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BRITISH INDIA.

THE DUTY AND INTEREST OF GREAT BRITAIN, TO CONSIDER THE CONDITION
AND CLAIMS OF HER POSSESSIONS IN THE EAST.

Addresses,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS,

AT THEIR YEARLY MEETING,

DEVONSHIRE HOUSE, BISHOPSGATE STREET,

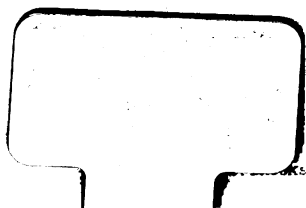
On the 1st of June, 1839.

PRINTED BY JOHNSTON AND BARRETT, MARK LANE,

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CLARK AND BALDWIN, 13, MOORGATE STREET.

MDCCCXXXIX.



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BRITISH INDIA.

ON Saturday afternoon, June 1st, 1839, a meeting of the Society of Friends took place in their Meeting-House, Devonshire-house, Bishopsgate-street, to consider the present state of the Natives of British India. In addition to a numerous assemblage of that esteemed and influential Body from all parts of the United Kingdom (it being the season for holding what is termed their "Yearly Meeting,") there was a considerable number of highly respectable persons of other denominations, among whom we noticed Sir Augustus D'Este, Bart. ; Sir Culling Eardley Smith, Bart. ; Major-General Briggs ; Colonel Nichols, late Governor of Fernando Po ; John Crawford, Esq., late Governor of Sincapore ; F. C. Brown, Esq., of Tellicherry ; John Bowring, Esq., LL.D. ; Vesey Leslie Foster, Esq. ; William Howitt, Esq. ; the Rev. John Arundel, the Rev. Mr. Pine ; J. H. Tredgold, Esq. ; &c. &c.

THOMAS FRANKLAND, Esq., of Liverpool, said he had been requested to explain the objects of the present meeting ; and, as they had the company of their well-known friend George Thompson, who was prepared with details fully sufficient to occupy the attention of the meeting, it would be only necessary for him to make a very few observations. The meeting had been called for the purpose of giving the public some information with respect to the formation of a Society, for bettering the condition of their fellow-subjects, the Natives of British India. He believed he might state, that the Society had been formed in consequence of the oppressions and sufferings of their fellow-subjects in the East. They were all aware of the extent of the British Indian empire—that it contained a population of more than one hundred millions—and the Society was prepared with authentic information from various sources, to prove

that a great proportion of that vast population was labouring under severe sufferings and great oppression.

It was well known that a succession of Famines had afflicted India for many years, and that the Famines of later years were not traceable to war, or any of those causes which would lead them to believe them unavoidable, or as having been inflicted by the Divine hand. On the contrary, they had every reason to apprehend that some of these lamentable visitations of Famine, might be traced to the nature of the government which prevailed in India, and the oppressive system of taxation under which the Natives groaned; so that in the midst of fertility, and in a land of plenty, they were starving. It was a well attested fact, that in the Famine of 1837-8, not less than 500,000 individuals perished.—(Hear.) He thought the Society had strong grounds for claiming the assistance of the religious community to which he belonged. They had long been engaged in endeavouring to put an end to Slavery in the British Colonies, and through the blessing of Providence, that object had been to a considerable degree attained. He well remembered some years ago, that their friend James Cropper, one of the warmest friends of the cause, strongly contended for the necessity of efforts to better the condition of the Natives of India, and to enable them to supply England with the produce of that Country. That position, all of them must be convinced was correct; and if they only exerted themselves so as to procure the articles they required, whether of luxury or necessity, from the produce of *free*, instead of slave labour, the object would be attained.

In America, there was little hope that the system of slave labour would be put an end to; while, on the other hand, India was prepared to supply them, under a better system of management, with all that America at present furnished them. He had great pleasure in stating, that the objects of the Society were intended to be conducted by moral and religious means alone—that those who had formed themselves into a Provisional Committee were earnestly desirous this should be the case; and their Prospectus stated, that the Committee prefer to make their appeal to the “just principles and Christian feelings of the country.”

There could, therefore, be no objection to any part of the plan, or to their uniting with the Society. He would not detain the meeting longer. He believed the evidence to be brought forward was such as might be relied upon ; and they had a strong proof of that fact, in the presence, at their meeting, of Major-General Briggs, who had, for many years, been Governor of a large district of that Country, who had resided in India thirty-two years, and who was the author of a very able work on the Land-tax of India. However little they might unite with him in that, which was one of the objects of his life and profession, they would all rejoice that he had a heart to feel for the sufferings of that people, and that he could enter into plans for their amelioration promoted by moral and religious means. They had also, present, Francis Brown, a gentleman from India, who had made a voyage to this Country, to call the attention of the people of England to the momentous subject. He was a landed proprietor and Magistrate of that Country. They had also, Dr. Bowring, who was well known to them. He would now call upon his friend George Thompson to address the meeting.

Mr. G. THOMPSON then came forward and addressed the meeting as follows: After what has been so kindly and ably stated, in the way of introductory matter by the gentleman who has just resumed his seat, I feel confident, there can be no doubt on the mind of any individual present respecting the importance of the subject we are met to consider. I believe, too, that no question will be raised touching our right to converse, inquire and communicate, on matters respecting the welfare of a hundred millions of the human race, who have been brought into political affinity with us. The doubt which I anticipate, concerns the *means* we possess of turning our discussions and inquiries to profitable account—a doubt respecting our *ability* to do good—not the necessity or duty laid upon us to perform the act, if it can be shown to be possible. There may be yet another question, viz.—Is not the discussion of the present topic calculated to lessen the effect of our efforts in a Cause, to which we stand religiously pledged ; and would it not be unwise to *divide* those energies which are found quite small enough, when *united*, to effect any considerable good?

These impressions, should they prevail to any extent, I hope to remove by a plain statement of incontrovertible facts, and to produce the conviction, and to fortify that conviction by evidence, that the Causes are *one*, and that the surest, simplest, and safest way of advancing that object to which you are already, and have been so long devoted, is to espouse and support the object I am permitted to lay before you.

OBJECTS OF THE BRITISH INDIA SOCIETY.

I appear in your midst to-day as the representative of a Committee, who seek no higher title, by their association, than the title of—"The friends of man." The good of man is their object, "good will to man" the bond which unites them, and truth and reason the only weapons with which they carry on their warfare. Those whose welfare the Committee immediately seek, are *British subjects*—they are a hundred million in number—they are Hindoos, Mahomedans, Pagans, and some, at least, of them, Christians; resident in a far distant land, which for half a century has been subject to our sway, and whose destinies depend, under Providence, upon the laws, institutions, and measures conferred or inflicted upon them by this Country. They are at present governed by a Company with certain specified, limited, and chartered rights; they are, nevertheless, within the reach of popular sympathy and popular legislation; inasmuch, as there is in the British Parliament, a constantly existing right and power to make laws for that people and Country, as though no Act had ever been passed. The people I refer to, are the long neglected Natives of British India.

CONNEXION WITH THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY AND THE SLAVE-TRADE.

I said the welfare of the Natives of India was the immediate object of the Committee I represent; but you will rejoice to learn, that that object is intimately and inseparably united with another, dear to us all, I mean the good of the injured sons and daughters of Africa; who, either on their parent soil, or in strange lands, are made, by hundreds of thousands, and millions, the victims of the

“oppressor’s wrong,” and all the ills which the Slave-trade, and its parent Slavery, engender and perpetuate. How stands the question? There are in North and South America, and on the Islands of the Gulph of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea, *from five to six millions of Slaves*. To supply the States where the foreign Slave-trade has not been abolished, a traffic between them and the shores of Africa is carried on, which occasions a loss to that country, by sickness, hunger, madness, despair, butchery, and slavery, of from 300,000 to 400,000 per annum. It is put beyond doubt by the calculations in Mr. Buxton’s book, that during every revolution of the earth upon its axis, a thousand human beings are offered in sacrifice, living or dead, upon the reeking shrine of the insatiate Moloch of Modern Slavery. To what fate are those who are wretched enough to survive the village war, the desert march, the middle passage, and the period of seasoning, consigned? To the drudgery of the rice plains of the Carolinas—to the wasting toil of the sugar plantations of Cuba, and Louisiana, and the Brazils—to the “never ending, still beginning” labour of the cotton fields of Alabama, Mississippi, and the Texas—or to the milder, but still forced and uncompensated service of the tobacco planter and Slave-breeder of Virginia and Maryland. To what markets are the fruits of the earth, thus watered with the tears and fanned with sighs of the captive, carried? Ask the merchant of Liverpool. Ask the manufacturer of Manchester. Ask the thoughtless civilized smoker of the pleasant cigar. Ask the fair wearer of the fine-spun Cottons of our Country. Ask the frugal housewife, who prepares the dish of rice for her household, or her guests. These are the buyers, the rewarders, the upholders of Slavery. Nay, more, many of those whom I first named, are at this moment the reluctant tributaries and impatient vassals of the slave-holder, dragged at the wheels of the monster’s car—a monster they have themselves fed, and harnessed, and employed. But is it necessary that every vein of Africa should bleed, that America and Europe may cultivate and consume the articles I have named? Will the Cotton-tree flourish only where Republican tyrants have

carried it, and compelled the negro in chains to plant and rear it? Must the Sugar-cane cease to grow, or its crushed sweets be procured at the expense of the crushed hearts of those, who send it to our tables? Friends of humanity! lovers of justice! patrons of peaceful, bloodless, and anti-slavery Commerce! look to the *home* of the Cotton-tree, to the *birth-place* of the Sugar-cane! Turn your eyes away from the desolated shores of Africa, and “the habitations of cruelty” in the West, from which the hopeless slave looks out upon the billows of the Atlantic, and fix them upon the broad plains of India, whose fertile soil and willing sons, wait to give you, in more than abundance, the luscious juices, and nutritious grains, and fragrant berries, which, for now two centuries and more, have been reared amidst the thunders of a violated law, and stained with the blood of the helpless and the innocent. Do justice to India, and banish the demon of intestine war from Africa! Do justice to India, and drive the miscreant man-thief from the banks of the Niger and the Gambia! Do justice to India, and see the fetter fall from the limbs of the slave! Do justice to India, and see your wharves covered, and your warehouses filled, and your looms made busy, and your population clothed with the produce of the East, with the fruits of the industry of the conquered and countless millions, who cry from the banks of the Ganges, and the Brahmapootra, and the Indus—“If you would redeem Africa, you must regenerate India!”

Let it not be inferred from these remarks, that I underrate either the duty or the importance of employing those means, by which we bring a purely moral influence to bear upon the slave-holding and slave-trading nations of the world. Did I entertain a sentiment unfavourable to these, it would belie all that I have said and done during the last eight years of my life—sayings and doings which are known to you all. But, in proportion as I insist upon the right and duty of a moral interference with the slave systems of the world, I am bound to recommend and pursue those measures which are strictly national and soundly politic, and easy and inexpensive in operation, which have a direct and certain tendency to effect the object to which those other means refer. We have a

vineyard of our own, fertile beyond description. In that vineyard are thousands and tens of thousands, "standing all the day idle, because no man hath hired them." I believe the annals of the world furnish not an instance of greater folly and infatuation than that which this Country has for a century presented in this matter. The *East* has been neglected. The splendid and fertile regions from which sugar, and rice, and cotton might have been obtained, to clothe and feed, not the inhabitants of this Country merely, but of the Globe, have been shunned; the bright chambers of the East have been forsaken for the slave-cursed territory of the West. The land where the luxuries we sought are indigenous, and often grow wild, has been suffered to remain an uncultivated jungle. Our own fair and bountiful vineyard, has, I say, been forgotten by some, despised by others, and mismanaged by all. Yet it still possesses exhaustless capacity. It may become like a watered garden. Its "old waste places" may be re-built; "the foundations of many generations may be raised up;" and it may prove not only a source of riches to its occupiers, proprietors, and cultivators, but its produce may be made to supersede and displace whatever is now produced by the labour of the unpaid slave. While we preach freedom to other nations—while we sign treaties with Portugal, send envoys to America, and ambassadors to France, shall we be justified in neglecting this region? Shall we be free from the charge of inconsistency, if we prove ourselves indifferent to one of the most legitimate and potential means of ridding the world of Slavery, a means which cannot fail to suggest itself to every one who takes a careful and comprehensive view of the subject?

