second reading himself? Sir James began by admitting that the statement of Objects and Reasons already published was not sufficiently precise and that a very precise statement on the part of the Government was called for in regard to the introduction of the Bill. He also admitted that the proposed Bill "attempted to interfere very closely with the interests of a large number of the poorer classes," but he claimed for Government that Government had not been guilty of any 'hasty' or 'foolish' action in the matter and that it had not acted "without having duly considered the measure and without having the fullest warrant for that which they proposed." After making these two admissions, Sir James hastened to disburden himself of an undeserved and uncalled-for attack on Mr. Mandlik. Speaking of the opposition offered by the non-official members at the first reading of the Bill, His Excellency tried to separate from the group and cajole Sir Jamshetji Jijibhai, Mr. Macaulay and Mr. Sassoon at the expense of the remaining two members. Sir Jamshetji and Messrs. Macaulay and Sassoon had only behaved with their 'usual fairness' and had only made a proper and legitimate demand, viz., that a full statement of the reasons which had induced Government to introduce the Bill should be supplied to the Council. But Messrs. Mandlik and Deshmukh had exhibited at the very introduction of the Bill "a hostility which did not wait to hear fully described the reasons for introducing the measure," and they had attended the first reading meeting "prepared to discredit it (the Bill) without really being in possession of any statement." Sir James told the Council that when so much was said about "the hardship to the poorer classes and the interference with their honest industry," he felt sure that there was another

side to the picture, and that a large part of the opposition to the proposed measure proceeded, not from the poorer classes, but from "the owners of property," whose receipts had clearly diminished owing to the great increase of taxation on the tapping of tress! After this unworthy flogging at Mr. Mandlik, His Excellency proceeded to make 'a very precise statement' of the reasons for the introduction of the Bill and spoke at great length and, it must be admitted, with considerable cleverness. But Sir James was too heavily handicapped in his cause and his lengthy and 'precise' statement therefore did not succeed in bringing over even one non-official member to the Government side, notwithstanding his complimenting Sir Jamshetji and others on their 'usual fairness.' "There is no idea," His Excellency said speaking of the intentions of Government, "of prohibiting the gathering and use of Mhowra flowers; what is proposed is that Government shall have power to regulate, if necessary, the collection and importation of the articles. Nor is it intended that these rules should be of general application; it is proposed to apply them within a very limited area; in the first place only within particular districts where the collection of these Mhowra flowers has been used entirely for purposes of distillation." After endorsing Mr. Ashburner's statement that when the Abkari Act of 1878 was under consideration, some officers had suggested the placing of restrictions on the traffic in Mhowra flowers, the President went on to say that there was a great deal of misapprehension as to the extent to which Mhowra was used as an article of food. "Mhowra is not used," said he, "in any way as an article of food in the districts of Thana and Kolaba, in which we propose this Act should be immediately applied. I believe they have a superstition there that it causes blindness. But it is certainly the

fact that it is not so used in that district. Among the Bheels in Khandesh, it is occasionally extensively used as an article of food, and I am told that a Bheel would never think of eating Mhowra with flour except when Mhowra is scarce. Then the Mhowra is prepared in a particular way with flour and is used. The profit he obtains from it is not in the shape of bread but in its exchange for other articles by which he lives. He and his family gather these flowers and exchange them with the Banias for other things which he and his family want, and he makes as good a bargain as he can." In support of his view, the Governor quoted the following testimony of Major Probyn:—"The chief value of the Mhowra flower to the Bheels is its collection, free of forest tax, and its sale or barter to the Banias. The Mhowra flower can hardly be looked upon as an article of food of daily consumption. The Bheels may be said to use Mhowra as an article of food only when they are hard pressed and then they eat all kinds of roots and other jungle produce as well. So long as a Bheel can procure flour of any kind, he will only occasionally partake of the Mhowra flower. The flower is dried on a *towa*, then reduced to flour, made into cakes, and eaten with a little *goor* or mixed with rice." Sir James then pointed out what steps Government had taken for controlling and thereby 'developing' the *hirda* nut collection industry and how beneficial, in the eyes of Government, were the consequences of those steps; and he asked the Council to allow the Government to do the same in regard to Mhowra flowers. He promised on behalf of Government to use the powers which the proposed legislation would confer upon it 'with consideration for the people.' The object Government had in view was to make the possession of Mhowra flowers, without a license, an offence in the tracts in which clandestine distillation prevailed

and to so regulate the collection that the whole surplus crop should be exported outside the districts when the season was over, the people collecting the flowers under Government permits being paid by Government at a certain rate. Turning next to the Thana and Kolaba Districts, His Excellency complained that the unrestricted collection and possession of Mhowra flowers had encouraged illicit distillation to a large extent, thereby causing serious loss of revenue to Government. Sir James then examined the figures of the Abkari revenue for the coast talukas and the inland talukas of Thana as also the figures of offences against the Abkari Act in the two groups and endeavoured to prove that the revenue in the six inland talukas showed a tendency to fall off because Mhowra flowers were abundant there, while the revenue in the coast talukas was rising with remarkable rapidity, because there Mhowra flowers were scarce. His Excellency then proceeded to claim for the Abkari department the credit of having weaned away the people of the coast talukas from habits of drunkenness. The two extracts from a report of Mr. Mulock, which have done duty during the last ten years on at least a dozen occasions, were faithfully quoted and it was triumphantly asked if the Abkari Department, which had effected all that, deserved that severe criticism which was always pronounced against it by non-official critics. Sir James next briefly mentioned the circumstances of a case in which a head constable had been killed while trying to effect the arrest of some persons who were engaged in illicit distillation and then briefly dwelling on the steps Government had taken during the last few years to check the spread of drunkenness in Thana and Kolaba, His Excellency concluded with the hope that he had sufficiently shown that the measure had not been introduced by Government without just cause and that the true interests of the people

had not been disregarded. Rao Sahib V. N. Mandlik, who spoke after Sir James, stated at the outset that the extraordinary course adopted by Government, *viz.* the President moving the second reading himself, compelled him to explain at greater length than he should otherwise have done, his reasons for opposing the measure. He reiterated his conviction that unless the harassing restrictions on raw toddy were relaxed, it was impossible for Government to deal effectively with the evil of illicit distillation. The history of Great Britain and other countries showed, he said, that if a tax was unnecessarily severe, there would necessarily be attempts at smuggling. Speaking next of the proposed restrictions on Mhowra, the speaker contended that whatever the officers of Government might say, his own information was that the flowers and berries of Mhowra formed no unimportant part of the food of the poorer classes owing to their deep poverty and he quoted in his support extracts from Elphinstone's History of India, Mr. Harrington Buckley's letter to the Superintendent of Revenue Survey, Guzerath, a letter from the Collector of Kaira, dated 31st January 1855, to the Revenue Commissioner, N. D. and the Report of the Indian Famine Commission. Turning next to the question of drunkenness, Mr. Mandlik quoted the following testimony of the Hon'ble M. Elphinstone, who in a Report to the Governor-General, dated October 1819, thus wrote:—"Drunkenness, the peculiar vice of the lower orders, is almost unknown in the Maratha country which has thence a decided superiority in morals over the old provinces. It arises from the discouragement to the sale of spirituous liquors and as the revenue from that source is insignificant, we should probably do well to prohibit it altogether." Mr. Mandlik then made a dignified protest against the manner in which motives had been ascribed to him by the

Governor in the matter of his opposition to the Bill. "Speaking for myself," he said, "I feel it to be a most anxious duty that I have to discharge at this Council; and I should not descend to make a statement I was not prepared to prove. We have to sail here between the Scylla of Departmental advocacy and the Charybdis of outside public criticism. And there are occasions when your Excellency will admit we are entitled to consideration for the difficulties by which we are surrounded. I do not propose to discuss any newspaper remarks here; but if a great deal of the information now placed before the Council had been placed before it at an earlier date as to the extent and scope of the Bill, the way in which it is to be worked &c., there might have been saved, not all the remarks which have fallen from me but a good many of these remarks. His Excellency will perhaps bear with me when I say that in the absence of any data, we may take the Statement of Objects and Reasons itself to be the justification of the measure. But I should not like to see the work of discussion rendered idle; for my own part I would sooner have no discussion at all, if I could not join in an intelligent criticism and examination of every thing that comes before us." The Rao Saheb concluded by once more earnestly appealing to Government to make raw toddy cheaper, so that the poor should not be driven to the evil of the illicit distillation. "In the case of the poorer classes," he observed, "it often means a few annas a month, which, if saved, turn the scale. The richer classes can bear their own burdens and can make themselves heard; it is the class that cannot, whose case we are now considering." Mr. Ashburner spoke after Mr. Mandlik, but with the exception of one or two statements, there was nothing remarkable in the Hon'ble gentleman's speech which was for the most part a brief repetition of the elaborate statement of H

Excellency the President. To the surprise of many Mr. Ashburner began by taking 'great reproach' to himself for the meagreness of the published Statement of Objects and Reasons, and for his neglect to make his remarks on the occasion of the first reading of the Bill as full as they ought to have been. After denying that the restrictions on toddy had anything to do with distillation, the Hon'ble gentleman, with amazing audacity, contended that the shocking state of demoralization and drunkenness, described by Mr. Mandlik, was really the result of the consumption of the 'so-called harmless' drink, toddy! In regard to this statement, all we would say here is that its untruthfulness has been clearly demonstrated by the Abkari Commission of 1885, appointed by Lord Reay to enquire into the Abkari grievances of the people of the town and island of Bombay. Mr. Ashburner next proceeded to consider whether Mhowra was an article of food. He was of opinion that it was so in some places, but not so in others. "Admitting, however," he said, "for the sake of argument, it is a food, are we to permit such shocking mischief, and such demoralising results as those so graphically described by every writer on the subject, to go on without regulation? When the results are so disastrous to the peace and morality of the country, it is impossible not to interfere with it, even if it is admitted to be a food." With regard to the objection that the Bill would interfere with the freedom of trade, the Hon'ble gentleman contended that when such freedom caused the demoralization of the people, it was necessary that Government should interfere. Mr. Ashburner concluded by saying that the Bill provided for a very mild interference with the raw material of Mhowra, because it was impossible otherwise to check drunkenness and at the same time prevent a serious loss of revenue from illicit distillation. Mr.