INDIA AN UNKNOWN COUNTRY.

But, I return to speak of the immediate object of the British India Committee. That object is the bettering of the condition of our fellow-subjects—the Natives of British India. I speak liable to correction. I am happy, for your sakes and my own, to know that there are here present, men who are thoroughly conversant with Indian affairs—men to whom the Oriental world

is known—men whose best years have been spent in India—who have trodden its plains—have lived in its villages—have mingled with its sons—have carefully studied its institutions—have surveyed its stupendous and unrivalled monuments of industry and genius. Men who have lived in India, not to oppress its Natives and purloin its riches, but to diffuse justice—to restore peace—to propagate the maxims of truth and wisdom; who, after they have served India, *in* India, have returned to their native land with a zeal unabated, to advance the welfare of India, by arousing the attention of their fellow-citizens to a sense of their responsibility, to devote their political and moral energies to the good of that great empire. These gentlemen will be able to correct my errors, should I fall into any. I am their humble and unlettered mouth-piece, and I ask them to watch my statements, and not only to confirm what is true, but to contradict what is inaccurate.

India is an unknown Country. Long as we have traded with that Country—many as have been the wars we have waged, and the victories we have won upon its soil—vast as has been the wealth we have derived from it—and numerous as have been the sons of Britain, who from year to year have gone forth and returned from it, it is to this hour, to the mass of the people of Great Britain, a sealed, an unknown Country. I speak of the genius of its inhabitants. I speak of its Institutions. I speak of its resources, its wants, and its claims. I speak of its learning and its Literature. I speak of it as a field for agricultural and commercial enterprise. I speak of it as a region for the exercise of Christian benevolence. I speak of it as a resting place for the lever, by which modern Asia is to be raised to more than ancient majesty and glory.

Considered in all these aspects, I hesitate not to repeat the words I have already uttered—"India is an unknown Country." Now, the British India Committee deem their first duty to be, that of diffusing information respecting this Country—its people, its government, its laws, its institutions, its necessities; ever bearing in mind the great end for which this information is sought, obtained, and diffused—the good of the Natives of British India.

They will seek to draw the veil that has been suffered hitherto to shroud the mingled misery and splendour of this land of wonders. They fear not the result. While there will be scenes of inconceivable wretchedness to attract the pitiful compassion of the philanthropist, there will be enough to fan the patriotism, and kindle the zeal of the lover of his Country, and the friend of commerce. Nor will the Scholar and the Christian lack incentives to effort and research. The former, if he has ever cherished a "feeling of contempt for the fancied bombast and nothingness of Eastern lore," will find that feeling give place to wonder, at its unadorned simplicity, and ponderous substantiality. He will find that he who treads the soil of India, approaches the birth-place of all that has embellished the Western world in science and philosophy. The Christian will find spread out before him, in immeasurable amplitude, a field for pious and prayerful exertion—"a field distinguished by features peculiar to itself, at once claiming his profoundest sympathy for the millions of his race, who are sunk in the grossest ignorance and superstition; and exciting his astonishment at the ruins of wealth and intellectual grandeur that everywhere present themselves." With these before him, while he is melted to sorrow by the proofs of a wide-spread apostacy and spiritual rebellion, he will be animated by the hope and faith of the Gospel, which teach him to look for a day, when, under judicious culture, the seeds of truth shall spring up, and cause the moral waste to bloom and blossom as the rose.

EXTENT AND PECULIARITIES OF OUR EASTERN EMPIRE.

But let me hasten to furnish some facts illustrative of the truth of what I have already said. I do not venture to hope that I can make use of a-tithe of the proofs with which I have prepared myself for this discussion. I do hope, however, to be able to lead your minds to inquiry; and, if I succeed—if I beget a desire to learn the history and real state of India—I shall be richly rewarded. You will soon find that you have entered upon a subject replete with all that can expand the imagination and affect the

heart, or call forth the efforts of the Philanthropist and the Christian. Take a glance at your Eastern empire. You are masters of a country stretching from the base of the Himalaya mountains to Cape Comorin, and from the sacred waters of the Ganges to the banks of the Indus. You are rulers of no fewer than one hundred millions of the human race, besides having fifty millions more your tributaries. An empire as large as Europe, exclusive of Russia. Behold its diversity. It is divided into almost innumerable States. It embraces various climates, languages, religions, and distinct tribes. And here let me say, that nothing is more necessary than to discriminate between one portion of India and another—between one Presidency and another, and between one State and another—else the most gross and serious errors may be committed. That which is true of Bengal, is inapplicable to Madras, and *vice versa*.

It is impossible, however, in an address like the present, to go into all the distinguishing peculiarities; the most that can be done, is to state distinctly to what part of the Country that which is said applies. Of the ancient history of India, I can say nothing. From the time of Alexander the Great, down to the consolidation of peace, under the East India Company's rule, we are made acquainted with a succession of invasions and conquests, causing an almost incredible loss of life, and leading to scenes of rapine and plunder, of the most revolting character. In 1599, a few London merchants obtained a Charter to trade between this Country and the East; and after establishing themselves at Madras, and multiplying their factories in other parts of India, they proceeded to the acquisition of territory, which they continued to increase, by craft and conquest, until they rose from merchants and ship-owners, to be the directors of armies and the sovereigns of a vast Empire. It is not my intention to trace the growth of British power. I shall quit that topic, and claim your attention to the capacity and products of the soil of India.

The peninsula of India possesses extraordinary fertility, yielding in many parts, not one crop only per year, but two, three, and sometimes four. Little pains is needed to produce from so

bountiful a soil, a richly remunerating harvest. Among the almost innumerable articles which can be produced, I may name, cotton-wool, coffee, sugar, rice, gums, indigo, spices, ebony and other woods, oils, cinnamon, musk, muslins, bandannas, ginger, senna, cochineal, tea, linseed, pimento, aloes, cocculus indicus, steel, gold, pearls and diamonds. I shall say one word respecting the skill of its inhabitants. Before our trade with India began, the workmanship of the natives in steel, and ivory, and gold, and muslins, was the glory and boast of the Eastern world. What, in modern times, can compare with the muslins of Dacca, spun by the fingers of the Hindoo females, and woven in their own looms? They could also point to their chemists, their architects, and their astronomers. In a word, it will be found that we have not to deal with untaught barbarians, but with a people, to a great extent civilized, polished and prepared. Why, then, do we neglect India? We have an uninterrupted highway upon the ocean; we have vessels, and mariners, and captains; we have weathered the Cape for two hundred and fifty years. We know how to coerce, and conquer, and spoil the people of India. How is it we have not yet discovered the way of turning the immense resources of India to their proper use? Why do we not make India the means of enriching this Country, and saving the Western world from the curse and dishonour of Slavery?

INSTITUTIONS OF INDIA.

I might speak of the admirable Institutions of India. We hear much in the present day of municipal reforms at home, and of giving English institutions to India; but I believe it will be found, that before we knew anything of Corporations in this country, India had Corporations as enlightened and liberal, and far more economical, than we have ever had, reformed or unreformed. The machinery of these is so perfect, that whatever you want to do in the way of revenue, police, or agriculture, or whatever you may want to do in the way of education, you may do through their native institutions, their native wisdom, their native teachers, and their native languages. To attempt to Anglicise India, to

attempt to colonize India, or to destroy her institutions, or to give her those which are of mushroom growth in Europe, for those which are older than our history in India, is to attempt to carry light to the sun, to perfume the rose, or to bleach the lily. They have had them long—they have them still ; but broken down and dilapidated by the hand of the modern Goth ; and if you will let them raise them up again, you may, through them, bestow on the Natives, the greatest blessings, without endeavouring to palm upon them institutions which are scarcely tried in this country. You have not to civilize the Natives of India—they are ready to your hand—they are ready to discuss metaphysics, religion, and philosophy with you, and if you would give them the argument of a paternal government, of a pure, consistent, and holy life, you might first find the way to their hearts, and through that inlet, you might proceed to conquer their intellect, their prejudices, and their superstitions,—till

“ Brahmah, from his guilty greatness hurled,
With Mecca's Lord—Messiah ruled the world.”

If you want to know more of the progress of civilization in India, I would recommend to your attention the delightful work of Bishop Heber, who has beautifully described the state of things he witnessed when in India.

THE BRITISH IN INDIA.

I come now to speak more particularly of the system planted in India by this Country. When the English got there, there went out a decree, not from Cæsar Augustus, but from another Power, that all India should be taxed. The Hindoos knew how to tax, and took a sixth—the Mahomedans knew better, and took a fourth—the English knew best, and took all, and would have taken more than all, but they knew not how. That is to say, they demanded more than the land would yield, more than the grain, put into Sicca rupees, would pay ; and the consequence has been, that individuals, and villages, and districts, have been getting deeper and deeper into debt. They are now the victims of the Collector, and they may be put into the

stocks, or driven from the soil as unworthy tenants of the land on which they were born. In 1793, an alteration was made in the revenue system of Bengal, by the Marquis Cornwallis, who, with the best intentions, gave to the lower provinces a Permanent Settlement, or fixed in perpetuity the amount of tax the land should pay—annihilated the ancient proprietors of the soil, and conferred the right on a class of men called Zemindars. These became answerable to the Government for the payment annually of a certain amount—they knew what they had to pay, and that all they could obtain beyond it was their own; but while a limit was put to the claims of the Government on the Zemindars, no limit was put to the claims of these newly made proprietors upon those beneath them. With all these faults however the system has worked beneficially. It did injustice to the ancient proprietors—it overlooked and trampled on the institutions of the country—yet, still with all its faults, and they were many and great, it has done good, and Bengal is now the most fruitful, happy, and contented portion of British India. In another part of British India, another system was adopted—a system of annual surveys and settlements in money. All the landowners were swept off, and the Government determined to be the sole landlord. Respecting this system I shall say more hereafter.

FAMINES.

Let me now refer to the subject of Famines. Famines have, from age to age, prevailed in India; under the Mahomedans more than under the Hindoo Governments, because the former took a larger portion of the produce; but the British have claimed still more, and the consequences, therefore, have been still more dreadful. Their legislation has been by no means so benign, their practical morality not so strict, as that of the Mahomedans: they have taken seven-eighths, nine-tenths, or all, and Famines have become general. Of course, the original cause of Famine is drought, and then, through the poverty of the people—the absence of roads, thus cutting off communication between one district and another—and the allowing to go out

of repair the artificial means of irrigation—there is a dearth; the people have not the means to buy rice for a month, although they can live on three farthings a day, and they die of starvation!

In 1764-66, a Famine raged on the coast of Coromandel. In 1770-71, a Famine raged in Bengal, which swept off, under the administration of Lord Clive, 3,000,000 of the inhabitants! And it has been put on record by a writer, now among us, that at that time, there was no deficiency of grain; that the Bengal store-houses were full to repletion; but that the *cause* of the calamity was, the poverty of the people, and the avarice of the holders of the grain. In 1782-3, another Famine raged on the Coromandel coast. In 1792-3, another Famine raged there. In 1803-4, a Famine raged in Bombay and the Deccan.

Now I grant that, during these Famines, wars were prevalent, and wars have always more or less disturbed, suspended, or destroyed the agricultural pursuits of the country in which they prevailed; but since 1818, there has been no war in any part of British India—there has been general, undisturbed, and perfect peace; but have Famines been averted? No. In 1820-21, there was a Famine in the southern part of the Deccan—in 1823-24, Famine raged in the Deccan from Kandiesh to Mysore—in 1832-3, in Bombay and the Deccan—in 1833-4, there was Famine in the Madras territory—in 1835-6, there was Famine in Orissa and on the Coromandel coast—in 1837-8, there was Famine in the Agra Presidency, a very brief but authentic account of which, you will find in the papers that have been distributed.

Last year, the national sympathy was roused and properly directed; and we succeeded in obtaining, if not from the Imperial Legislature of this land, at least, from the fears of the Colonial Assemblies, the emancipation of the negro; but while we were struggling for their emancipation, almost as many human beings as there were apprentices in the British colonies, died of hunger—they died in the garden and granary of the world, under the sway of Queen Victoria, on British territory, where a man can be sustained for thirty days for two shillings! They died in a land, which yields not a bad or niggard crop, or scantily, as in the glens

and on the hills of Scotland, where the people, however, die not of Famine; but they died in a land, where, although the earth is furrowed with a wooden plough, and the seed scattered with a careless hand, yet yields not one, but three crops a year. In this land, 500,000 persons died in the neighbourhood of Agra! How many died in the distant jungle, no one can tell! Mothers deserted and destroyed their children, leaving them on the highways, or throwing them at night into the Jumna. The vulture and the jackal fastened on the fainting prostrate wretch before life was gone; the courses of small rivers were impeded by the masses of bodies thrown into their channels, by those employed to clear the highways; and European residents were compelled to abandon their evening drive, from the impossibility of encountering the effluvia, arising from the putrid corpses around.

The total number of those who died cannot be told, unless it were possible to collect their skeletons, or gather up their dust. But this we know, from authentic information, that 500,000 died in the vicinity of the Agra Presidency. Should not this one solitary fact, taken out of the catalogue of calamities now before me, awaken your sympathy. If the slavery of thousands called forth your noblest energies, ought not the death of 500,000 men, called free, in a few months, of disease, and cholera, and hydrophobia, produced by Famine, to beget a lively and active compassion, and a determination to look into the *causes* of these horrid events, and if it be possible, to apply a remedy.

There is a Famine still raging in India. During the latter end of last year, and during the present year, Famines have appeared in the Bombay Presidency and on the Coromandel coast. I think I may say, that, excepting the settled provinces of Bengal, and some few others, Famines are prevalent all over British India; and bear in mind the character of the Country—the few and simple wants of the people—the cheapness of provisions—and that it is *British* India! British India, that has poured into the lap of England a thousand millions of pounds sterling! British India—"the brightest gem"—as an orator once called it—"in the Crown of England's Queen." Yet in that Country,

there died of British subjects—peaceable—loyal—and would have been attached subjects—during last year, no fewer than half a million !

GROWING DISAFFECTION OF THE NATIVES.

I come now to speak of the state of mind of the People. No people might be more easily governed than the Hindoos. The fact of our now being the masters of India, despite of the machinations of Russia and our own misgovernment, is proof to demonstration, that had we been ordinarily kind, the people would not only have obeyed us, but they would have done more, they would have done that without which obedience is worthless—they would have loved us. But I can show that something more than apathy exists—I will not say treason, but I will say discontent and disgust. I have a number of authorities here, but I shall trouble you with very few. I have a work before me, published in Calcutta, and laid before the government of Bengal, by William Adam, Esq., a most cautious writer and acute observer ; and he, speaking of the lower provinces of Bengal, closes his *official* report on the State of Native Education, in the following words :

“ The utmost that can be said of native society in general, even in its most favourable aspect, is, that there is no hostility, but in place of it a cold, dead, apathetic indifference, *which would lead the people to change masters to-morrow, without a struggle and without a sigh.*”

What is the testimony, on this subject, of *A Servant of the Company*, in the Asiatic Journal for August last ?—

“ It may be doubted, if, at any time since we first occupied territory in India, such *deep* and *dangerous* disaffection has prevailed as exists at present. Our unsparing taxation, our long continued and augmenting exhaustion of the resources of the country, our resumption of rent-free lands, our schemes of conversion, &c. &c. have spread and are spreading, *throughout India*, universal alarm and discontent. We shall soon be entangled in a plentiful crop of domestic embarrassments, sown by our own blindness and faithlessness. This is the language of five out.

of six of the Company's servants who have recently returned from India; it is derived by authentic information from the natives themselves, of the sentiments which they entertain: it is the language of all who are capable of connecting causes and consequences."

Hear the words of the late acting Governor General of India, *Sir Charles Metcalfe*:—"Such is the *insécurité* of our tenure of India, that I should not be the least surprised to *awake some morning and find the whole thing blown up!*" These rude unvarnished expressions are fearfully significant, and indicate a most portentous state of things. In addition to these witnesses to the threatening aspect of Indian affairs, I will bring before you one, who "though dead yet speaketh," in the works he has left behind: I mean the *Hon. Frederick John Shore*, the enlightened and laborious friend of India. I would earnestly recommend to attentive perusal, his two volumes of Notes on Indian affairs, from which I now quote:—"Why, [he asks,] should the Natives of India be grateful? Why attached? What have they to be grateful for? Placed by the chances of war, or negociations in which they had no share, under our authority, they have been ruled by a system whose *primary principle was self-interest and exaltation*. They have witnessed, year by year, the gradual decay of their power, their dignity, and their wealth; the ruin of their Princes and Governors, and the daily increasing poverty of the whole people, *caused by the rapacity and mismanagement of their Governors*. They have suffered by being excluded from every office, which it was possible to bestow upon an Englishman; they have seen the abolition of almost every hereditary institution by which the affairs of the country were formerly administered; and have been *mocked by a harassing and vexatious system miscalled justice*, infinitely more expensive and less efficient than their own, under which oppression and injustice have pervaded the land. This is, in a few words, a summary of their obligations to the British Government. Nor have they fared much better in the treatment they have received from the English as individuals."—Vol. i. p. 146.

Again,—“Notwithstanding the eloquent declamation so often pronounced in favour of the British India Government, and against the ‘*Tyrannical Barbarians*’ whom we have supplanted, *the truth is forced on us, that we have not gained any superior favour, but are regarded by them with the strongest feelings of aversion, and that they would hail with joy the first opportunity of emancipating themselves from our yoke, so bitterly do they feel our oppression and injustice.*”—Vol. ii. p. 136.

Again,—“WE ARE ABHORRED BY THE PEOPLE, WHO WOULD HAIL WITH JOY, AND INSTANTLY JOIN, THE STANDARD OF ANY POWER WHOM THEY THOUGHT STRONG ENOUGH TO OCCASION OUR DOWNFALL.”—Vol. ii. p. 521.

The conclusion at which he arrives is, that “The remedy must be forced upon them (the Government) by an appeal to the honest feelings and generous sympathies of the people of England—if, indeed, *it is possible* to rouse them on the subject of *India*, and her interests; and from the enthusiasm now excited at home for the *religious* state of India (a feeling which, though I hail with delight, I would fain see guarded with the greatest circumspection and the soundest judgment), we may hope, that if a like powerful appeal were made for her *political* improvement, there would not be wanting many a manly breast to give it echo, and many an eloquent tongue to plead her cause.”

All things in India appear to be in a declining state. Public works, manufactures, credit, wages, inland customs, revenue from the land, and, last and worst of all, the attachment of the people. The seeds we have sown are bearing fruit; poverty, misery, discontent, and disaffection. We might have ruled the hearts of a hundred million of people—their loyalty and devotion to our paternal sway could have rendered us invincible; but we have abused our opportunity. Already the natives are beginning to speak out their grievances. Already they are asking, “What need have we to care, whether the English, French, or Russians rule over us?” At a late meeting of five thousand of the natives of India of all classes, held in the Town Hall, Calcutta, to resist the Resumption on the part of the Government of rent-free lands; an influ-

entia and wealthy native, in the course of his speech, exclaimed,—
 “ We talk of the tyranny of the Mahomedan Government ! but what are the English doing ? they are taking away from us all that the benevolence of the Mahomedans had given us. The just, the liberal, the enlightened English, are depriving us of all that a tyrannical, bigotted, semi-barbarous Government has bestowed. Is this the boasted justice and liberality of our rulers ? ”

This is an extract from a speech delivered by DWARKANATH TAGORE, at a meeting of *Landholders*, held on the 31st of October last. At this meeting,—“ Several Brahmins held up their sacred thread, and threatened to tear it as a malediction, if nothing should be done to protect them against the resumption operations.”

DEPRESSION AND DEMORALIZATION.

Add to all this the testimony of CAPTAIN WESTMACOTT, the author of—“ The present and future prospects of our Indian Empire.” Captain W. has been twelve years in India, and lately assistant Political Agent on the North-Eastern frontier.

“ It is greatly (says Captain Westmacott) to be deplored, that *in places the longest under our rule, there is the largest amount of depravity and crime.* My travels in India have fallen little short of 8000 miles, and extended to nearly all the cities of importance in Northern, Western, and Central India. *I have no hesitation in affirming, that in the Hindoo and Mussulman cities, removed from European intercourse, there is much less depravity than either in Calcutta, Madras, or Bombay, where Europeans chiefly congregate.*

“ The influx of wealth, and the demoralization that everywhere dodges the footsteps of the European, are destroying the most valuable features of the national character. *Where Europeans congregate in the greatest number, the natives are a changed people;* they have lost their simple manners and their probity, and have received no countervailing benefits from what is called civilization.”—Page 43.

“ Our laws for the regulation of commerce, revenue, and justice, besides being unpopular, have produced a lavish expenditure,

and a debt of fifty millions sterling. *The tribunals of popular judgment have yielded to the sway of the tax-gatherer and the soldier, and are attended with all the evils and impositions of stamps and fees, from which Hindostan was free under its own rulers, and under that of the Mussulman conquerors.*

"The laws we have given to the East, have made it necessary to erect prisons, which overflow with debtors and felons. In the native states there is scarcely a prison to be seen. The labourer, under the British rule, is incarcerated if his rent is in arrear, and his land and goods seized; under the Hindoo and Mussulman law the person of the debtor is sacred, and his property alone attachable; but neither that which is necessary to his subsistence, nor that which is requisite for the pursuit of his avocations, is liable to seizure. No wonder, then, that the introduction of these laws produce demoralization in the people, and weakness in the Government. Furthermore, we levy from the native a higher assessment than his own ruler; we have subverted the local Governments and municipalities of the country, and have thus deprived the Natives of the right they formerly exercised of electing their own police, apportioning their own burthens, and settling the affairs of their own villages."—Pages 44 and 45.

"The abolition of the ancient mode of assessment, instead of producing a harvest of good to the people, and of money to the Government, as some predicted of it, has covered India with disaffection, poverty, and crime.

"Excessive delay in the administration of the laws and courts of appeal established in distant parts of the country, tear the peasant from his plough, and oblige him, in seeking for justice, to leave his fields untilled.

"Literature languishes for want of encouragement."—Page 46.

"The waste lands belonging to villages, and reserved by the inhabitants to meet the wants of their increasing populations, and to support schools, charities, and caravanseries, have been appropriated by our Government.