Ashburner was followed by Sir Jamshetji Jijibhai, who, notwithstanding the cajoling remarks of the President, put the case against the Bill so clearly and with such point and force that we cannot resist the temptation of quoting here almost the whole of the Hon'ble Baronet's speech. After complaining that the statistics placed before the Council by the President were incomplete and insufficient, Sir Jamshetji said :—

'We must bear in mind that the Abkari Act itself is already extremely stringent in its provisions. It gives large powers, in the first place, to Abkari officers and Inspectors and then makes the Magisterial authority the cat's-paw of those officers and Inspectors. We have no means of judging whether this Act with all its stringency, and this army of officers and Inspectors is wholly inefficient and has failed of its purpose. I can scarcely believe that wholesale and lawless distillation can be going on so widely as to become an evil. It is hardly conceivable that bold and defiant violation of the law is stalking through the land in broad daylight so as to call for a special check on free trade. I fear Government have not been accurately informed with respect to the extent of the practice. I am persuaded that it is the wail of the farmer of the Abkari revenue that is resounding in this Council at the present moment. He engages to pay the Government a large sum of money and to work a Sudder Distillery for a whole district. His interest it is to make the best of the bargain he has entered into. He makes loud and incessant complaints to the Collector. The Collector knows the farmer has bid a large amount and he is urged by the Abkari Department to support and assist him to the utmost, for he is the backbone of the Abkari revenue. The farmer keeps up a body of Abkari preventives and detectives of his own and is occasionally assisted, when there is need, with a posse of Police by the Collector. These men scour through the villages, and backed as they are by the strong arm of Government, are quite well able to prevent or bring to punishment any practices of illicit distillation they meet with. These practices, from the very nature of the case, are so dangerous and so jealously watched both by Government officers and the Abkari farmer's myrmidons that they

cannot be going on extensively with any degree of impunity, or if they are, there must be evidence, statistics of cases, punishments, failures to convict for special reasons. None, however, are produced. Vague statements and assertions, by whatever high authority, cannot justify a measure like this in the absence of direct evidence and your Excellency must admit that the measure cannot be justified by a little evidence or by isolated cases, but requires a mass of the best and most convincing proofs. Illicit distillation and the like are well known to the villagers to be offences punishable by law, and rendering property seized liable to confiscation. Those practices, therefore, must necessarily be carried on with great caution and secrecy, and must, as a natural consequence, be far from a frequent occurrence. But, in the eye of the farmer, even a single instance of such practice becomes magnified into the precursor of his ruin; and so he makes unceasing complaints and his appeals for protection are constantly dinned into the ears of the Collector and the Abkari officers. These complaints and these appeals are in due course communicated to Government. Thus it is that the information which reaches Government is tainted by exaggeration at the very source. There is no falling-off, I believe, in the sums realized at the annual auctions. That is the only way in which loss to the revenue could occur or show itself. The farmer, however, fears a loss or he fears that he may not make so much as he hoped to do, and therefore maintains his cry, as farmers will always do, that he is going to be ruined, that the all-powerful *Sarkar* should come to his help, and it is to his rescue that this Council is asked to run. And how? By putting an embargo on Mhowra flowers; by checking free trade; by taking away from the mouths of a poor and famished race of people an article that serves them and their cattle for casual if not regular food; and by arming the Abkari officers, already too powerful, with still more power which will have the direct effect of oppressing and harassing every man, woman and child of the very poorest classes of the people. I regret very much indeed that I cannot see any justification whatever for this measure."

Mr. Macaulay, who spoke next, thought that in spite of the attempt made by His Excellency to enlighten the Council, no sufficient case had been made out for the proposed legislation. The Bill interfered to a considerable extent with trade

and its effect must necessarily be injurious when the large quantities that were exported to France had to be collected under the supervision of Government officers. The trade was a new one but it was a growing one. After quoting statistics of export in support of his statement, Mr. Macaulay said :—“ Now most of that money has found its way, no doubt, into the hands of the people who collected the flowers, and the loss which they will feel will be a severe one, as they are a class of people who have very small incomes, in some cases not exceeding an anna or an anna and a half a day. The people to whom the Act will apply are very ignorant, the most ignorant probably of the whole population of the country. It is therefore all the more necessary that restrictive legislation of this sort should not be carried out. They do not understand the cause of the new laws introduced and it will only drive them to commit breaches of the laws they do not understand.”

In regard to illicit distillation, Mr. Macaulay agreed with Rao Saheb Mandlik that that was to be accounted for, to some extent at least, by the increase in the cost of intoxicating drink. The increase in the duty on toddy had been something like 30 or 40 fold, and that of itself had put the duty-paid spirit beyond the reach of a great many who had formerly indulged in it and regarded it as one of their regular articles of food.

In conclusion, Mr. Macaulay agreed with Sir Jamsbetji that the introduction of the Bill had been due, to some extent at least, to the cry of the Abkari farmers, and that being so, he asked the Council to be very chary in passing the measure. Mr. Macaulay was followed by Rao Bahadur Gopal Rao Hari Deshmukh, who agreed with Sir Jamsbetji that the existing arrangements were sufficient to prevent whatever there was of illicit distillation. The liquor-farmers, he argued, invariably employed a large number of detectives to find out illicit manu-

facture of liquor and they had behind them the support of the Police and the Magistrates. That ought to prevent, the speaker said, the necessity of imposing restrictions on the freedom of a flourishing trade which was very largely carried on between Bombay and Marseilles. The dry flower sold at Rs. 2 as. 5 per hundred-weight, or 9 annas per maund, and the trade was a growing one, and it was unwise, Mr. Deshmukh thought, to interfere with it. According to Hindu Law, the free use of all forest produce was a right of the people from times immemorial and the Rao Bahadur asked Government to be very cautious in their interference with such a right. Mr. Ravenscroft, who spoke next, put the side of Government briefly and clearly before the Council, certainly more clearly than had been done either by the President or by Mr. Ashburner. The Hon'ble gentlemen contended that it had been shown very clearly by the Governor in his statement that there was no reason for any one to fear that the proposed Act would, in any way, be used to oppress the people. In Guzerath, where people ate Mhowra flowers in the hot season, the regulations were not required and would not be pressed. In Khandesh, where also the flowers were eaten, the regulations for their collection and sale which would be ordered, so far from proving injurious to the Bheels and cultivators, would confer on them a benefit. And it was only in Thana and Kolaba, where drunkenness was very rife and where illicit distillation was carried on to a very large extent that Government intended to put in force stringent regulations. Mr. Ravenscroft, in conclusion, asked Honorable members to remember that they were bound to give Government credit for endeavouring to frame rules in such a way that not only would the law not be violated, but the benefit of the general public would also be secured. Mr. Sassoon began by assuring the Governor that it was with

no light heart that he felt constrained to oppose a measure proposed to the Council by the Executive after due consideration. The tendency of all modern legislation was to remove all restrictions on trade and to interfere as little as possible with that free agency which was brought into play by the daily struggles of life ; and he could not, therefore, help viewing with disfavour a repressive enactment like the one proposed, which would place in the hands of ill-paid or inferior instruments, a power of harassing the poor dumb ignorant population inhabiting the forest tracts of the country, a population, who, in Mr. Sassoon's opinion, were dependent on the Mhowra for subsistence for themselves and their cattle and on its barter for the means of supplying the commonest human needs. " I cannot imagine," Mr. Sassoon went on to say, " that any increase of the Abkari revenue would compensate for the injury that would be inflicted on the very poorest classes by depriving them of an article of sale or barter which has been provided for them by the bounty of nature and which they have freely collected from immemorial time. I say that any such increase of revenue would be as a drop in the ocean of Indian finance and on purely fiscal grounds, the cost of collecting it would not be ' worth the candle.' " The President, in replying on the debate, made a short and very peevish speech which showed that His Excellency was clearly out of temper. He began by accusing Sir Jamshetji of coming to the Council with a mind already made up to oppose the Bill, and therefore it was, Sir James said, that the Hon'ble Baronet had complained of the insufficiency of statistical information. His Excellency regretted that the non-official members were ' with one consent ' opposing a Bill, the need for which had been proved in an ' almost unanswerable ' manner. Sir

James then repeated his opinion that the proposed measure, so far from doing any harm to trade, would actually encourage and develop it; he also repeated that the existing provisions of the law and the powers which they conferred on the Executive were inadequate to cope with the evil of illicit distillation. After resenting the suggestion that the cry of the liquor-farmers was at the bottom of the proposed legislation as an 'unworthy imputation,' His Excellency thus concluded:—"Although I have quoted facts and figures so extensively, I am told by Hon'ble members that no reasons have been given. Well, I suppose we have wasted our breath and I must say it is most disappointing to me that after the points, upon which doubt was thrown by the opponents of the Bill, have been established, we are challenged with being in want of facts." The division on the second reading then took place with the result that the seven official members,—viz. the Governor, the Commander-in-Chief, Mr. Ashburner, Mr. Ravenscroft, the acting Advocate-General, General Merriman and Mr. Gonno, voted in favour of the motion and the five non-official members, viz. Sir Jambhetji Jijibhai, Mr. S. D. Sassoon, Rao Sahadur G. H. Deshmukh, Rao Saheb V. N. Mandlik and Mr. Macaulay voted against it. The Bill being thus read a second time, a few minor amendments were considered, after which His Excellency the President said:—"It is no use fighting the battle over again and I therefore propose to suspend the standing orders that the Bill may be read a third time." *The standing orders being thus suspended, the Bill was read a third time and passed at the same sitting!*

But though the Bill was thus rushed through the local Legislature in a manner, unusually high-handed, it could not become law unless it had received the assent of the Viceroy,

and in this matter the Government of Bombay soon found that they had been counting without the host. Sir James Fergusson and his colleagues must have expected that the Viceroy would give his assent as a matter of course, but there they were doomed to the bitterest disappointment and humiliation. Meanwhile the agitation against the Bill did not cease with the measure passing through the local Legislature. The Poona Sarvajanika Sabha submitted a lengthy representation to the Government of India, criticizing severely the conduct of the Bombay Government, who with their official majority had rushed the Bill through the local Legislature in the face of the united protest of the non-official members, and praying that the Viceroy should be pleased to withhold his assent from a measure so oppressive in its nature and passed in the teeth of so much opposition. As this letter of the Sabha has not been before published, we give it here *in extenso*, hoping that our readers will find it interesting reading, especially as it shows what was then thought of the conduct of the Bombay Government by a body like the Poona Sarvajanika Sabha:—

No. 143 of 1882.

Sarjanik Sabha Rooms,
Nagarkar's Wada near Vishrambag.

Poona, 24th July 1882.

To

D. FITZPATRICK ESQUIRE,

Secretary to the Government of India,

Legislative Department, Simla.

Sir,

We have been directed by the Managing Committee of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha to submit the following representation on the subject of Bill No. 3 of 1882 to amend the Abkari Act V of 1870 which was passed last month in the Local Legislature by the

votes of an official majority against the unanimous protest of the non-official European and Native representatives in Council and by the suspension of standing orders which left no opportunity to the people concerned to make their views known to Government. As the Bill now awaits the sanction of H. E. the Viceroy and Governor-General, we request that for the reasons stated below, H. E. will be pleased to withhold his sanction and veto the Bill in its present form, and suggest a further inquiry into the entire working of the Akbari laws in this Presidency chiefly in respect of their effects on the moral condition of the people before fresh legislation is attempted in this direction.

2. Our first objection to the measure has reference to the question of procedure. The draft of the Bill was published first on 30th May accompanied by a statement of objects and reasons, which, as was admitted during the debates by the hon'ble mover himself, was very meagre and not to the point. This circumstance necessitated the substitution of a new Statement of Objects and Reasons materially differing from the original, which was published on the 23rd June after the first reading was over, and on the eve of the second reading, when the conduct of the measure was unexpectedly taken up by the President in his own hand. This step was so unusual that it could not but have influenced the official votes, and it certainly interfered with the neutral attitude of arbiter between the official and non-official views which the President of a deliberative body is bound to preserve. This vacillation of purpose suggests that the Executive authorities were not quite clear in their own minds in respect of the necessity of legislation. On comparing the two Statements of Objects and Reasons, it will be seen that while the first made no mention of Gujarath and the districts above the Ghâts (Khandesh), but referred only to the Konkan, this extension to the non-Konkan territories found a prominent place in the new draft. In a similar manner no reference was made in the first draft to the demoralization of the people consequent on the practice of illicit distillation, while the greatest prominence was given to this feature in the second draft. The Hon'ble mover in his opening speech denied the fact that Mhowra was used as a food for men and cattle by the wild Bhils and Kulsees &c. The President at the second reading admitted this position for Khandesh and Guzerath. No wonder that when the Dy.

ecutive members of Council were not quite clear in their own minds in respect of these salient points, the non-official representatives who had nothing before them but the rejected Statement of Objects and Reasons, were placed upon a wrong scent altogether, and were not prepared to meet the official justification urged at the second reading. The suggestions thrown out asking for more accurate information were negatived summarily and further deliberation was made impossible by the haste with which, notwithstanding the change of front adopted by the official supporters of the measure, the second and third readings were both finished at the same sitting. No urgent necessity beyond a mere impatience to fight the battle over again in debate was shown for dispensing with the usual guarantees of deliberation. In this way, a Bill which in its actual operation affects the food and comfort of one million of aboriginal tribes and races was passed into law in less than a fortnight, though the non-official members, European and native, opposed it unanimously and public opinion outside was equally pronounced. Lastly, the Bill was passed as a measure applicable to the whole Presidency, though by the admission of the President himself there was no justification for its extension to Khandesh and Guzerath, and the word of Government was pledged that no immediate measures would be taken to apply it to those districts. Unlimited discretion in regard to time and place has been vested in Government which has the power of making rules and all attempts by the non-official members to limit the operation of these rules in the act itself were denounced as showing want of confidence in the good intentions of Government.

3. For all these reasons, we submit that, quite apart from the inherent merits or faults of the new law, the procedure followed in its enactment was vitiated in most material points, and was so opposed to the spirit which should guide legislative deliberations, that we trust H. E. will not fail by his veto to emphasise his condemnation of such summary and ill-regulated precipitancy in matters of such grave importance.

4. With regard to the merits of the measure, it is alleged in the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill that Mhowra flowers are openly sold and used for the purpose of illicit distillation thereby causing lawlessness and demoralization among the people and loss of

revenue to Government, a state of things against which under the present law Government are unable to provide a remedy. The Bill, therefore, (among other amendments with which this representation does not deal) proposes (1) to include Mhowra flowers in the list of intoxicating drugs, the possession and traffic in which is prohibited, except under license, by the Abkari law ; (2) to give power to the Local Government to make rules to regulate or prohibit the collection, import, export, transport, sale and possession of Mhowra flowers within any defined local area or place ; and (3) to punish any breach of the rules so made with a fine not exceeding rupees 500 or with imprisonment which may extend to three months, or with both.

5. The five non-official members of the Council, who were present, objected to this part of the Bill on the grounds that besides being used for distillation of liquor (1) Mhowra flowers form an important article of the food of the poorer classes of the people as well as of cattle ; (2) that these flowers are largely used as medicine in the Districts where they grow, by native women during their convalescence after delivery ; (3) that oil is pressed from the Mhowra berry for domestic use by the said poor people ; (4) and that the provisions of the Bill are calculated to interfere with the freedom and development of the remunerative export trade which has recently sprung up in dried Mhowra flowers, nearly four lacs of rupees worth having been exported to foreign parts during the last year. They therefore deprecated any interference on the part of Government with the free collection, use and sale of these flowers which the bounty of nature provides for the poorer portion of the population and pointed out that the Abkari law which was already very severe and stringent, ought, if efficiently worked, to enable the Executive officers of Government to detect and put a stop to any illicit distillation from these flowers. Two of these members suggested inquiry through independent agency, and called for precise information or statistics as to the extent of the alleged illicit distillation from Mhowra flowers and of the lawless conduct complained of.

6. The official explanation stated that in the inland part of the Thana District, 678 offences against the Abkari law were brought to trial during one year (though the number of convictions was not given) and one solitary case of blood-shed and resistance to the de-

detective police was quoted. A slight decrease in the Abkari revenue in the said inland part of Tanna was also shown, though this decrease was more than made up by an enormous increase in the remaining parts of the same district.

7. This explanation was extremely meagre and unsatisfactory to justify the grant of the enormous general powers which the Local Government wished to take in order to suppress the illicit distillation alleged to be carried on in a small and isolated part of one of the eighteen districts of the Presidency. This was pointed out by the non-official members, who contended that there were no facts before the Council sufficiently clear and strong to show any necessity of fresh powers to suppress the alleged illicit distillation, that such powers, if granted, would directly interfere with and deprive the poor population such as Bhills, Kolis, Katkarics, Thakurs and others, numbering nearly a million of one of the cheapest articles of their food which the free collection of the Mhowra flowers at present supplied them in the districts where those flowers grow in wild profusion such as Khandesh, the Panch-Mahals, Kaira, Broach, Surat, Tanna and Kolaba. And it was further contended that a large number of detective police which the farmers and Abkari Officers at present employ, and which are spread over the country as a kind of network, ought to be and as a matter of fact already are, able to detect and bring to punishment cases of breaches of the law. It was however plain from the attitude of Government members that the measure was a foregone conclusion; and it was passed without due consideration of the objections raised, as stated above in para 2.

The foregoing summary of the discussion *pro* and *con* which took place in the Local Legislative Council will show that Government thought it proper to assume powers to place an embargo and take virtual possession of the entire produce of the Mhowra flowers of the whole Presidency, although it is an article of food and comfort and medicine of nearly a million of the poor classes of the population who have enjoyed the right of its free collection from time immemorial, and all this done on the plea that illicit distillation from the said Mhowra Flowers prevails in a small portion of only one of the eighteen districts yielding about 1-36th part of the entire Abkari revenue of the Presidency. The Committee

accordingly beg to urge upon the notice of the Viceroy and Governor-General the real significance of the fresh legislation. Powers to make rules "to regulate and prohibit the collection, import, export, transport, sale and possession of Mhowra flowers," mean practically powers given to the Abkari Department to monopolise the entire produce of the Mhowra flowers growing in all parts of this Presidency. Indeed the public are not left merely to infer this from the working of the Bill. The President of the Council cited the case of Hirda or Myrabellam which grow wild in the forests and which, since their collection &c. began to be regulated by the forest officers, have become the absolute property of and a new source of revenue to Government. The poor classes of people who formerly collected and sold this Hirda for its full worth in the market being now left to collect it for the Forest Department only, and be content with a pittance scarcely covering ordinary wages of labour. The Bill now awaiting the Viceroy's assent, if sanctioned, will not only similarly deprive the poor people of a right which they have enjoyed from time immemorial of collecting and appropriating the Mhowra flowers free of any taxes or license fees, but will at the same time deprive nearly a million of them of a cheap supply of food during a part of the year when they are peculiarly hard pressed for it. It is true that the President of the Council stated that no tax is intended to be levied on the Mhowra flowers, and the Sabha do not question the verbal correctness of the statement; but what is objected to is that under the usual process of the powers to "regulate" and "prohibit" the collection and possession of that article, the great bulk of the million of poor population residing in the Mhowra producing Districts of Khandesh, Guzerath and parts of N. Konkan will be gradually deprived of the right of free collection and appropriation of an article of their diet which the bounty of nature has supplied them at their doors, and the lion's share of the profits of those poor people will be effectually swept into the Government treasury, nominally as part of Abkari revenue, but in reality as the fruits of a most unjustifiable and cruel monopoly. This would indeed in exact accordance with the policy pursued by Government officers in the forest Department, who in some places have monopolized even the retail trade in fire-wood and charcoal.

The official justification of this measure of wholesale appropri-

tion of the Mhowra flowers is that one of the uses made of them is illicit distillation of intoxicating liquor, which is alleged to have been detected in a small portion of one of the eighteen districts of the Presidency resulting in a small diminution of Abkari revenue and demoralization of the people from over-drinking within that area. Granting that these allegations are well founded, the magnitude of the evil with which the new measure is fraught is so great compared with the insignificance of the expected gain to Abkari revenue in an isolated locality that the "Objects and Reasons," given on behalf of the Abkari Department carry their condemnation along with them. But the Sabha take the liberty to question the absolute correctness of what is brought forward as facts. Seeing that the Abkari revenue is farmed out to a single contractor for the whole district, it is not practicable to find out correctly what portion of such revenue is due to particular parts of the District; but even if the Abkari officers have a way of finding this out, it might be more correct to attribute the fall to the reduction of the number of retail liquor shops in this same district, for which in the same breath the Abkari Department has claimed credit. If a people accustomed to drink cheap toddy or beer find themselves suddenly deprived of it, breaches of the peace may be reasonably expected to occur, but one case of outrage and bloodshed cited as having taken place in a remote corner of the Presidency is hardly a sufficient justification to inflict a severe punishment upon a whole population.

The alleged significance of the facts and figures quoted by the Abkari Department, meagre and unsatisfactory as they were, was called in question, and some of the non-official members asked for special inquiry through independent agency to obtain correct statistics of the extent of illicit distillation and lawlessness complained of. But this most reasonable and constitutional demand was met by recriminations such as want of confidence in the Executive and opposition from interested motives of property holders. Nothing can be more unjust than such a reproach. There was no time allowed for independent representations from the outside public. Of the non-official members who opposed the Bill, one was a European and another a Jew Merchant, two were Brahmans who could have no possible interest in opposing a measure intended to check drunkenness, and the fifth was a Parsi Baronet, who with rare courage stated that

the measure was forced on Government by the interested advocacy of Abkari farmers, who are, it must be remembered, chiefly Parsees. Private owners of Mhowra trees are really not likely to be the sufferers. It is the poor Bhils, Kolis and Katkaris who feed themselves and their cattle on the Mhowra flowers four months in the year when other resources fail, whose interests were advocated by the non-official opposition. So far from deriving any revenue from licit or illicit use of Mhowra flowers, examples could be quoted of private landlords foregoing such income or profit and generously granting the applications of their poor ryots to be left undisturbed in the enjoyment of their immemorial right of freely collecting and appropriating these flowers, an example of generosity on the part of private landlordism which Government might well imitate instead of denying its existence.