"The rich manufactures of India have dwindled from their

prosperity. The beautiful muslins of Dacca, the brocades of Benares, and the shawls and jewellery of Delhi, are no longer in demand. Agra, Kalpy, Dacca, and other great commercial and manufacturing towns of the Empire, situated on the principal rivers, have *shrunk within half their former limits*. Religious endowments have been sequestered; and the reservoirs and aqueducts that fertilised the country are *gone to decay*. The charitable institutions; the asylums for the poor, the sick, and the maimed; splendid and useful public works, are *crumbling to dust*; and the wells and resting-places in the desert, built and endowed by Princes, and the wealthy and benevolent, as a refuge for the traveller under an eastern sun, are *neglected and fallen to ruin*."—Page 47.

"By depriving the communities of their rights, we have engendered crime, misery, and revolt; and every fresh inroad on the municipalities, loosens our hold on the affections of the people, and HASTENS THE DOWNFALL OF OUR EMPIRE."—Page 48.

UNCULTIVATED LANDS.

In India, there is much land lying waste. In some districts, very extensive tracts. A very large proportion of this land is capable of cultivation; but owing to the excessive taxation of the land in India, it is suffered to remain the hiding-place and possession of the Tiger, the Jackall, and the Boa Constrictor. Were these waste lands given up, or granted on fair terms to the peasant, they might be soon made to yield an abundant harvest. I have seen it stated, that in 1813-14, there were 2,281,297 beegas* of waste and uncultivated land, in the very Provinces which have been recently visited by Famine in its most horrid forms. The late Col. Sir Thomas Munro has declared, that in the Ceded Districts, with which he was particularly acquainted, there were 3,000,000 acres of cultivable land, unappropriated. Colonel Sykes, in his evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons, stated, that in the district of Kandeish, there were 84½ per cent. of waste lands which were cultivable; and in Dharwar 83¾. The Marquis Cornwallis

* About the third part of an acre.

once said, in a Despatch to the Court of Directors—"I may safely assert, that one-third of the Company's territory in Hindostan is now a jungle, inhabited only by wild beasts." Major-General Briggs, in his most valuable work on the Land-Tax of India, has convincingly shown that these waste cultivable lands might be made at once a source of revenue to the State and of prosperity to the people.

NEGLECT OF ROADS.

I pass from the subject of waste lands, to notice the state of India in regard to roads. It has been said, that one of the first symptoms of civilization which strikes the eye of a stranger, is a gibbet. I should be disposed to place good roads first among the signs of improvement and civilization. What, then, is the condition of India? On this part of the question, I am permitted to refer to some *memoranda* kindly placed in my hands by General Briggs, who has noted down some particulars illustrative of the state of India in 1836. In reference to roads, he says,—

"The *total absence of high roads*, by which the traffic of the country might be conducted, is found to be one of the heaviest evils with which our Eastern dominions is afflicted. One large navigable river passes through a tract of one thousand miles of country in Upper India, into which other streams, navigable for several months in the year, fall in its course; and along this great outlet a considerable traffic, in large, unwieldy and unsafe boats, is conducted up the river, at the average rate of *about ten miles a day*. From the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay, a single road has, in each case, been lately constructed, to the distance of about one hundred miles, along which, at Bombay, within the last six or eight years, the post is conveyed by horses, and carts travel at the same rate as the traffic goes up the stream of the Ganges. The exertion of some local officers, too, have led to the construction of tolerable roads for a few miles around the principal towns, constructed without expense to the State, by the employment of prisoners in irons; and the extension of this benefit has lately been undertaken along some principal lines in the Bengal Presidency."

on the same limited and economical principle. *Such a system for the internal communication of a territory as extensive as Europe, excluding Russia, is worse than mockery.*

“Will it be believed, that after holding possession of such a Country for nearly a century, that the Government post is for the most part conveyed by footmen, *at the rate of about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour*—that travellers cannot proceed but on horseback, at a rate not exceeding 12 or 14 miles a day; and that if an officer of Government is required to travel at the utmost possible speed, he is conveyed singly, in a palankeen, on men’s shoulders, at a speed not exceeding *three miles an hour*, and that he must give notice a week before, to enable the public authorities to provide bearers, at the rate of a shilling or eighteenpence a mile, and that as many men as the traveller has to travel miles, have to be put in requisition for this purpose; so that in order to go from Calcutta to Delhi, at the utmost possible speed, the traveller is conveyed on men’s shoulders in the absence of a road, and *more than a thousand men* are employed to carry him! The greater portion of the internal traffic of the country is conveyed on the backs of oxen, carrying one and a half hundred weight, at an average rate of about six or eight miles daily, for the most part over level countries, abounding with the finest material for road-making, but which the poverty of the inhabitants, and the indifference and neglect of the State, suffer to continue as mere bridle tracks. In this state of things, we cannot wonder at the obstacles which exist to the conveyance of the natural products of the country to the coast for foreign markets, nor at the want of information, of our own merchants, residing at the sea-ports, of the resources of the interior.”

These facts will explain how it is, that during a period of scarcity in a particular province, the stores of the adjacent provinces cannot be made available. Dr. Spry, in his very interesting volumes,* has vividly described the miseries of Indian travelling, in a narrative of a journey of six hundred miles, through the

* Modern India, in two volumes, 1837, Whittaker & Co.

most populous and frequented part of India, viz., from Calcutta to Cawnpore—a journey which occupied fourteen days and nights in uninterrupted travelling. For example—"Soon after emerging from the City of Moorshedabad, *the road became a perfect swamp*, and frequently no vestige of it could be found. *After wading the whole night, we reached, about half-past two o'clock in the morning*, a little rising ground, where the weary bearers found a dry spot to rest the palankeen." Again, "A sepoy, (native soldier,) whom I met on the road, gave me a wretched account of the state of the roads. He came from the very place to which I was destined, and had been *seventy days* marching down." Again, "At Rajmahal, I was supplied with fresh palankeen-bearers, who I hoped would prove more efficient than their predecessors, but *they also broke down before they had carried their burden two miles, and I was compelled to get out and walk, although the sun was scorchingly hot.*" Again,—“I was now about to enter a dreary tract of country,—the impenetrable belt of Rajmahal jungle. * * * Scarcely had we entered the thicket, when we were deluged with myriads of insects, attracted by the glare of the torches. Eyes, mouth, ears, and nostrils, being alike objects of curiosity with these unwelcome visitants. This was bad enough; but in the course of a short time, on came a shower of flying-bugs, and in an instant our persons were throughout covered with these detestable creatures. As for myself, I was nearly suffocated; compelled to keep the doors of the palankeen open, to carry on respiration, these insects came over me in hundreds, emitting an odour altogether indescribable.” Who does not envy the pleasures of travelling *post* in India! Had this Government officer taken a voyage up the Ganges, his journey would have occupied *three months and a half*, the time a ship takes in going from England to India.

LAND TAX.

Let me now draw attention to the chief source of the poverty and depression which have so long prevailed in British India. I have said the people are poor, discontented, famishing;

and you ask why is all this? I answer, first, there has been exhibited, on the part of Rulers, Legislators, and Administrators connected with India, great ignorance of the wants, institutions, and resources of the people of the country. There has been legislation upon false principles—there has been an administration of affairs by no means calculated to correct the errors of legislation. The great vice in our mode of Indian Government, is our system of taxing the land—a system founded upon the assumption of a proprietary right to the soil. The Government has become the *sole landlord*, claiming the whole of the landlord's rent, and subjecting the tenants to the oppression of a host of revenue officers, appointed to superintend cultivation, make assessments, and collect money. The views and opinions of the most eminent men upon this subject, which I am about to submit, are worthy of particular regard.

“When the British power (says *Mr. Rickards*) supplanted that of the Mahomedans in Bengal, we did not, it is true, adopt the sanguinary part of their creed; but from the impure fountain of their financial system, did we, to our shame, claim the inheritance of a *right to seize upon half the gross produce of the land as a tax*; and wherever our arms have since triumphed, we have invariably proclaimed the savage right; coupling it at the same time with the *senseless doctrine of the proprietary right to these lands being also vested in the sovereign*, in virtue of the right of conquest.*

“It appears to me (says *Mr. Shore*) that whatever may be the case *de jure*, Government is virtually the proprietor of all the land in that part of the country to which the permanent settlement does not extend. It possesses, not by any right of justice, but by the assumption of MIGHT, the power to assess the revenue at pleasure—to demand what it pleases from the owners, farmers, cultivators, or whatever they may be denominated (often employing for this duty very inexperienced agents;) and in default of payment, it offers the land at public auction, to realize the sum awarded, at the same time fixing the assessment on the new occupier at its own valuation, and treating him in the same manner if he fails to pay it: and as the *ultima ratio*, when the estate has, from such a mode of

* Rickards' History of India, London, 1829.

treatment, become so deteriorated, that neither farmer nor purchaser can be found, the Collector is authorised to keep it in his own hands, and make the best he can of it, by renting it in detail to the different subordinate cultivators, or ryots. It is difficult to imagine stronger proof of ownership than the power to rack-rent an estate in this way."

Let us imagine, (says *General Briggs*), as in India, that the Sovereign of England claimed, as proprietor of the soil, the whole of the landlord's profit or rent. I ask, what other source of revenue would be left? Could there exist any consumers of the comforts, much less the luxuries of life? Landed proprietors would be reduced to till the land with their own hands; and where would be the "stream of commerce," if all the profit went into the public treasury? How can we wonder that the revenue declines annually, that the products of the earth are no longer what they have been, and that trade languishes?" Again, the same author observes,—“Under the present system, it would be of no avail, even if the soil produced gold instead of grain, if the great landlord (the Government) were to take all the produce except what is necessary to pay the labourers.” Again,—“The season of harvest having arrived, the cultivators are not allowed to cut their crops till the latter have undergone a *third inspection* by the Collector and his cutchery; and if the district is extensive, or the Collector dilatory, *many crops are destroyed* before the permission is granted. All this process is deemed requisite to prevent the necessity of superintending the actual cutting, thrashing, and measuring of the grain of each field or village.”

But, perhaps, the illustration which will be most intelligible to the English reader, is that furnished a few years ago by a *member of the Madras Government*. It may be proper to state, that within the Presidency of Madras, the system described, viz. the *Ryotwar* system, has been carried to its highest state of perfection.

“Imagine the whole landed interest—that is, all the landlords of Great Britain, and even the capital farmers, *at once swept away from off the face of the earth*; imagine a rent fixed on every field

in the kingdom, seldom under, generally 'above its means of payment;' imagine the land so rented, lotted out to the villagers according to the number of their cattle and ploughs, to the extent of forty or fifty acres each. Imagine the revenue, rated as above, *leviable through the agency of one hundred thousand revenue officers*, collected or remitted at their discretion, according to their idea of the occupant's means of paying, whether from the produce of his land or his separate property; and, in order to encourage every man to act as a spy on his neighbour, and report his means of paying, that he may eventually save himself from extra demand; imagine *all the cultivators of a village liable at all times to a separate demand*, in order to make up for the failure of one or more individuals of the parish; imagine Collectors to every county acting under the orders of a board, on the avowed principle of destroying all competition for labour, by a general equalization of assessment, *seizing and sending back run-aways to each other*—and lastly, imagine the collector, *the sole magistrate, or justice of the peace of the county*, through the medium and instrumentality of whom alone, any criminal complaint of personal grievance, suffered by the subject, can reach the Superior Courts. Imagine, at the same time, *every subordinate officer, employed in the collection of the land revenue, to be a police officer, vested with the power to FINE, CONFINE, PUT IN THE STOCKS, AND FLOG any inhabitant within his range, on any charge, without oath of the accuser, or sworn recorded evidence in the case.*"

With these exemplifications before you, of the nature and operations of the widely extended Land-tax system of British India, you will cease to wonder at the poverty and wretchedness of the inhabitants. You will at once perceive that their habits of living, in regard to food and clothing, spring from necessity, and that there exists an insurmountable obstacle to all improvement.