Lastly, it must be borne in mind that the whole question turns upon the decision of this single view whether as a fact there is room for much illicit distillation against which the Abkari officers cannot protect themselves by the provisions of Act V of 1878. The official apology does not touch this point. It is notorious that Mhowra flowers cannot be distilled without filling the whole neighbourhood with a most offensive smell. Secret illicit distillation therefore is not possible with such an army of Inspectors and spies as the Government and the farmers have at their command. The most ordinary use of Mhowra is not for distillation but as an article of trade, and of food for men and cattle and for oil and medicinal purposes. All these uses represent a vast interest which deserves every care which Government can bestow upon its preservation from interference for the increase of revenue. Abkari revenues from Mhowra flowers have increased very largely under the operation of Act V of 1878, and this fact of itself contradicts the assumption on which fresh legislation is justified.

As regards the moral aspects of the question, Government took great credit for an alleged increase of sobriety in the Thana District. The Committee beg to observe that the general impression is opposed to this belief. The use of toddy, which in its sweet state is harmless, has indeed been diminished but it has only made room for more noxious drinks. The increase of drunkenness in Poona was admitted

by the Honorable Mr. Ashburner. The number of retail liquor shops has of late years increased and every evening the neighbourhood of these shops presents a scene, the reverse of creditable to the Department of public administration under whose patronage they claim to continue and flourish.

The Sabha, therefore, takes the opportunity of asking for a special Commission of inquiry into the moral effects of the working of the Abkari Department of this Presidency, composed of members unconnected with the Revenue Department assisted by non-official native gentlemen. The Sabha feels confident that such an inquiry will establish the fact that the Abkari Department is chiefly answerable for the increased drunkenness and demoralization of the lower classes and that the increased revenue is purchased at too great a sacrifice of other and more important interests. The Sabha, therefore, earnestly hopes that H. E., the Viceroy and Governor-General will

(I) Withhold his assent from the Bombay Abkari Act Amendment Bill now before him ; and

(II) Order a special Commission of Inquiry to investigate the necessity of fresh legislation and the general working of the Bombay Abkari Department with special reference to its moral effects on the condition of the people, composed of members unconnected with the Revenue Department, half of them being native gentlemen of experience and independent character.

We have &c.

S. H. SATHE,

S. H. CHIPLONKAR,

Secretaries, P. S. Sabha.

It was the blessed *regime* of Lord Ripon, and the Government of India brought to the consideration of the question a mind, free from all prejudice and unfettered by official traditions or by any false regard for the 'prestige' of Provincial Governments. The result was that Lord Ripon added one more claim to the many he already possessed on the gratitude of the people of this Presidency. In a letter, dated 23rd October 1882, the Viceroy gave the Bombay Govern-

ment to understand that he could not help withholding his assent from the Bill and he stated his grounds at considerable length and with great force. As this letter is not now within easy reach of the public, we reproduce it here for the benefit of our readers.

No. 1265.

From—The SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT of INDIA,
Legislative Department,

To—The SECRETARY to the GOVERNMENT of BOMBAY,
Legislative Department,

Simla, the 23rd October 1882.

Sir,

The Governor General has had before him the Bill noted in the margin,* which was passed by the Bombay Legislature on the 28th June last, and which was forwarded for his assent in letter from the Bombay Legislative Department of 6th July last.

2. His Excellency desires me to state, for the information of the Governor-in-Council, that he has given long and careful consideration to this measure, and has with much reluctance come to the conclusion that he would not be justified in according to it his assent.

3. Before, however, proceeding to signify his reasons for this decision, as required by Section 40 of the Indian Councils Act, he thinks it desirable to remove a misapprehension into which His Excellency the Governor appears to have fallen in regard to the attitude of the Government of India towards the Bill. Speaking in the Legislative Council on the 21st June, His Excellency is reported to have made the following remarks:—“This Bill has been submitted to the Government of India, who are always very watchful indeed against any measure pressing unduly on the people and increasing the burden of taxation. They, after full consideration, entertain no such objections as have been stated here to-day.” Those remarks undoubtedly imply that the Government of India had, at least tacitly approved of the policy of the Bill. But this is not the case. It is true that in

December last the Bill was forwarded to the Government of India but only with reference to one particular feature of it, viz., the penal clauses, which, according to established rule, required the previous approval of the Government of India before they could be inserted in the Bill. They alone were considered by the Government of India at that time, and the letter of 16th February 1882 to your Government was confined to a direction for the reduction of the proposed penalties, and to suggestions for some trifling improvements in the drafting of one of the clauses, no allusion being made to the general policy of the measure. And this, I am to remark, was only in accordance with what His Excellency conceives to be the recognised practice in regard to measures submitted under the rule requiring the previous sanction of the Government of India to the penal clauses of Bills introduced into local Legislatures. On such occasions the consideration of the Government of India is not given to the general policy of a measure, and any action they may take at that stage must not be interpreted as, implying either that the Governor General in Council has in any way signified approval of the general policy of the Bill, or that the discretion which the Governor General is called upon to exercise at a later stage is in any way compromised. His Excellency has thought it desirable to say this much, because, from the remarks quoted above, he feared that His Excellency the Governor might regard his present action as inconsistent with the action previously taken by the Government of India.

4. Proceeding now to His Excellency's reasons for withholding his assent, I am to observe that the measure proposes to make several minor modifications in the existing law, upon which the Governor General does not desire to make any observation, as in considering the question of giving, or withholding, his assent to the Bill, His Excellency has been guided only by considerations connected with the main issue of the policy which it involves.

This centres in Sections 4 and 8, which provide as follows :—

Section 4 provides that the following words shall be inserted in Act V of 1878 :—

The Governor of Bombay in Council may from time to time by Notification published in the *Bombay Government Gazette*—

‘ (a) make rules regulating or prohibiting the collection, sale, and possession of Mhowra flowers within any defined local area or place, or the import, export or transport thereof into or out of or over any such area or place, and such rules may be different for different areas or places, and (b) cancel, modify, or reimpose any such notification.’

Section 8 provides for the following addition being made to Section 43 of Act V of 1878 :—

‘ Whoever, in contravention of this Act, or of any rule or order made under this Act, or of any license, permit or pass obtained under this Act, gathers, collects, imports, exports, transports, sells or possesses Mhowra flowers, shall be punished for each such offence with a fine which may extend to five hundred rupees, or with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months, or with both.’

5. The grounds on which these provisions have been enacted are that illicit distillation from Mhowra flowers is rife in certain districts of the Presidency, notably in Thána and Kolába, and that from such illicit distillation result (1) an increase of drunkenness demoralising to the population, (2) loss to the public revenue from excise, and (3) frequent breaches of the peace between the Abkari Police and illicit distillers or smugglers. Incidentally it is claimed for the proposed law that it will have the advantage of enabling Government to stimulate and develop a legitimate trade in the Mhowra flower, in a way similar to that in which it is stated that, under the Forest Act, a trade in mirobolans or *birda nuts* has been fostered and regulated.

6. On the other hand the opponents of the measure assert that the evidence which has been brought forward in its support is not sufficient to establish the reality of the evils which are alleged to exist, or to prove that, if those evils do exist, the present law is inadequate to meet them ; and, further, they maintain—and this is their principal ground of objection—that the proposed law will inflict severe hardship upon the poorer class of cultivators by depriving them of the free use of an article which they consume largely as food for themselves or for their cattle.

7. Dealing first with the allegation that the Mhowra flower is used as an article of food, the Governor General does not find that the opponents of the measure have anywhere questioned His Excellency

the Governor's statement that it is not so used in Thana and Kolaba, the only districts to which, in the first instance, it is proposed to apply the law. On the other hand, the evidence before him proves conclusively that Mhowra is extensively used as an article of food in some other districts of the Bombay Presidency, in parts of Bengal, notably Chota Nagpore, in a very large part of the Central Provinces, in the North-Eastern Districts of Madras, and in the States of Central India bordering upon Khândesh. Were provisions like those of the Bill to be enforced in any of these regions, His Excellency cannot persuade himself that it would not entail serious hardship upon the poorer classes, more especially in times of scarcity or famine. Further, as regards the regions bordering on Khândesh, which are inhabited by Bhils, Nâiks, and other wild tribes, he has received from the Political Officers of Central India reports which convince him that any attempt to enforce the provisions of the Bill, even amongst the neighbours of those tribes, would be attended with serious danger to the peace of that part of the country. The boundary between Khândesh and the States of Central India is for a considerable distance very ill-defined, the tribes on each side of the border are intimately connected by intermarriage and intertribal law, and what injuriously affects one portion of these tribes is felt by all. He is therefore assured that an extension to Khândesh of the restrictions that it is proposed to introduce into Thana and Kolaba, or even an attempt to place the trade in Mhowra flowers under official control, which the Bombay Government does in fact contemplate, would have a most disquieting effect upon the whole of the Bhil country; and that should the first promulgation of such regulations coincide with a season of scanty rainfall,—an event that occurs every four or five years in those parts,—there would be grave risk of an outbreak. He is therefore of opinion that, except in the districts of Thana and Kolaba, the use of the Mhowra flower as food is sufficient to constitute a strong objection to the policy of the proposed law. His Excellency the Governor in Council has suggested that any inconvenience arising from the restrictions upon the collection and sale of the flower would, in the case of honest persons, be more than counterbalanced by the advantages that would accrue from the regulation of the trade by Government. But in this argu-

ment the Governor General is unable to agree with His Excellency. The proposal to regulate the trade and to pay the people for collecting the flower at 'a certain rate fixed by Government' seems to him open to very strong objections. It is opposed to the general policy of the Government of India, which desires to interfere as little as possible with trade; and as I have stated above, he has reason to believe that any interference of the kind might produce serious political complications in those districts which are inhabited by Bhil tribes. He therefore cannot but regard the suggestion as an argument against, rather than in favor of, the Bill.