INLAND AND SEA DUTIES.

In an address like the present, intended to take notice of the principal grievances endured by the people of British India, the subject of Inland and Sea Duties must not be overlooked, as

they are the occasion of loss, inconvenience, vexation, and loud and just complaint. Some idea of the character of this part of our Indian system, may be gathered from the account given of it by *Charles Trevelyan, Esq.*, an officer of extensive local information and experience, and one of the Secretaries to the Government of India, who in 1834, was directed to draw up a Report upon the Inland Customs and Town Duties of the Bengal Presidency.

This gentleman describes the system as "*utterly barbarous*;" and says, "if it were desired to *depress the productive powers of Indian industry*, could any scheme be devised for the purpose more effectual than this? Although *we* have now *ocular demonstration of its existence*, yet when it has been once abolished, *the world will find it difficult to believe that such a system could have been tolerated by us for the better part of a century.*"

Let another witness, of the highest respectability, and best means of information, *F. C. Brown, Esq.*, of Tellicherry, give evidence on this subject, in respect to another part of the country, viz., the Maritime Provinces of Madras, "where the sea is the only highway, and where the *indirect* tax fixed upon every article whatever of produce, [except the most valuable, which are liable to 15 or 18 per cent.,] is an Export Duty of 8 per cent., besides Stamps and Fees, levied upon them, when taken from the interior coastways, for sale at the nearest port, if it be but a mile; where this duty is again exacted, if, at the expiration of a short time, the produce remaining unconsumed, it is transported for sale from the first to any other port in the *same* Province; and if the produce be transported, *within the time allowed*, for sale in any *other* Province, it is there subjected to duty, *as an import*, agreeably to the different Tariff of that Province."

But, continues Mr. Brown,—“In order to make the operation of such a system plain and palpable, let it be applied to any other country in the world—to Scotland for example—no larger than many Indian Provinces. Let us suppose the Government of Great Britain to take, in the first instance, in money, the whole rental of the land of Scotland; to take it from every acre and

every fraction of an acre in every parish in that kingdom ; to collect this money at every county town ; and, monthly, to send every farthing, except the fraction (36 shillings) spent in each parish, to be hoarded in the Treasury at Edinburgh : let us suppose that there are no roads,—therefore, no carts, in the country ; that all the inland traffic is by porters, with tolls at every bridge and at every ferry, at which a Native with only a bundle in his hand, is considered as a loaded animal, and pays double toll every time he passes, the European and his suite paying nothing. (Some years ago, the tolls levied in Malabar, lying in the Treasury, amounted to 60,000 Rupees, a sum which, judiciously expended, would have made many, many miles of excellent roads. What was done with it? Every Rupee was carried to account as *surplus* revenue!) Let us suppose a Custom-House erected at the mouth of every stream, and river, and accessible spot on the coast, from the Tweed east, to Solway Firth west ; at which every article of produce passing sea-wards is stopped for 8 per cent. duty, besides stamps and fees : let us suppose this to be called *an export* by sea, and the same articles, if subsequently taken to another port in Scotland, if from Leith to Dunbar, to be subject to a fresh duty of 8 per cent. : let us suppose the article taken to any port in the adjoining counties of Cumberland or Northumberland, and to be there stopped, as *an import*, and taxed with fresh duty, besides stamps and fees, according to a *different tariff* in that county : let us suppose the articles to be so met, and stopped at every port in every different county coastways, all the way to London : let us suppose all the coin of Scotland so collected, directly and indirectly, at Edinburgh, to be transmitted periodically to London : let us suppose that it is the return trade (imports) from London to Scotland, placed exactly upon the same footing as the trade outwards, which must bring all this coin back to Scotland, during the eight months of the year that the Coast-Navigation is open ; while, during ten months of the year, the Government is rigorously calling upon the people in the remotest parishes and hamlets to pay monthly the direct land-tax, and their tax on every house and shop, in this coin, under pain of having their moveables and immoveables sold, and these failing, their persons imprisoned :

let a man suppose two necessities of life, Salt and Tobacco, to be Government Monopolies: let him suppose all these, only the most striking points of the system, to be applied to Scotland, and then let him say whether the marvel would be, not that the people were almost uniformly quiet, patient, and submissive under such a Government; but that the standing miracle would be, that the whole country was not one deadly, perpetual, endless scene of riot, insurrection, and bloodshed from one end to the other."

With one other illustration of this system of taxation, I will dismiss the topic. I find it stated upon good authority, that within the last six or seven years, the following circumstance occurred:—The Governor of Madras ordered a carpet to be manufactured for himself, within his jurisdiction, at the distance of 200 miles from the capital. In the absence of good roads, and owing to the rainy season, the agent was induced to embark it on board a vessel about proceeding coastwise, to Madras. This operation involved an *export* duty of eight per cent. when it was embarked, and as much more as an *import* duty when it reached its destination. What should we think, if Scotch muslins and English broadcloths were subject to such imposts when imported into London?

TREATMENT OF THE NATIVES BY EUROPEAN FUNCTIONARIES.

"The haughty superciliousness, arrogance, and even insolence of behaviour, which the generality of the English think it necessary to adopt towards the Natives, by way of keeping up their own dignity, is extremely great." * * * "When an Englishman does treat the Natives with mere common civility, he is looked upon as a wonder." * * * "To treat the Natives civilly—to speak of, and to them, without abuse—to study their language, manners, and customs—to make oneself acquainted with their history, all these seem, if one may judge by their conduct, in the estimation of many of the English in India, to be degrading to their dignity."

These are the assertions of the Hon. F. J. Shore, in his notes on Indian affairs—assertions, the truth of which, he has established by a multitude of examples. It is high time the people of England were made aware of the manner in which their countrymen con-

duct themselves towards the natives of British India. It is impossible to reprobate too strongly the behaviour thus described, Its effect upon the minds of the natives must be most injurious—its tendency most dangerous. In other places, I have quoted largely from the valuable writings of Mr. Shore, and shall therefore, on this occasion, confine myself to an illustration furnished in a work consisting of a selection of papers from the Asiatic Journal. I will give the paper entire.

“ A Native correspondent of the *Sumachar Durpun*, (A newspaper published for circulation amongst the Natives, partly in Bengalee and partly in English,) observing that the object of the British Government, to establish ‘ English ways and principles,’ will never be realized so long as the judges and Collectors of the old school continue in the *Mofussil*, (‘ The country,’ as opposed to ‘ the town,’) describes the mode in which Natives are treated there.—“ *In the Mofussil, no one dares go to the house of a judge or collector with his shoes on; nor can he address those gentlemen without folded hands* and the appellations *Jonabhuzoor, Jonabalee, Japuna, and Khodawund*, (appellations of profound reverence, the latter signifying your Lordship, literally, *Godship*.) Many of those gentlemen style themselves *Huzoor*, (‘ *The presence*,’ anciently used towards the Princes of the country,) with their own lips. Thus, when they speak to the officers in attendance, they will say, ‘ Bring the box of the *Huzoor*.’ ‘ Attend at the house of the *Huzoor* to-morrow at 10 o’clock, otherwise the *Huzoor* will be angry with you.’ It is a custom with some gentlemen, when any person looks in their face, to say, ‘ It is exceedingly improper for you constantly to look in the face of the *Huzoor* whilst you speak; you are not worthy to salute the *Huzoor*.’ No one has permission to enter with a palanquin the compound of a gentleman’s house; and how shall I describe their dignity when sitting in *cutchery*! (Court of justice—treasury, &c.) *No one must cough, although he has a cold; his presumption will be immediately punished. All, great and small, stand with their hands together.* The Shiristadars (the Head Native officers, next to the Judge or Collector) of the Sudder Dewannee, (supreme Civil Court,) the Sudder Board, (Supreme Board of Revenue,) the

Court of Appeal, and other chief cutcheries, in Calcutta, *receive chairs to sit* beside the Sahebs. The Shiristadars of the zillah (Provincial) Judges and Collectors, *stand* like the bird Gurooru from 9 A. M. to 7 P. M., and attend to business; and if their loins or bodies bend, it is reckoned a sign of rudeness.”*

The impression on my mind of the accuracy of these representations has been deepened by a perusal of Mr. Adam's excellent report on the state of Education in Bengal. That gentleman, whose interesting business, carried him amongst the Natives, found that “The sudden appearance of a European in a village often inspired terror, which it was always difficult, and sometimes impossible to subdue.” The people could not understand any other language than that of *command*. When he talked of consulting their wishes and their feelings, “The adoption of such a style of address by a Government functionary was apparently *new* to them, and *scarcely intelligible*.” Mr. Adam here speaks of a province in which the English have ruled longer than in any other part of India. It is much to be regretted, that the manners of the English have not been civil and conciliatory. Mr. Shore affirms, that when an Englishman treats the natives with “*common civility*,” he is spoken of by them *with respect for miles beyond his station*.”

SALT MONOPOLY.

The comfort and welfare of the people of India seem to require the total abolition of the Salt monopoly. I have no time at present to enter into this mystery of iniquity. A more unnatural, unjust, or oppressive system was, perhaps, never invented to increase the revenue of any Government. Between two and three millions of pounds sterling are annually raised by the monopoly of an article, which the enlightened Rajah, Rammohun Roy, denominated “*an absolute necessary of life*.”

It is well known that the food of the people of India consists chiefly of boiled rice,—an insipid dish, to season which, Salt, or something impregnated with Salt is required. So highly is this seasoning valued, that the poorest individual will purchase it at

* Anglo India, or Papers from the Asiatic Journal, vol. i. p. 45, 46.

the sacrifice of every other article. For this want, nature has provided in a manner the most simple and bountiful. In every part of India, washed by the ocean, salt is obtained by the evaporation of sea-water upon the sand or rocks, by the heat of the sun. By this process, salt in a pure and perfect state of crystallization is procured. It is also made by boiling sea-water. The first process is called *cultivation*, the second *manufacture*. The cultivation, manufacture, and sale of salt, in British India, is a strict monopoly. The Native of British India can be severely punished for daring to place upon his tongue, or remove into his hut, a single grain of the sun-evaporated salt, left by nature at his own door. In the *new* Penal Code for India, I find that the cultivation, collection, or manufacture of salt may be punished by three months imprisonment, or a fine of five hundred rupees, or both. And that the same penalty may be inflicted upon the person who makes a salt-pan for the purpose of collecting salt. Officers of Government are employed to destroy the salt naturally formed. The Government also claims the right of determining what shall be the amount of salt consumed by the population during the year. Many are the evils created by this system. *Smuggling* is one. The practice of *adulterating* the salt, by mixing it with *one-third*, or even *one-half* of earth, is another. The *raising of the price* of the article to such an extent as to oblige the Indian peasant, in order to supply his family, to sacrifice one-seventh part of his entire wages, is another. The *encouragement of fraudulent speculators* is another. The employment of an expensive, vexatious, and *corrupt preventive service* is another. These, with every description of *evasion, lying and robbery*, are among the effects produced by the Salt Monopoly in India.

OPIUM MONOPOLY.

The trade in Opium is also a strict Monopoly in the hands of the East India Company. The *Chinese Repository*, for February 1837, gives the following account of its cultivation in the Company's Territories :—

“ In Benares, Behar, and throughout all the territories within

the Company's jurisdiction, the cultivation of the poppy, the preparation of the drug, and the traffic in it, until it is brought to Calcutta, and sold by auction for exportation, are under a *strict monopoly*. Should an individual undertake the cultivation, without having 'entered into engagements with the Government to deliver the produce at *the fixed rate*,' his property would be immediately attached, and the ryot compelled either to destroy his poppies, or give securities for the faithful delivery of the product. Nay, according to a late writer, '*the growing of opium is compulsory on the part of the ryot*.' Advances are made by Government through its native servants, and if a ryot refuses the advance, '*the simple plan of throwing the Rupees into his house is adopted*; should he attempt to abscond, the peons *seize him*, tie the advance up in his clothes, and *push him into his house*. The business being now settled, and *there being no remedy*, he applies himself, as he may, to the fulfilment of his contract.' "

The opium thus obtained, finds a ready market in China, where the practice of smoking it, prevails to an extraordinary and distressing extent. Previous to the year 1796, opium was admitted into China on the payment of a certain duty, and a few hundred chests annually were introduced. Since that time, the trade has been repeatedly interdicted by Imperial mandates, but carried on in open defiance of law. The following statement exhibits the consumption of opium during the last twenty years :—

	Chests.	Value.
1816 . . .	3,210	3,657,000 dollars.
1820 . . .	4,770	8,400,800 "
1825 . . .	9,621	7,608,205 "
1830 . . .	18,760	12,900,031 "
1832 . . .	23,670	15,338,160 "
1836 . . .	27,111	17,904,248 "

By the last account it had increased to the extent of 34,000 chests !

This quantity, at twenty grains per day for each individual, is sufficient to demoralize more than three millions of persons. When the habit is once formed, it grows till it becomes inveterate; discontinuance is more and more difficult, until at length, the sudden deprivation of the accustomed indulgence, produces certain death.

Every opium-eater, it is **calculated**, shortens his life ten years from the time when he commences the practice. The importation of opium was, I have said, interdicted in 1796. Smokers of it were to be pilloried and bamboosed, and the venders were liable to banishment and death. The amended law of 1833, condemns buyers and smokers to a hundred blows, and to wear the wooden collar for two months; Mandarins to be punished one degree more severely. Opium shops are, notwithstanding, as plentiful in some parts of China as gin-shops in England. There is a depôt at Lintin, at the entrance of the Canton river.

Let us return to India, and look at the evils which are inflicted upon our native fellow-subjects, by the prosecution of this immoral traffic. I find the following, stated in a valuable work, which has just appeared from the pen of the Rev. A. S. Thelwall:—

“The evils which the cultivation of opium entails upon our fellow-subjects in India, arise partly from the ryots in the opium districts of Patna and Benares being *compelled to give up fixed portions of their lands* for the production of the poppy.

“It is true that the Honorable Company pay fairly for the lands and labour thus wrested from the ryot;* and did the amount paid by the Government find its way honestly into the possession of these people, there might not be so much cause of complaint in this matter; but the contrary is the case. These payments have to pass through the hands of numerous *employés* of the Government: and *scarce twenty per cent. of it ever reaches the legitimate owner.*

“The evils of the cultivation, however, do not end here. In consequence of being *obliged forcibly to cultivate* this highly-taxed drug, the peasant is constantly exposed to a suspicion of retaining some part of the produce for private sale; the surveillance of the police is, therefore, especially directed to these unhappy creatures; and *the oppressions which they are subjected to in this*

* That is to say, the Company pay *their own price*, after the manner described in the preceding extract from the *Chinese Repository*; a price so far below that at which it is exported, that, according to Mr. McCulloch, the monopoly has sometimes produced a net revenue of a million pounds sterling; a sum, which, were free trade allowed, would be divided among the growers.

way, surpass belief. They are exposed to every sort of annoyance which the ingenuity of the authorized plunderers (the police, and the custom-house searchers) can devise, in order to extort bribes. The privacy of their miserable abodes is intruded upon by these harpies of Government, and no redress can be given by the Government unless they abolish the production of this accursed drug. Were the cultivation of it transferred to private individuals, the evil of it would (as far as the cultivation is concerned) be greatly mitigated, inasmuch as the servants of private individuals would not have the power to oppress the natives to the extent possessed by those of the Government, and there would be a distant hope of redress to an oppressed native in the Government Courts. But *when the Government itself is virtually the defendant, an appeal to its justice is a mockery.* And thus arises a moral aggravation of the evil. . . . To sum up the *curse* consequent on this right of search, which springs from the Government trade in Opium, I may say they are as follow :—the *exactions and corruptions*; the *grievous delay*; the *insolent exercise of low, ill-paid authority*; the *interruption of communication*, by shutting up ferries, roads, and routes; the *distress and ruin resulting from false seizures*, (got up by the Custom-house people to blind the Government;) the *diversion of trade* into channels less impeded; the *advancement of the price of all goods*, by reason of these checks and annoyances; and, worst of all, the *demoralization of the habits of all parties* connected with, or exposed to, the influence of these oppressive and unjust measures.”

Again, “Vast tracts of land, *formerly occupied with other articles*, are now covered with poppies, which require a superior soil to produce opium in perfection. Hence its cultivation has not extended over waste and barren lands, but into those districts and villages best fitted for agricultural purposes, where *other plants grown from time immemorial, have been driven out before it.*”

Every reader of the public prints is aware that the *Emperor of China* has very recently issued a new edict against the trade in opium. I hold in my hand a copy of the *Canton Register* of the 13th of December last, giving an account of the infliction of the punishment of death upon a man, found guilty of keeping an

opium smoking-shop. The Chinese authorities, to mark their abhorrence of the conduct of Europeans, ordered that the culprit should be "*brought to the quarter of Canton, separated for the use of the BRITISH and other foreigners, TO BE STRANGLED IN THE SQUARE IN FRONT OF THE FACTORIES!*" This, by great exertion was prevented, and the man was put to death elsewhere.

From the evidence now adduced, it appears that the opium trade of British India is a *strict monopoly*, in the hands of the East India Company : that the *best lands* in certain districts are chosen for the cultivation of the poppy : that useful and nutritious articles are "*driven out*" to make way for this *poisonous plant* : that the *cultivation* of the poppy is often *compulsory* on the part of the ryot : that the trade has created a numerous class of persons who live by insolence, extortion, and corruption, *making the helpless ryot the victim of their cupidity and fraud* : that the opium grown in British India is *smuggled* into China, *in defiance of the laws and regulations of the Chinese Government* : that the opium so introduced, is *the instrument of demoralization and death* to a large portion of the inhabitants of the Chinese empire : that the prosecution of the trade in this pernicious drug *has brought upon us the mingled hatred, suspicion, and contempt of the Government and people of China* ; and, finally, that the trade *operates to exclude us from unrestricted commercial intercourse* with an immense population.

SLAVERY IN INDIA.

The time will I trust shortly arrive, when we shall be prepared to lay before the public of this country, authentic information respecting the nature and extent of the various kinds of Slavery which exist in British India. I confess my inability at the present time, to go minutely into this part of the subject, and I should be sorry to venture statements without adequate evidence. I shall consider it a part of my duty to collect whatever facts are within reach, bearing upon the question, and to lay such facts before the nation, that immediate measures may be taken to put an end to involuntary servitude, and to banish the odious and wicked doctrine of the lawfulness of holding property in man. In the original

draft of the bill for 1833, for renewing the East India Company's Charter, there was a Clause, providing for the total abolition of Slavery throughout British India. In the progress of the measure through the House of Lords, that clause was struck out and another substituted, which appears as the 88th clause of the present Charter, enacting that—"The Governor in Council shall, and he is hereby required forthwith to take into consideration the means of *mitigating* the state of Slavery, and of *ameliorating* the condition of Slaves, and of *extinguishing* Slavery throughout the said territories, so soon as such extinction shall be practicable and safe; and from time to time to prepare and transmit to the said Court of Directors, drafts of laws or regulations for the purposes aforesaid," &c. &c. How far the obligations imposed by this clause upon the Indian and home authorities have been discharged, and with what success, have yet to be ascertained. The subject of Slavery in India claims the earnest attention of the abolitionists of this Kingdom. Our principles, our pledges and our petitions would rise up in judgment against us, were we to neglect this matter. I find it stated upon high authority, that in many parts of India, human beings are sold like cattle, and are even regarded as of inferior value. From the papers of Dr. Francis Buchanan, recently given to the world, it appears that in some districts surveyed by him, the price of a *man* is from thirty to forty shillings; of a *lad*, of sixteen years of age, from twenty-four to forty-shillings; and of a *girl*, at eight or ten years old, from ten to thirty shillings. Let it not be said that after shedding the light of freedom over the islands of the West, we left any in the East to perish in the darkness and degradation of Slavery.

The question this day brought before you, is really and truly an Anti-slavery question: not merely as it bears upon the condition of a part of the Native population of India, but also and still more in its relations to Africa and America. The struggle for Negro emancipation must be transferred to the soil of India, on which it can be triumphantly carried on. We must cease to draw our supplies from the plantations of tyrant masters in the *West*, and encourage and consume the free produce of the *East*. Let us then consult the honour, the interests, and the happiness of our own nation and

fellow-subjects, and the welfare and freedom of mankind at large; by laying the foundation of an enlightened

COMMERCE WITH BRITISH INDIA.

On this subject I take leave to quote the following authorities :—

The *Bombay Chamber of Commerce* have reported to the London East India and China Associations, that excellent Sugar,—Cotton equal to some of the finest kinds of American, and also Raw Silks, can be produced in the Bombay territory.

“India would not be found wanting in any essential requisite for the production of the best cotton, providing the cultivators emulated the care of the Americans, in the choice of soil, in the use of manure, in the selection and change of seed, in planting, weeding, thinning, and pruning, so as to give health to the plant, and, at the same time, to prevent the waste of its vigour in the production of useless foliage; and if they did not spoil their harvest by carelessness in gathering, cleaning, and packing it. The vast extent to which cotton has long been grown in India, and the exquisite beauty of some of its manufactures, are only additional reasons for prosecuting inquiry.”—*The Right Hon. Holt Mackenzie.*

“It is certainly without a parallel in the annals of the world, that a country possessing such capabilities as India, should have been so long hermetically sealed against the enterprise of Britons, in order to prolong the abuses of patronage. Had the peninsula been open, we should not now be dependent on America for raw cotton, nor would the country have been brought, as it was four years ago, to the very verge of bankruptcy and revolution, when the stock of cotton on hand was not adequate to three weeks consumption; and when, if easterly winds had continued only for a single month, all the factories in Lancashire would have been closed, and the starving operatives driven to destitution and despair. To this astounding blunder, the southern division of the United States owes its cotton plantations and its rice fields, and also the blighting curse of slavery, which is sapping the vitals of its existence. * * * In 1834, four bales of Bombay cotton were sold in

Liverpool at a higher price than the bulk of the American cotton. * * * * * Evidence confirms the fact, that cotton can be grown in India fully equal, or rather superior, to the bulk of the American cotton. * * * * * At a late meeting of the Agricultural Society of Calcutta, the president stated, "From the trials already made, and results obtained, there could be little doubt as to the success attending the introduction of a superior description of cotton."—*Dr. Henry H. Spry, Bengal Medical Service.*

"The wide-spread and fertile plains of India are capable of producing, in almost boundless quantities, articles which are of prime necessity to the manufacturing power of England. In return for her commodities, we have the power of clothing her myriad population in the productions of our mills and looms: Thus India will afford employment to the hundreds of thousands who depend for subsistence on the prosperity of the manufacturing establishments of Great Britain; and those establishments, in return, will contribute to the comfort and well-being of the people of India, while enriching the coffers of the British capitalist, and creating for the British workman fresh sources of demand for his labour and skill. Who, then, are interested in the prosperity of India? The answer is obvious. All classes—the capitalist, the merchant, the manufacturer, the labourer, the landlord, the farmer, the ship owner, and the sailor. No man can look at the Peninsula of India, with a population of a hundred millions, over every acre of which we have the means of carrying the varied products of our busy country, without at once perceiving that a wise and liberal course towards such a field of commerce and enterprise will make us independent of the world beside."—*Author of a pamphlet, entitled, India, Great Britain, and Russia.*

If these things be so, why, I ask, do we detain millions of immortal beings in bondage? Why permit the recreant republican to keep his heel upon the neck of his brother? Why let the air be rent with the sighs and groans of the millions who are now in captivity, when the rice of Carolina, and the cotton of Georgia, and the sugar of Cuba, and the coffee of Porto Rico, might be

* India, Great Britain, and Russia. London, 1838.

grown in superabundance on the plains of British India? Why do we not awake to righteousness, and gird ourselves to the work of removing the existing impediments to the prosperity of India, and the consequent liberation of six millions of slaves, and the abolition of the infernal slave-trade?