8. Turning now to the question of illicit distillation and the evils resulting from it, he finds that the districts of Thana and Kolaba again stand by themselves as somewhat exceptional, and he concurs with the Government of Bombay in thinking that the evidence proves that illicit distillation from the Mhowra flower takes place to a considerable extent in the six inland Talukas of the Thana district, and also (though on this the evidence is less conclusive) in the Kolaba district. Further he thinks it is satisfactorily established that the work of checking illicit distillation is one of considerable difficulty, and that some serious breaches of the peace have occurred between the Abkari Police and the inhabitants. But he finds little or no evidence that a similar state of things prevails in other districts of the Bombay Presidency, and he is not satisfied that either illicit distillation, or the evils which it causes, are of such an amount, or so widespread, as to justify the very large and stringent powers which it is proposed in the Bill to confer upon the Government. It can scarcely be denied that those powers, if misused, might be productive of great harm, both in the way of checking the freedom of trade, and of interfering with the collection, sale and possession of an article which is largely consumed by the poorer classes in certain parts of the Presidency as food for themselves or their cattle; and though it appears that it is only intended to exercise those powers in districts where the objection on the score of interference with a food of the people does not at present apparently apply, and though the Governor General has every confidence that the Bombay Government would administer the Act with consideration for the people, he cannot feel satisfied that these arguments are sufficient to outweigh the fundamental objections, which seem to him to exist, to conferring upon the

Executive Governments power which admittedly go far beyond the actual necessities of the case, and which might at some future time be misapplied. The main objects which the Bombay Government has in view, viz., to check the demoralisation consequent on excessive drinking of illicit spirit in the districts of Thana and Kolaba, and to protect the Abkari revenue in these districts might, as it appears to His Excellency, have been perfectly well attained by passing a law of much more restricted scope than the Bill which has now been submitted for his assent; and he has carefully considered whether he could not accord his assent, subject to an understanding that the law should not be put in force beyond the limits of those districts, and that the rules to be made under it should be confined to the single purpose of remedying the evils arising from illicit distillation. But the very wide scope of the Bill makes such a course undesirable, for the Act would create powers which appear to be neither necessary nor expedient; and though these might be left dormant for a time, there could be no permanent guarantee that under other counsels they might not be called into activity.

9. Moreover, it may be doubted whether stringent measures of repression are the only or the best means of remedying the evils of which the Bombay Government complains. The Governor General observes that some of the non-official members of the Council ascribed those evils to the severity of the present Abkari Laws, and to the high tax now placed upon toddy trees. He has not before him sufficient information to enable him to judge what amount of force there may be in this contention, but the explanation is at least a possible one, and he does not find that it has been examined in such a way as to deprive it of all weight. He is therefore of opinion that further enquiry should be made as to whether the high rate of duty charged on licit spirit in the districts of Thana and Kolaba has not encouraged smuggling, and the opportunity might at the same time be taken to investigate somewhat more closely the question as to whether the Mhowra flower is ever used as food in those districts. If after these inquiries had been made, it was found that the flower was not used as an article of food, and if it were clearly proved that no remedy for the existing state of things in those districts could be found in a relaxation of the present Abkari laws, it might then be considered whether legis-

lation should not be undertaken for the purpose of placing some restriction upon the collection, sale, and possession of Mhowra flowers in those two districts alone. But, as the case stands now, His Excellency cannot consider that the facts clearly establish the necessity for legislation, even of a much more limited scope than that of the Bill now before him, and that being so, he regrets that he sees no other course open to him than to withhold his assent.

I have the honour, &c.,

(Signed) D. FITZPATRICK,

Secretary to the Government of India.

It is not difficult to imagine with what feelings of chagrin and humiliation, this letter of the Government of India must have been received by the Bombay Government and the all-powerful Abkari Commissioner. But the drowning man catcheth at a straw, and the Bombay Government thought that the last paragraph of the Government of India's letter gave them just a chance. With a view, therefore, to institute a 'further inquiry,' "as to whether the high rate of duty charged on licit spirit in the districts of Thana and Kolaba has not encouraged smuggling" and to take the opportunity "to investigate somewhat more closely the question as to whether the Mhowra flower is ever used as food in those districts," the Bombay Government appointed a Committee, consisting of Mr. Shepherd, then Commissioner N. D., Mr. Mulock, then Collector of Thana and Mr. Campbell, then acting Collector of Customs, with Mr. Shepherd as President. This exclusively official Committee, after taking such evidence as it pleased, relating again only to Thana, recorded the four following conclusions:—

1. That smuggling and illicit distillation of spirit are virtually non-existent in the Talukas (Dahanu, Mahim, Basin,

and portions of Panvel and Salsette) where toddy spirit is the liquor consumed.

2. That smuggling and illicit distillation of spirit are generally prevalent in all the Talukas (Vada, Shahapur, Karjat, Murbad, Kalyan, Bhiwandi, and parts of Panvel and Salsette) where Mhowra spirit is drunk.

3. That the prevalence of illicit distillation is only rendered possible by the unrestricted collection, sale and use of Mhowra flowers.

4. That the Mhowra flower, as distinct from the Mhowra berries and seeds, is nowhere used as a staple article of food, and is only eaten in small quantities and as a relish or addition to their ordinary diet for a brief period of the year by some of the wild tribes.

It was a foregone conclusion that the Committee would record these views, seeing that it was composed entirely of officials who were aware of the painful snub which their Government had received from the Government of India and who knew what it was that Sir James Fergusson and his colleagues wanted. In reviewing the report of this Committee, the Bombay Government thus wrote in regard to the prevalence of illicit distillation in Thana :—

“ Every disinterested person competent to form an opinion on the point has stated that illicit distillation is rife. Mamlatdars, Inspectors, private individuals, Government pensioners, liquor-farmers, all agree on this subject. *The fact is partially denied by a few of the persons, whose statements have been recorded, and by certain anonymous writers in the columns of the local vernacular papers, but their statements appear from internal evidence and from the consensus of opinion*

on the part of credible witnesses to be undeserving of weight." (The italics are ours.) Having thus summarily disposed of those whose evidence did not support the conclusions which Government wanted to establish, Government proceeded to write as follows in regard to whether Mhowra was used, during any period of the year, as food either for men or cattle:—"As regard the fourth point, the evidence proves the following facts:—1st. That only a limited number of persons belonging to the wilder tribes, the aborigines, such as Warlis, one branch of Thakurs, Kathodis, and Dublas eat Mhowra flowers, and that even they do not eat them as a substitute for other food, but as an addition mixing occasionally small quantities of the flowers like raisins in their bread. 2nd. That the higher castes do not eat the flowers. 3rd. That even the Kathodis, Warlis &c. consume the flowers in very small quantities, finding it more profitable and economical to barter or sell the flowers they collect than to eat them. 4th. That Mhowra flowers are occasionally, as alleged, used for medicinal purposes, but that the amount consumed for this object is exceedingly small. 5th. That Mhowra flowers are sometimes given as a part of their food to cattle. Owing, however, to the costliness of the flowers, it would be a very expensive measure to feed cattle to any appreciable extent on them and the flowers are generally only given in any quantity to cattle after the spirit has been distilled from them." It will be seen that the foregoing passage contains *very important* admissions, though, of course, they are made with that grudging spirit which officials always display when they are forced to alter or modify their views and opinions confidently and dogmatically expressed. It was contended by Sir Charles (then Mr.) Pritchard in his Abkari Reports for 1880-81, and 1881-82 that the *sole* use to which Mhowra flowers

were put in Thana and Kolaba was illicit distillation, and the contention was repeated in the Legislative Council by Sir James Fergusson. We will, however, deal with this point later on. It has already been observed that Mr. Shepherd's Committee took evidence and recorded conclusions only for Thana. The Bombay Government, therefore, appointed a second Committee, composed of two officials,—Mr. Campbell and Mr. King, then collector of Kolaba,—to make a similar inquiry and perhaps submit an identical report for Kolaba. The report of this Committee is not available to the public, but Sir Charles Pritchard quoted on the 5th April last in the Legislative Council a lengthy extract from a Government resolution reviewing the Report and this extract contains the following important admission. "*The increase,*" says this Government review, "*in the cost to the consumer of licit spirit would not appear in Kolaba to have stimulated the illicit production of liquor. The native officials whose replies have been received to the exhaustive set of questions propounded by the Committee are almost unanimous in the opinion that formerly there was little illicit distillation in Kolaba, and that now clandestine manufacture is, if carried on at all, conducted but rarely and on an altogether insignificant scale.*" (The italics are ours.) But though in regard to illicit distillation Government admitted that there was practically no illicit distillation in Kolaba,—an admission, refuting in the most complete manner imaginable the assertion of Sir James Fergusson and Mr. Ashburner that the Bill of 1882 was necessitated by the wide prevalence of illicit distillation in Thana and Kolaba—in regard to the use of Mhowra flowers, Government recorded that the consumption of those flowers for lawful purposes was nil in the Kolaba district, and that "no

interests which deserved any respect are likely to be injured if Mhowra flowers were placed under restrictions." Armed with the Reports of these two Committees, the Bombay Government again approached the Government of India with a view to obtain the latter's consent in regard to the restriction of the traffic in Mhowra, so far as Thana and Kolaba at least were concerned. It should here be remembered that the Bombay Government now wanted to restrict the use of Mhowra in Kolaba, *even after the most distinct admission that ever could be made that there was practically no illicit distillation of Mhowra in that district!* It is no matter of surprise, therefore, that the benign Government of Lord Ripon still refused to have anything to do with the Bill, "deprecating," as Sir Charles Pritchard observed the other day in the Legislative Council, "resort to legislation except on the clearest evidence that an intolerable evil existed and that there are no other means of meeting it." For the time, thus, all hopes of Sir Charles Pritchard were dashed to the ground. Lord Ripon was succeeded in the Viceroyalty by Lord Dufferin, but, at the same time, fortunately for the people of Thana and Kolaba, Sir James Fergusson resigned the reins of the administration of this Presidency to Lord Reay. And the Abkari Department had to devise other ways to cope with the fancied evil!

Such, in brief, has been the history of the past efforts of the Bombay Government in the matter of restricting and controlling by legislation the free traffic in Mhowra flowers; and no one could have reasonably expected that after all this, the local Government would once more make an attempt to revive this twice-discredited measure. But the tenacity of purpose or rather the obstinacy of Sir Charles Pritchard is wonderful and he seems determined to make this parting gift to Thana and

Kolaba before he retires from the Bombay Council—a gift that would fittingly crown a series of measures which have made toddy so dear and so scarce and which have forced upon a toddy-consuming people the deleterious drink of Mhowra spirit. But although we thus think the new Mhowra Bill will, in all probability, be passed into law—at least will be passed by the local Legislature, we feel it to be our duty to examine here the grounds on which the justification of the present measure is based, as also the merits of the measure and its probable consequences. The Statement of Objects and Reasons published by Sir Charles Pritchard says that the present Bill has become necessary because “recently there has been a very serious increase of illicit distillation from Mhowra flowers in the Thana and Kolaba districts and the conclusion is forced upon Government that this cannot be effectively checked without bringing the collection, sale and possession of Mhowra flowers under control.” The statement gives the following assurance with a view to inspire, if possible, confidence in the public mind in regard to the working of the proposed measure:—“No interference with legitimate trade or the use of Mhowra flowers as medicine or condiment is contemplated. It is intended that licenses, permits and passes should be granted without payment of fees. It would be well, in order to understand the real nature and scope of the proposed Bill, to quote here also the central clause of the Bill, which runs as follows:—“The Governor-in-Council may, from time to time, by notification in the *Bombay Government Gazette* (a) make rules regulating or prohibiting the import into, the export from, and the collection, transport, carriage, transfer, sale and possession of Mhowra flowers within, the Districts of Thana and Kolaba, and the issue, with or without conditions, and the recall or cancellation of licenses, permits and passes in

respect there of, and (b) vary or rescind any rule so made: Provided that no rule under this section shall render any person liable to any punishment under this Act, in respect of any Mhowra flowers growing on any tree or lying on the ground under any tree from which they have fallen." It is provided that whoever is convicted of an offence under this Act shall be punished with fine which may extend to Rs. 500 or with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three months or with both.