A word respecting the willingness of the natives to consume our manufactures.

DEMAND FOR BRITISH MANUFACTURES.

“The people could take a great deal of the British manufactures; they are remarkably fond of them, particularly of scarlet. It is a mistaken notion that Indians are too simple in their manners to have any passion for foreign manufactures. They are hindered from taking our goods, not by want of inclination, but either by poverty, or the fear of being imputed rich, and having their rents raised. When we relinquish the barbarous system of annual settlements; when we make over the lands either in very long leases, or in perpetuity, to the present occupants; and when we have convinced them, by making no assessments above the fixed rent for a series of years, that they are actually proprietors of the soil, WE SHALL SEE A DEMAND FOR EUROPEAN ARTICLES, OF WHICH WE HAVE AT PRESENT NO CONCEPTION.”—*Sir T. Munro.*

“The natives of India are just as desirous of accumulating wealth, as skilful in the means of acquiring it and as prone to all its enjoyments, as any people on earth. It is the land-tax that confirms their unalterable poverty. If the channels of wealth were freely opened in India, luxuries would abound as in other countries. It is inconsistent with the laws of human nature to suppose otherwise.”—*Bishop Heber.*

“Place India on an equal footing with the mother country; treat her as a trading nation, and not as a tributary colony; and ninety millions of people, with a thriving agricultural population, and a ready market for their produce, will not fail to consume all that the manufacturers of England can supply, in the way of broad cloth, cutlery, machinery of every description, (from a steam-engine to a pocket-watch,) porcelain, glass ware, in all its shapes, jewellery, wines, and a hundred other articles, which the want of

means alone now prevent the natives from purchasing.”—*General Briggs*.

“ The principal obstacle in the way of extending the commerce with India, does not consist in any indisposition on the part of the natives to purchase our commodities, but in the difficulty under which they are placed, of furnishing equivalents for them.”—*Mr. McCulloch*.

POWER AND RESPONSIBILITY OF ENGLAND.

I have thus endeavoured, to the best of my ability, to bring before you the real state of India, and to point out the duty and advantages of adopting towards that interesting and neglected country a wiser and better course. I have laboured also to show that, while diffusing contentment and happiness among the population of India, we shall be opening the gates of liberty to millions, and shedding the richest blessings upon the Continent of Africa. I have spoken under a deep sense of our accountableness as a nation. My time has not permitted me to dwell upon the many sins of omission and commission of which we have been guilty—sins which have spread misery and ruin over the fairest portions of the globe; sins which will hereafter appear as conspicuous for their folly and fatuity, as for their magnitude and criminality; sins committed by a blind avarice against the clearest principles of good government and a sound political economy. On this humbling topic I cannot now dilate. I place before you, as a part of the British people, a solemn and sacred duty, an exalted and enviable privilege. One branch of that duty and of that privilege is,—to destroy Slavery. I am not afraid of being convicted of extravagance when I say, *England has the power in her own hands to crush Slavery all over Christendom*. She can bless India—she can proclaim emancipation in America. At present she upholds the abominations of Slavery, and the Slave-trade. Her money bribes the planter and the man-stealer; her looms weave, her sons and daughters consume, the produce of the slave; but whenever our nation turns its attention and enterprise and capital to India, and to the hundred millions who will work there at a penny or two-pence per day, foreign nations will no longer be able to say, that we

uphold slavery on the other side of the Atlantic. To effect this change in public sentiment and action we must enlighten the Country. We must hold public meetings, and stir up the mercantile and manufacturing interests; we must memorialize the Government; we must petition the Legislature;* we must open the eyes of the abolitionist to this economical mode of effecting the object he seeks. I say then to those whom I address, and to all to whom these words may by any means come,—*at your peril neglect or despise the means I now point out.* I show you a safe, a peaceful, a profitable, a certain method of abolishing slavery. More hopeful than undertaking to convert the Brazilian or Texian—less bloody and expensive than the preventive service along the shores of Africa, and more direct than the influence and success of treaties with insincere nations, or remonstrances with the enlightened, but proud and sensitive Americans. You need not wait till the United States is consistent—till Portugal is honest—you have only to wait till you yourselves are sensible of your power and responsibility. Then will you do justice to the natives and the soil of India, and by the infallible operation of a liberal and honourable system, snap the fetter of the slave in the West, and starve the miscreant prowler from the shores of Africa. I look with hope and confidence to the abolitionists of Great Britain. I make my appeal to their principles and to their recorded pledges, and I call upon them, one and all—upon every man, woman and child in their ranks, to aid us in our lawful, patriotic, and merciful plans. Since we commenced, a few months ago, we have found powerful supporters at home and abroad. Societies have been

* The following is the 51st Clause of the Charter Act:—"Provided always, and be it enacted, That nothing herein contained shall extend to affect in any way the right of Parliament to make Laws for the said Territories and for all the Inhabitants thereof; and, it is EXPRESSLY DECLARED THAT A FULL, COMPLETE, AND CONSTANTLY EXISTING RIGHT AND POWER IS INTENDED TO BE RESERVED TO PARLIAMENT, TO CONTROL, SUPERSEDE, OR PREVENT ALL PROCEEDINGS AND ACTS WHATSOEVER OF THE SAID GOVERNOR-GENERAL IN COUNCIL, AND TO REPEAL AND ALTER AT ANY TIME, ANY LAW OR REGULATION WHATSOEVER, MADE BY THE SAID GOVERNOR-GENERAL IN COUNCIL, AND IN ALL RESPECTS TO LEGISLATE FOR THE SAID TERRITORIES AND ALL THE INHABITANTS THEREOF IN AS FULL AND AMPLE A MANNER AS IF THIS ACT HAD NOT BEEN PASSED.

formed and affiliated. The sagacious men of Lancashire are coming forward—the merchants of Glasgow are with us—the landholders of Bengal are aiding us—the Press is espousing our cause—distinguished men from India are joining us daily, and our prospects are hourly brightening. If, as without the shadow of a misgiving I anticipate, the wonder-working energy and unfaltering resolution of the abolition host shall be enlisted on our side, the victory will soon be won, and by that victory millions upon millions in both hemispheres will be blessed. Behold, my friends, the tremendous power which God has placed in our hands! Feel you not the heavy responsibility which rests upon you? Will you not appreciate and embrace the privileges to which you are invited? But I need say no more. I remember where I stand, and feel that I have already, perhaps, said too much. But you will forgive me, I am most deeply impressed with the importance and solemnity of the subject. I have for eight years been a humble labourer for the oppressed. On the passage of the Abolition Act in 1833, I felt it my duty to attempt the formation of societies to promote the *universal* abolition of Slavery, and succeeded to some extent both in England and Scotland. In furtherance of the great plan I visited the United States in 1834, and on both sides of the Atlantic, through evil and good report, in gloom and in sunshine, have toiled to disseminate the principles of freedom and humanity. Recent investigations into our connection with India, have brought me to the conclusion that we possess the means of accomplishing by a safe and simple process, the great object to which my public life has been devoted. I cannot therefore but feel deeply anxious, that those whom I now address should perceive the practicability and power of the plan which I recommend. If I have been fortunate enough to make that plan appear plain and satisfactory, then suffer me to invoke you, by the memory of your revered founders, by your long sustained and noble testimonies, by the labours you have performed, and by the successes you have achieved, to become the patrons and helpers of this holy cause. So shall you alleviate the miseries of India, arrest the march of desolation in Africa, proclaim with an irresistible voice the freedom of the slave in America, purify and enrich the markets of Europe, and cause

the four quarters of the Globe to rejoice in the triumph of your well-directed moral effort.

F. C. BROWN, Esq. (of Tellicherry, India,) stated, in reference to the Famine which raged in the province of Agra, in 1838, when 500,000 persons are computed to have perished, that this terrible loss of life occurred, not from the scarcity of food, but from impossibility, through poverty, of purchasing it. For during that year, there were exported from Calcutta to Great Britain, Mauritius, the French island of Bourbon, and to other parts of the world, of rice alone, no less than 926,364 bags of 168lbs. each, as would be seen from the following statement, which was read :

RICE EXPORTED (1838) FROM CALCUTTA.							
Date.	Great Britain.	Mauritius.	Bourbon.	Madras.	Bombay.	Gulphs.	Sundries.
1838.							
January	39,738	32,991	10,505	196	4,967	31,521	19,732
February	10,151	9,643	19,501	1,839	4,024	7,180	2,558
March	9,966	24,302	19,459	2,411	. . .	597	4,257
April	1,262	3,030	5,314	307	360	. . .	2,717
May	11,930	12,030	5,601	5,653	15	. . .	3,013
June	4,198	36,930	3,211	. . .	242	. . .	4,820
July	4,121	29,354	. . .	. . .	8	. . .	6,356
August	14,463	18,972	13,751	32	. . .	. . .	3,094
September	13,400	19,930	8,165	. . .	5,450	. . .	4,055
October	6,852	28,506	32,137	13,533	35,212	5,290	3,426
November	9,524	4,608	4,350	33,058	15,995	30,499	15,337
December	3,327	10,075	7,039	46,074	6,543	63,235	26,422
* Bags	156,932	230,371	129,033	103,103	72,816	138,322	95,787
* Of 2 mds. or 168 lbs. each on an average.					Total 926,364 Bags.		

Now the port of Calcutta communicates directly with the province of Agra, by means of two fine navigable rivers, the Ganges and the Jumna.

The quantity of rice exported only to the Mauritius, (and it is there sent for the purpose of raising, at a greatly enhanced cost, sugar for the wants of Great Britain,) this rice would have adequately supported in a season of scarcity 578,520 persons for a month. But besides this vast export of rice, he would read another document, which would show the large export of other

kinds of grain and vegetable food [it might be said, of all kinds,] which was going on from Calcutta, while famine was depopulating Agra.

EXPORTED FROM CALCUTTA IN 1838.