Let us now first consider the alleged justification for the proposed Bill. It is alleged by Sir Charles Pritchard that *recently there has been a very serious increase* in the illicit distillation of liquor from Mhowra flowers. For obvious reasons, it is a matter of great difficulty to prove or disprove a statement of this kind, which, to a large extent, must remain a matter of individual observation and individual opinion. Yet it will be readily admitted even by Sir Charles Pritchard himself that when such a statement is advanced with a view to curtail the privileges which people have enjoyed from time immemorial, and to deprive a considerable portion of the very poorest classes of the free use of a valuable article, the public has a right to expect that something more than a mere assertion or belief is relied on by Government in justification of the contemplated repressive legislation. And judged from this point of view, the opening statement of Sir Charles, made on the 5th of April, must be pronounced to be very disappointing, for beyond a reference to the compilation of papers laid by him on the table of the Legislative Council, the Hon'ble gentleman adduced absolutely no proof in support of his statement. Now we have this compilation before us and really we are astonished that so clever a man as Sir Charles Pritchard thinks he has made

out a case for his repressive proposals when he has laid these papers on the table of the Legislative Council. About a third part of this compilation is taken up by correspondence and figures relating to the state of things prior to 1882 and this portion might well have been left out, because it has nothing whatever to do with the present Bill. Then follow figures relating to the offences of illicit distillation during the past ten years, the cost of preventive establishments, the conflicts between the offenders and the Abkari Police, the consumption of illicit liquor and the revenue realizations in the several districts of the Presidency. All these figures are, no doubt, very valuable, *but they are so, not because they in any way make out a case for the proposed repressive legislation, but because they do the very reverse, viz. they show conclusively, that whatever justification Government might have had three years ago for proposing a measure like the present Bill, they have no such justification now, as we shall show later on.* At the end of the compilation, there is a note drawn up by Mr. Lee-Warner on Criminal Statistics in the Thana and Kolaba Districts, which has very little to do with the practical question now before the Legislature. In our opinion, therefore, there is nothing in this compilation to justify the confident expectation of Sir Charles Pritchard that its perusal will make converts of those who are opposed to his Mhowra Bill. To make our meaning clear, we proceed to an examination of the figures on which Sir Charles seems to rely as making out a case of necessity for his proposals.

The question that we have to consider here is twofold. First, whether *recently* there has been an increase in the illicit distillation of liquor from Mhowra flowers, and secondly, whether this increase has been *very serious*. Sir James Fergusson, in 1882, laid down two tests to ascertain the extent of

illicit distillation in a given area,—the number of Abkari offences connected with illicit distillation detected and the fall-off in revenue realizations. These are very fair tests and to them we would add a third, viz, the quantity of liquor illicitly consumed. Judged by these three tests, the double contention of Sir Charles, viz, that there has *recently* been a *very serious increase* in the illicit distillation from Mhowra flowers in Thana and Kolaba will be found to be quite untenable. It should be stated here that whatever controversy there is in regard to the prevalence of illicit distillation concerns Thana alone and it is only the perversity of Sir Charles Pritchard that has coupled poor and unoffending Kolaba with it. *There has never been much illicit distillation in Kolaba and there is not much to-day.* In 1882, both Sir James Fergusson and Mr. Ashburner loudly complained that illicit distillation was rife in Kolaba and yet, as we have already stated, the Kolaba Committee, appointed by Government in 1883, could not but report as follows :—“ The increase in the cost to the consumer of licit spirit would not appear in Kolaba to have stimulated the illicit production of liquor. The native officials whose replies have been received to the exhaustive set of questions propounded by the Committee are almost unanimous in the opinion that formerly there was little illicit distillation in Kolaba and that now clandestine manufacture is, if carried on at all, conducted but rarely and on an altogether insignificant scale.” *Last year there were only 5 cases of illicit distillation detected in the whole district of Kolaba,* and Mr. Loch, the acting Abkari Commissioner, expresses satisfaction at this state of things. It is true that in 1888-89 and 1889-90, the numbers were abnormally high, being 93 and 94 respectively, against an average of about 16 in the previous years; but, as has been admitted by Sir Charles Pritchard

himself; this was solely due to the system experimentally tried by the Bombay Government during a part of 1887-88 and the whole of 1888-89, owing to which, while the restrictions on toddy were to some extent relaxed, the duty on distilled spirit was suddenly raised from Rs. 3 as. 8 to Rs. 4 as. 8, thus practically making its price prohibitive to many of those who were accustomed to its use. "It must be admitted," said Sir Charles the other day in the Legislative Council, "that the exciting cause of that access of illicit distillation (of Mhowra and to some extent of toddy) lay in changes made by the Government of the day in the system of excise management in the districts of Thana and Kolaba, which resulted in a large and sudden increase in the prices at which liquor was placed on sale in the licensed shops in those districts." The experimental system having now been abandoned, the district has, to use Mr. Loch's words, "recovered from the effects of the experiment tried in 1888-89," and no more, we think, ought to be said, especially by Government, about the abnormal figures of offences in those two years. It was impossible for Sir Charles Pritchard to ignore these facts entirely and he therefore felt it to be his duty to admit, on the occasion of the first reading, that "the apparent case for legislation is not as strong as regards the district of Kolaba as it is with respect to the district of Thana." Indeed the papers laid by Sir Charles Pritchard on the table show that so far at least as the number of offences connected with illicit distillation, is concerned, Nasik and Surat are a great deal worse than Kolaba, there being respectively 36 and 24 offences in those two districts against the 5 of Kolaba last year. And yet Government neither complains that illicit distillation is rife in Nasik and Surat, nor does it propose to deal with the evil by fresh legislation! All talk, therefore, of any wide

prevalence of illicit distillation in *Kolaba* is obviously absurd and it is a matter of painful astonishment that Sir Charles Pritchard should propose for this district a piece of legislation as uncalled for as it will prove oppressive, with a light heart, and this in spite of the snub twice administered to him by the Government of India!

To turn now to *Thana*, which requires a much more detailed consideration, we have the following figures of Abkari offences connected with illicit distillation detected during the last eleven years:—

1880-81	612
1881-82	767
1882-83	190
1883-84	} Information not available.
1884-85	
1885-86	
1886-87	234
1887-88	373
1888-89	606
1889-90	492
1890-91	403

It will be seen from these figures that the largest number of offences was detected in 1881-82 and the next largest in 1880-81 and yet, with these figures before it, the Government of India twice deprecated legislation of the kind now proposed. It is also interesting to note that when the Bombay Government became hopeless about getting the Viceroy's sanction to the first Mhowra Bill, they adopted other measures which reduced the number of offences to moderate dimensions and which thus proved fairly effective, in spite of the statement repeatedly made in 1882 and 1884 that there was no other way of coping with the evil than legislation! The Depart-

ment does not give statistics for the three years following 1882-83 and we may well assume that the numbers of offences in those years were not very serious, as, if they had been so, the Department would assuredly not have failed to make a great deal of noise about them. The figures continue to be moderate till the end of 1887-88 and then there is a sudden increase in the next year of over 60 per cent. This is no doubt a *very serious* increase and we think Sir Charles Pritchard must specially have had this year in his mind when he spoke of a very serious increase *recently* taking place; but if so, it is very unfair on the part of the Hon'ble gentleman to thus take advantage of the exceptional circumstances of that year—circumstances, again, which were entirely of Government's own making. In dealing with Kolaba, we have already quoted the very important admission made by Sir Charles Pritchard in the Legislative Council on this point. But the quotation may well bear a repetition. "It must be admitted," said Sir Charles, "that the exciting cause of that access of illicit distillation lay in changes made by the Government of the day in the system of Excise management in the districts of Thana and Kolaba, which resulted in a large and sudden increase in the prices at which liquor was placed on sale in the licensed shops in those districts." The changes experimentally introduced in that year were twofold. Prices of licit liquor were so far forced up that they became prohibitive to many who were before used to its use; and secondly the restrictions on toddy were to some extent relaxed. So that while the first offered the temptation to distill liquor illicitly, the second supplied, to some extent, the facilities. That this was so has been admitted by the Government of Bombay themselves. In the report of the experiment, supplied by

them to the Government of India, and published by the latter as an appendix to its despatch of 4th February 1890 to the Secretary of State on the Excise Administration of India, they write :—“ The inciting cause of the serious outbreak of illicit distillation that has now to be dealt with, lay in the departure made in 1887-88 from principles of Abkari management previously recognized and acted on. The retail prices of spirit were forced up to rates that consumers could not afford to pay by the competition for the farms which were sold under the new system,* introduced on the 1st of January 1888, to the persons who volunteered to pay the highest rates of still-head duty, while the restrictions that compelled farmers to retail within fixed maximum prices were placed in abeyance. At the same time, the rates of tree-tax in several of the principal toddy-producing talukas were lowered, and the restrictions that confined tree-tapping exclusively to persons who had provided themselves with a fixed and certain market for the licit disposal of the toddy they drew were relaxed. Before these changes were made, tapping licenses were issued only on the application of persons to whom licenses either to sell or to distil toddy had been granted and for the supply of specified shops or of specified distilleries. In 1888, these limitations on the grant of tapping licenses were removed, and tapping licenses were made issuable, without any limit as to number of trees, to all applicants and the only obligation with respect to the disposal of the toddy drawn placed on the tappers was one that bound them to sell it to some licensed shop-keeper or to some licensed distiller, within the limits of the Taluka or Mahal concerned.

* Under the system previously in force, the rates of still-head duty and the maximum retail selling prices were fixed by Government and the farms were then put up to public competition and sold to the persons who guaranteed payment of the highest minimum revenue.

Tapping licenses were also made issuable to approved applicants, who were privileged to sell toddy to the public at the tree-foot and to the toddy distillers; and further tapping licenses for a limited number of trees in each case were made issuable to tree-owners with the privilege of using the toddy they drew for domestic consumption,* and of selling it to licensed shop-keepers or licensed distillers. The provisions expressed in the tree-foot and domestic consumption licenses as to the disposal of toddy to licensed shop-keepers and distillers allowed such disposal of *surplus* toddy only; but as a surplus quantity is an indeterminate quantity, this provision in practice was altogether ineffective, and it was open to the tree-foot booth and domestic license tappers to sell as much or as little of their toddy as they pleased for the supply of licensed shops or licensed distilleries, and gave them an opening for selling toddy to persons who put it to illicit use." The Abkari Commissioner, in his special report on the experimental arrangements, thus writes:—"The temptation to use surplus toddy for illicit distillation must be very strong and it is the more dangerous for the reason that the process leaves no refuse and is so simple that it can be carried on in the distiller's house with his domestic utensils and all traces of it can be cleared away in a few minutes while the excise officers are kept waiting outside. It is thus most difficult to detect and suppress and most likely to spread where the practice once takes root." At the end of this report to the Government of India, the Bombay Government write as follows:—"The situation that has now to be faced is much more serious than that which existed in 1881-83. Illicit distillation was then confined to the inland talukas of the Thana District and Panvel and to Mhowra spirit. Now it has extended over the whole of the Thana Dis-

trict and part of Kolaba and *the illicit distillation of toddy as well as of Mhowra spirit is rife.*" We have thus on Government's own showing two things:—*First, the responsibility for the increase that took place in illicit distillation in 1888-89 lies entirely on the shoulders of Government, and secondly, much of the illicit distillation of that year was toddy distillation.* When these two facts are borne in mind, the figure for 1888-89, heavy as it is, ceases to have anything serious about it and cannot serve in any way as a justification for the proposed legislation. Further, it is unduly straining language to describe the increase indicated by the figure as *recent*, because the figures for the next two years are available and show a steady diminution and an unmistakable tendency to return to the moderate dimensions of previous years. The experimental arrangements being abolished at the end of 1888-89, the number of offences at once fell from 606 to 492, a decrease of about 20 per cent. There must have been considerable illicit distillation from toddy in 1889-90 also, for, as observed by the Government themselves, people were found in that year to hold large stocks of toddy from the previous year. In 1890-91, there was a further fall in the number of offences detected, the figure standing at 403 against 492 of the previous year,—a decline of over 17 per cent. In fact, there was a very near approach in 1890-91 to the state of things that prevailed before the introduction of the experimental changes in 1888, the figures being 408 for 1890-91 and 373 for 1887-88. It is impossible for Sir Charles Pritchard not to admit all this, especially as the Abkari Commissioner himself has expressed this view in his latest Report of the work of his department. In his Report for 1890-91, dated 4th December 1891, Mr. Loch thus writes:—"In Thana, vigorous efforts have been made for the last three years to keep down illicit

distillation and the number of cases of smuggling, illicit distillation and possession has been much greater than in any other district, 675 in 1888-89, 578 in 1889-90 and 458 in the year under report. *I do not think that there is any reason to doubt that the efforts made have been successful and that there is much less illicit distillation than there was.* (The italics are ours.)

Mr. Loch arrives at the same conclusion from an examination of the figures of licit consumption. In another part of his Report, he thus writes about both Thana and Kolaba :—“ When the increase of duty is taken into consideration, it may, I think, be assumed from the figures of consumption *that illicit distillation has been kept fairly in check and that the districts have recovered from the effects of the experiment tried in 1888-89.* (The italics are ours.)

Coming from the head of the Abkari department itself, these admissions are of the highest importance and in our opinion they completely destroy the case which Sir Charles Pritchard is labouring to make out. Thus a careful examination of the figures relating to offences of illicit distillation during the past eleven years leads us to the following conclusions:—

1. That compared with the figures for 1880-81 and 1881-82, the figures for ‘ recent ’ years show not merely no ‘ very serious ’ rise, but a very substantial fall-off, and that if a Bill based on the heavy figures of those two years was vetoed by the Government of India, *a fortiori* must that Government veto a measure based on the much lower figures of ‘ recent ’ years, even if the local Legislature were to pass it.

2. That the fact that when assent to the Bill of 1882 was withheld by the Government of India, the Bombay Government were able by other means to materially reduce the heavy figures of offences detected in 1880-81 and 1881-82 in

subsequent years, and keep them within moderate bounds, shows that legislation of the kind now proposed is not required for coping with the evil of illicit distillation, which again is now smaller in magnitude than what it was prior to 1882.

3. That the sudden increase that took place in the number of offences in 1883 was entirely due to the action of Government and that it is therefore unfair on the part of Government to take advantage of it to pass a piece of repressive legislation.

4. That the figure for 1888-889, considerably higher as it is than that for 1887-88, does not represent Mhowra distillation exclusively, but covers much illicit distillation of toddy also, and therefore it cannot be said that there was in that year a very serious increase in the illicit distillation of liquor from *Mhowra flowers*.

5. That it is unfair to describe the increase that took place in 1883 as *recent*, because statistics for later years are available and they show a material diminution in the number of offences.

6. That since the abolition of the experimental arrangements of 1888, the number of offences has been steadily and rapidly diminishing, eliciting expressions of satisfaction from the head of the Abkari department itself, and that in the course of a year or two, a return to the state of things which prevailed prior to 1888 might be legitimately looked for.

So far, therefore, as the number of offences are concerned, we may well say that Sir Charles Pritchard has no case. We shall now apply to the question the second of the two tests laid down by Sir James Fergusson in 1882, viz. the amount of revenue realizations. The compilation of papers laid by Sir Charles Pritchard on the table of the Legislative

Council gives the figures of revenue realizations only for the last six years ; and as it is unnecessary to go farther back, we confine ourselves here to a consideration of these only. The following are the figures of revenue realizations for Thana from 1885-86 onwards :—

Year.	Rs.
1885-86	8,14,756
1886-87	8,38,051
1887-88	7,39,114
1888-89	6,86,673
1889-90	8,28,337
1890-91	8,86,624

It should be remembered that in 1879-80, the Abkari revenue of Thana was only a little more than 6 lacs, and that in the course of seven years, it grew by leaps and bounds to over 8½ lacs. The growth was arrested in 1887-88 and there was a fall in that year of about a lac of rupees. In 1888-89 there was a further drop of about Rs. 50,000. In 1889-90, there was again an upward leap and the realizations were very nearly the same as those in 1886-87. Last year, there was a further improvement and a substantial improvement too, the figure being higher than that for the previous year by about Rs. 60,000. So far, therefore, as the recent revenue realizations of Thana go, the Bombay Government have no reason whatever to be dissatisfied. It is true that there was a fall-off in 1887-88 and 1888-89, but that was entirely due to the experiment tried by Government during five months of the former year and the whole of the latter year. Mr. Trevor has described the period during which the experimental arrangements were tried as financially 'disastrous.' With the abolition of the arrangements, the revenue not merely regained its old level but also resumed its

capacity to expand. No better proof of this could be required than the fact that the figure for 1890-91 is considerably higher than that for any of the previous years. So far, therefore, as revenue realizations go, no support is lent to the contention of Sir Charles Pritchard that *recently* there has been a very serious increase in the illicit distillation from Mhowra.

A consideration of the figures of licit consumption leads us to the same conclusion. The following are the figures of country liquor licitly consumed in Thana from 1885-86 onwards, converted to 25° w. p. ;—

Year.	Gallons.
1885-86	3,23,992
1886-87	3,27,708
1887-88	2,62,260
1888-89	1,40,446
1889-90	4,33,493
1890-91	4,07,681

In examining these figures, it should be borne in mind that *the Abkari Department has always tried to interpret a rise in licit consumption as an index of the diminution of illicit distillation.* And regarded in this light, the figures justify a conclusion diametrically opposed to the contention of Sir Charles Pritchard. As has already been observed, during part of 1887-88 and the whole of 1888-89 prices of licit liquor were so far forced up by the experiment tried by Government that a large number of people found themselves unable to purchase it. With the abolition of the experimental arrangements, there was a 'rush' to the liquor-shops and the figure of consumption went up at one bound from 1,40,446 gallons to 4,33,493 gallons, and during the last year, it very nearly maintained itself at that abnormally high

level. Thus if there is any complaint to be made about any "recent" and "serious" increase, it should be in regard to the quantity of liquor licitly consumed and not about that illicitly distilled!

Thus whichever test we apply, whether it be the number of offences, or the amount of revenue realizations or the quantity of liquor licitly consumed, we come to only one conclusion, viz. that whatever justification might have existed for the complaint about 'a very serious increase' taking place in illicit distillation three or four years ago, when Government were trying experimental changes in their Abkari policy, *no such justification now exists and the Bill at present before the local Legislature is absolutely uncalled for.* It must not be understood from this that we deny the very existence of illicit distillation itself. Undoubtedly the evil exists in Thana to some extent, but it is the absurdly exaggerated version of it that we repudiate. Already the Abkari Act of 1878 is extremely stringent in its provisions. Besides additional powers have been put into the hands of the Abkari Department by certain rules framed under Section 41 of the Forest Act, as amended in 1890. It has been admitted by Mr. Spence, Acting Abkari Commissioner in 1890, that "a good deal will be able to be effected under the Forest rules," and that they will enable the Abkari Department to effectively control the transit of Mhowra flowers. The Department, again, maintains in Thana large and costly preventive establishments, whose efforts are supplemented by those of the private establishments maintained by liquor farmers at their own cost for the detection of illicit distillation. We think these are sufficient safeguards against any appreciable prevalence of illicit distillation. Distilling liquor clandestinely from Mhowra flowers, without

running great risk of detection, is, again, no easy thing. In the first place, the people know the thing to be an offence and howsoever they may be given to it, they would instinctively try to avoid it as far as possible. Then the process of distillation is such that a reasonable degree of vigilance on the part of the Abkari Police ought to detect it without much difficulty. It is notorious that before liquor can be extracted from Mhowra flowers, they have to go through a process which makes them emit a stench "powerful enough," to use the words of the *Times of India*, "to awaken a slumbering Abkari peon a mile away and thus set in motion the existing law." Then, again, the private feuds and jealousies of villagers among themselves minimise the chances of successful illicit distillation. Finally, the very heavy fines which Courts inflict on those who are convicted of illicit distillation and which have, in some cases, brought ruin on whole families have already produced a deterrent effect and there is no reason to doubt that under normal circumstances illicit distillation will diminish day by day. Sir Charles Pritchard makes so much in his speech of the resistance offered to the Abkari Police in the discharge of their duty by the people. His own compilation, however, shows that even in this respect, the evil is not serious. The following table gives the number of cases in which violence was offered in Thana to the Abkari Police since 1885:—

Year.	No. of cases.	Convicted.	Discharged.
1885.	2	1	1
1886	4	3	1
1887	1	1	—
1888	3	2	1
1889	4	3	1
1890	1	1	..
1891.	1	1	..

If these figures show anything, they show that the evil complained of was never very great and that even that is at present on the decline. For one or two cases of resistance to Abkari authority in a year in a district, which claims a population of more than 800,000 persons, cannot surely be said to constitute a great or serious evil. Altogether then we contend that the extent of illicit distillation in Thana is absurdly magnified and that the existing law is quite sufficient to cope with the evil as it is.

We will now proceed to a consideration of the consequences that will result from the present measure passing into law. As has been already pointed out, the Bill empowers the Governor-in-Council to make, from time to time, rules "regulating or prohibiting the import into, the export from and the collection, transport, carriage, transfer, sale and possession of Mhowra flowers within the districts of Thana and Kolaba and the issue, with or without conditions, and the recall or cancellation of licenses, permits and passes in respect thereof," and to vary or rescind any rule so made. It will clearly be within the power of the Executive under this section to make it penal to possess even a handful of Mhowra flowers. It is true that Sir Charles Pritchard promises in his opening statement, on behalf of Government, to allow people to possess or transport without a permit any quantity of Mhowra flowers not exceeding four seers of 80 tolas each in weight and the Statement of Objects and Reasons also gives the undertaking that "no interference with legitimate trade or the use of Mhowra flowers as a medicine or condiment is contemplated," which means that some small quantity will, in all probability, be allowed to be held or transported without a license. But if the Bill passes into law as it is, the right

of Government to make the possession of even a handful of flowers penal, will be legally, though perhaps not morally, beyond dispute. It is clear that this will be a dangerous power in the hands of the Executive and may inflict great hardship and misery on poor people. A man, for instance, in a remote village, may suddenly require a few flowers for some medicinal purpose. If the Executive is disposed to exercise its full right, it will be impossible for the man to get them unless he takes the trouble of finding out the Mamlatdar of his Taluka or some Abkari Inspector, which may mean harassing delays and worry and expenditure. Mere verbal pledges, howsoever honestly given, are not to be relied on, because those who give them might find themselves unable to fulfil them and their successors might refuse to be bound by them. It is well-known that at the time of passing the Forest Act, Sir T. Hope promised in the most distinct manner possible that no interference with the private rights or privileges or conveniences of the people was contemplated and yet the pledge has been so completely violated that no one would believe to-day it ever was given. For the purposes of our present discussion, therefore, we must reject all promises which find no place in the Bill itself, and much confine ourselves to the four corners of the proposed enactment. In our opinion, the Legislature fails to discharge its function properly when it confers a wide and indefinite power, which could be seriously abused, on the Executive, and then expects the people to rely on the discretion of Government!

Another and a far more serious objection is that the Bill interferes with what is over a considerable area a subsidiary article of food both for men and cattle. The inquiries, privately instituted by the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha in this

matter, have elicited replies which leave no doubt in our mind on the point. Dealing with this question, the *Bombay Gazette* thus observes in its issue of the 7th April:—"In his Statistical Atlas of the Bombay Presidency, which was brought out five years after the Committee (of 1883) reported, Mr. Ozanne, while observing that the ripe and unripe fruit of the Mhowra are eaten, goes on to say that the most important product is the flower, which is eaten in all seasons, either raw or cooked, along with parched grain. Dr. Lisbon, to whom Mr. Ozanne refers, is more explicit in the same sense. From two hundred to four hundred pounds of these flowers, he says in the Botanical Volume of the *Bombay Gazetteer*, are sometimes collected from a single tree. The flowers are gathered early in the morning, dried in the sun and then sold as an article of food, being consumed either raw or cooked along with parched grain. Dr. Lisbon adds that during the famine of 1873-74 in Behar, they are said to have kept thousands of people from starvation." It is freely admitted by Government that Mhowra flowers are used as an article of food in the Guzerath, Khandesh and other parts of the country and yet it is persistently asserted that in Thana and Kolaba alone, they are not so used. What prevents the people of these two districts from using these flowers as the people in other parts of the country use them, Government does not trouble itself about. But even the grudging admissions of the Thana Committee of 1883 on the point are important. "Only a limited number of persons," the Committee recorded, "belonging to the wilder tribes, the aborigines, such as Warlis, one branch of Thakurs, Kathodis, and Dublas eat Mhowra flowers and that even they do not use them as a substitute for other food, but as an addition, mixing occasionally small quantities like raisins in their bread." The Committee took care to add that

the higher castes did not eat those flowers, but no one had ever contended that they did. The Committee also added that even the Kathodis, Warlis &c., consumed the flowers in very small quantities finding it more profitable to sell them than to eat them. But the relevancy of this remark might be questioned, for in what way the poor people find it most profitable to dispose of the flowers is a question which need not trouble us, after the admission is once made that they are used, to some extent at least, as food. We must not forget to mention that the Committee was constrained to admit that "Mhowra flowers are sometimes given as a part of their food to cattle," although Mr. Shepherd and his colleagues tried to minimise the importance of this admission by adding that the flowers were so costly that it was a very expensive thing to feed cattle on them ! Altogether, there is very fair evidence to show that the flowers are used as a subsidiary article of food by many poor people, and are also given to cattle ; and thus in passing the present Bill into law, Government will be inflicting very serious injury on a class of subjects who are always on the brink of starvation and whose life is one continuous struggle to keep body and soul together ! Already the resources of subsistence for these poor people are woefully few, and it is little short of heartless to cut away even one of them !

The Statement of Objects and Reasons says that no fees will be charged for licenses or permits, but it does not bind Government to grant licenses to all who may apply for them. Indeed with the object which Government profess to have in view, it is impossible that it should be otherwise. For a wholesale granting of licenses would defeat the very object for which Government wants to create the permit system viz., to fix without any trouble or difficulty the responsibility for

illicit distillation. The proposal, therefore, to charge no fees for licenses, permits or passes is devoid of any value, for an exceedingly small number of persons alone will be able to profit by it, if indeed they will. For even if no sum may have to be paid directly as fees, it is to be feared the applicants will practically have to incur considerable expenditure in gratifying the underlings of the Department, as owing to the extremely limited number of licenses to be granted, the competition for them will be exceedingly keen. But the large mass of poor people will find it impossible to secure the licenses, permits or passes they may require, and we fail to understand how Government can, with any show of reason, contend that this would entail no hardship on the people.

Lastly, the power which the Bill confers upon the Executive to control the export and possession of these flowers will make the traffic in them practically a monopoly under the control of Government. For since Government can, under this Bill, place any restrictions they please in regard to these matters, they will have the right not merely to name the person or persons to whom alone private owners should sell their flowers, but also indirectly to fix and control the price of the flowers. For the owners will have either to accept whatever price is offered them or to destroy their flowers entirely as their possession will render them liable to punishment. The natural adjustment of the price by the ratio between supply and demand will thus be interfered with and private owners put to a serious loss. It is an admitted fact that the value of Mhowra flowers as an article of export is daily rising and the trade in them promises, in the course of time, to be a flourishing one. Private owners have, therefore, a right to complain of this interference with Mhowra, as the proposed

measure will have the effect of unjustly confiscating a considerable portion of private property, the growers being prevented from finding their legitimate and natural market.

We trust we have now succeeded in showing how the alleged justification for Sir Charles Pritchard's Bill does not exist, and how the measure will prove oppressive in its operation. It is singularly fortunate that in this matter we have the powerful support of both the Anglo-Indian dailies of Bombay and surely this circumstance should yet give the Bombay Government pause. It is easy enough for Government departments to ignore the opinions of the native press but the voice of journals like the *Times of India* and the *Bombay Gazette* is far too potent to be similarly treated. We are very sorry that at this juncture, Mr. Javerilal Umiya Shankar Yajnik is not in the Legislative Council. The public will sorely miss on this occasion his shrewdness, his industry and his tenacity of purpose in the deliberations of that body. Most of the non-official members have already disappointed us greatly, and it remains to be seen if these gentlemen acquit themselves better on the occasion of the second reading. The Bill, we repeat, is absolutely unjustifiable in principle and will prove harassing and oppressive in its working. It is not wise statesmanship to punish for the sins of a few individuals entire classes of people, and yet this is exactly what the Government are at present proposing to do. Because a few individuals dishonestly distil liquor from Mhowra flowers, therefore Government propose to shut out all people—and these deeply sunk in poverty—from all legitimate uses of them! At this rate, we should not be surprised if Government on some future occasion propose to interfere with the unrestricted use of rice and dry dates, and sugarcane juice and such other articles on the ground that

from these substances too, liquor can be illicitly distilled ! It is impossible that Government can be ignorant of the true cause of illicit distillation. Mr. Mandlik, Sir Jamsheji, Mr. Macaulay and others told Sir James Fergusson and his colleagues in 1882 that it was the Abkari Department itself that was driving people to illicit distillation. Disinterested critics like Mr. Dantra and Mr. Wacha have repeated the statement on numerous occasions and have fairly demonstrated the correctness of their contention. Raw toddy, a perfectly innocuous drink and one which was generally used by the people in former days, has been made dear and scarce. And licit liquor is so heavily over-taxed that the temptation to satisfy the cravings of nature in an illicit manner is indeed great. The principle that should regulate Abkari taxation has been thus enunciated by the Government of India :—“Liquor should be taxed and consumption restricted, as far as it is possible to do so, *without imposing positive hardships upon the people and driving them to illicit manufacture.*” (The italics are ours.) The very complaint of the Bombay Government about the prevalence of illicit distillation in Thana and Kolaba thus proves that licit liquor in those districts is greatly over-taxed. The proper remedy, therefore, against illicit distillation is not an oppressive restriction of the free use of useful articles but a reduction of this high taxation. We earnestly hope Lord Harris will consider this aspect of the question seriously and without any bias. Sir Charles Pritchard thinks, or at any rate professes to think, that the passing of the present measure will enable Government to reduce the cost of preventive establishments. But a little reflection will show that this is an idle hope, for the machinery that is now required for the detection of illicit distillation will afterwards be required for the detection of the illicit possession, import, transport &c. of the flowers.

We appeal to the Government of Bombay in general and to Lord Harris personally to drop this Bill. It affects the interests of such of our brethren as are far too ignorant to understand its nature and scope and too poor to make their voice heard and for whom life has few comforts and fewer hopes. That the measure is intensely unpopular is now beyond all doubt. The entire native press has expressed its disapproval of it; the two Bombay dailies have denounced it in vigorous terms, and even the Government of India has in the past twice taken the unusual course of openly deprecating it. False notions of humiliation may prevent the Bombay Government from dropping the Bill now; but wise statesmanship and a genuine regard for the true interests of the people alike dictate the course which we have earnestly and respectfully asked Government to take.