		Wheat.	Paddy.	Grain.	Dholl and Peas.	Flour.	Bran.
January	Great Britain	36	998	1,584	273	4,191	32
	Mauritius .	4,200	80	3,098	127		805
	Sundries .	2,001	353	792	100	58	8
February	Great Britain	14	262	178		4,096	30
	Mauritius .	3,850	50	52			
	Sundries .	1,734	199	1,099	391	31	73
March	Great Britain						
	Mauritius .	3,150	1,364	4,745	394		
	Sundries .		1,514	91	87		
April	Great Britain	250	10	655	10		
	Mauritius .	2,421	23	650	286		
	Sundries .		1,469	40		1,930	
May	Great Britain				84		
	Mauritius .	1,400	42	433	34		
	Sundries .						
June	Great Britain	10	330	62		1,102	
	Mauritius .	1,152	40	7,132	4,333		
	Sundries .	2,850	40	140	92		
July	Great Britain	12	307	557	800	138	
	Mauritius .	776	6	2,164	1,401		6
	Sundries .	3,506	138	413	356	227	
August	Great Britain		62	62		1,435	
	Mauritius .	3,505	26	3,529	662		
	Sundries .		60	527	143		
September	Great Britain	100	100	2,800	570		
	Mauritius .	3,210	50	1,212	100		
	Sundries .		50	16		1,190	
October	Great Britain		17	380	818		
	Mauritius .	10,875	67	3,025	1,003		
	Sundries .		16	9		2,853	
November	Great Britain			100	14		
	Mauritius .	2,000	71	2,883	2,760		
	Sundries .	23,508	94	92	266	2,743	
December	Great Britain						
	Mauritius .	5,670	12	2,331	1,885	474	
	Sundries .						
		76,230	7,850	40,851	16,989	20,4468	974

Bazaar Maunds.

Wheat	76,230
Paddy	7,850
Grain	40,851
Dholl and Peas	16,989
Flour	20,468
Bran	974

Bazaar Maunds of 84 lbs. 163,362

If further proof be required of the inability of the Natives to pay for the food with which their country teemed, while they were starving, it is furnished by the fact, that since their destruction, the Government has been compelled to reduce the tax assessed upon their lands, no less a sum than 59 per Cent. of the whole amount, and to submit to a large consequent annihilation of revenue (rupees 1,004,209).

Cotton and sugar are two great staple productions of India, and in the Presidency of Bombay, where there are vast tracts of waste, the late Governor, Sir R. Grant, in order to encourage the Natives to produce these articles, so vital to the commerce and manufactures of England, invited them, by public proclamations, to take grants of land, on the terms of exemption from land-tax for a given number of years. Especial care was taken that the public revenue should not be diminished to the extent of one farthing by the operation of these grants. The result of this wise and humane measure, was, that in a very few brief months, the Bombay Chamber of Commerce reported to the London East India and China Association, that excellent sugar from the Mauritius cane, and cotton, equal to some of the finer kinds of American, were being produced. What did the Court of Directors, when they heard of these grants? The following Notification issued in the Bombay Government Gazette of the 20th of June, 1838, must answer the question:

“The Honorable the Court of Directors having been pleased to disapprove of the Notifications of the 24th of February, and 1st of August, 1835, and of the 1st and 17th of November, 1836, issued under the authority of Government by the Revenue Commissioner, granting certain exemptions from assessment to lands cultivated with cotton, and the Mauritius sugar cane, and to direct that such Notifications **BE IMMEDIATELY RECALLED**; the Right Honorable the Governor in Council is pleased hereby to cancel the said Notifications from this date.”

Dr. BOWRING said that it was a privilege to be allowed to co-operate in a work so important as that in which the society was engaged—a work of peace, appropriately advanced in this temple of

peace—a work of humanity, fitly entered upon by those, who in the cause of humanity, never have been known to faint or flag; that religious body who happily bringing all their energies to concentrate themselves on a few great objects, pursue these objects with untired and unabating zeal, and will submit to no defeat, nor slacken under any disappointment. He thought it of the happiest augury that the religious body of Friends should gather around the cradle, as it were, of the British India Society, and was quite persuaded they would watch its growth, and bring it up to a propitious and efficient maturity. The Society had indeed everything to recommend it. A field of beneficence on the very widest scale; the amplest verge for charity and philanthropy. It was to him a thought of humiliation and sorrow, that the supply of benevolence seldom equalled the demand; and of the sympathy which is called into action, how little is well or wisely directed! A lady faints in a public assembly—what a rush there is of kindness—how many are hurrying to offer or to administer aid. Millions perish of hunger, how small the supply of active charity! You have heard the horrid tale of suffering which your eloquent friend has brought to your thoughts; you have listened to the picture of misery sketched by so masterly a hand! Are not these sufferers men and brethren? Think you that they are outcasts from the bounty of our common Father! O no! the sun that shines on them is the same, but mightier and brighter than that which ripens your harvests. They walk by the banks of more magnificent rivers than ours; they look up to loftier mountains; they are surrounded by the beauties and glories of nature, showing that the purposes of Providence towards them, were as paternal and as beneficent as towards the most favoured portions of the human race. And yet they are miserable—most miserable! But it is we who are responsible. We were the conquerors of their native land. To us its Government has been confided. If they are happy, ours is the glory; if they are wretched, ours is the shame!

It may be asked, what interest have we in busying ourselves about their felicity? We have the strongest interest, the interest of duty; and here, as in almost every other case, interest and duty

are inseparable. Our prosperity is linked with our philanthropy ; our very selfishness should teach us benevolence.

It was indeed a noble sacrifice, when the Legislature voted twenty millions for the abolition of Slavery. There is no man, however poor or mean in this country, who did not contribute something to that magnificent work of emancipation. If the wealth of the few paid a portion of the price of that great deed, so did the sweat of the many ; the labourer in the field was a contributor, as well as the lord in the palace. But do you know that the sacrifice has been made in vain ; that the misery, that the Slavery which have been left, are greater than the misery and the Slavery you destroyed, or meant to destroy !

Mr. Buxton's book has shown, that so far from having uprooted Slavery, Africa, unhappy Africa is more desolate, devastated, unpeopled than before, and that the Slavery fiend is ruling more fiercely, more cruelly than ever. The fact, the lamentable fact is, that our efforts have been misdirected. We have not attacked the evil at its source. 'We have not crushed the mischief in its bud. We have been grappling with it alone, where it was too great to be mastered or managed by our puny means. We have talked in vain ; we have legislated in vain ; we must track back the pestilence to its very origin.

Look at Africa ! What country is there whose lands are more fertile ; the labour of whose population is obtainable for so small a remuneration ; and what have European cupidity and European miscalculation done ? They have transplanted the African to lands infinitely less fruitful ; to lands where labour is incomparably more costly ; they have sacrificed lives innumerable in this profligate shifting, and have made the people of England, all the people of England, pay for the enormously aggravated cost of all Colonial produce. You must pay dearly to the West Indian planter because he has trafficked in Slaves. These slaves, had they been left at home protected by the peaceful guarantees of legitimate intercourse, might have given you from their own lands, at an incomparably less cost, all that has been extorted from their labour, by those who stole, or by those who work

them. At home, they might have been tranquil, happy, productive; but you have allowed them to be kidnapped, to be conveyed across the Atlantic, to be forced to excessive labour, and you have consented, and consent to pay, to those who kidnapped, and to those who bought them, a profit, a high profit, on their treachery and their trade.

If he dwelt somewhat at length on this part of the subject, it was because his visit to Eastern Africa, and constant correspondence with that extraordinary Prince who now rules over Egypt and Nubia, down to the frontiers of Abyssinia, had of late, particularly called his attention to the subject. Mahomet Ali has just been accompanying an expedition up the Blue Nile. On one occasion, in that exceedingly fertile part of Africa, which is found at the confluence of the Blue and White Nile, a Melek or Native Chieftain, came down from the mountains to pay his homage. It was found, that though the country is productive almost beyond example; though the Doura produces sixty seeds for one, and the finest cotton uncultured by human hands, grows wild in the woods, that the horrid influence of the Slave-trade had forced the Melek and his tribe to live in the mountains, on the green leaves of the forest trees, lest their descending into the plains, and occupying themselves with the cultivation of the lands, should expose them and their families to be kidnapped and sold to the slave dealing Iellab. To the honour of Mahomet Ali, be it mentioned, that he issued positive directions prohibiting the capture of Slaves, that he directed the Negroes who should take to the cultivation of the lands to be protected and recompensed; and has been giving effect to an assurance that the Consul-general and himself had the happiness of obtaining from him, that he would do what in him lay for the total suppression of the Slave-trade in Eastern Africa.

In the same way must this society work in Asia. There is a boundless field for production. With proper care and attention, there can be no doubt, that our Asiatic possessions may become the means of putting an end to Slavery itself. Their competition will successfully meet the produce of Slaves in every part of the American continent. Give to Asia a fair chance, and its inhabitants

will release you and your manufacturers from the vassalage, under which they lie to Slave-cultivators and Slave-traders. Cotton, so important an element in your manufacturing organization may, there is no doubt of it, be produced more economically and to any extent in your India possessions. But you must look towards them; you must busy yourselves about their interests and about their concerns, and it will be found that your interest, as has been already observed, is completely synonymous with your duty.

JOHN CRAWFURD, Esq., late Governor of Singapore, and Envoy to the Birman Court, next addressed the meeting. He said, that after a long experience of the state of India, he could bear testimony to the general accuracy and fulness of Mr. Thompson's eloquent address. In some matters, indeed, he could not go along with Mr. Thompson: thus, in his praise of the Native Institutions. These were the institutions of a long civilized, but still a rude people, who had much to learn from Europe, without learning its vices. There could be no greater mistake, than to fancy that the enlightened and instructed Indians preferred the dead Sanscrit, a mere receptacle of obsolete theology and pretended science, to the English language, and the practical knowledge and wisdom of which, it was the vehicle. What progress those Indians had made, might be seen in the proceedings of a meeting, lately held in Calcutta, and which he had placed on the table: the object of that meeting was, to oppose a pernicious measure of the Indian Government, for an inquisition into the titles of land, over the whole breadth of a country, as large and as populous as the kingdom of France, and which had been held tax free for above seventy years. He would refer more particularly to the speech of a Brahmin—a man of fortune and influence, well known to all Englishmen acquainted with India, Dwarkanath Tagore. That Brahmin expresses himself in our language far better than nine-tenths of the members of the two Houses of Parliament. The real cause of the bad condition of India—of the poverty of its people, was mal-administration, the most prominent form of which was excessive and uncertain taxation. Nine-tenths of the entire taxation of India falls directly on the

occupant and tiller of the land. A variable periodical assessment of the Land-Tax is the principle adopted now throughout the greater part of India; and when he stated to the meeting, that the rule was to take for the Government eighteen shillings in the pound, leaving the owner but two shillings, it would readily be understood what the effect of such a measure must be, particularly when accompanied every year, or every fifth, or under the most favourable circumstances, every tenth year, with a fresh inquest and a new assessment. Gentlemen who had preceded him, had spoken of the Famine which lately affected Upper India. The system just described, prevails in that country, although six and thirty years ago, a solemn pledge by proclamation was made to the inhabitants, that the Land-Tax should be fixed in perpetuity as in Bengal. That pledge has never been redeemed, nor explanation offered to the people, why it was not. Capital, in such a state of things, cannot accumulate; and, consequently, no stocks of corn can be maintained from the abundance of a plentiful year, to meet the wants of a scarce one: there are neither Roads, Bridges, Canals, and still less Railways, by which the wants of one Province can be supplied from the surplus produce of its neighbour. Vast exports of cheap grain are making from Calcutta, whilst half a million of the people of Agra die of Famine. Great and useful public communications are hardly to be expected from any Government, for these ought to be works alone of a thriving and well governed nation. He remembered that the East India Company, which is the effectual lord of all the land of India, was called upon, during the last Parliamentary examination into its affairs, to show what Public Works they had erected during the twenty years of their Charter. Although they exhibited, on that occasion, a medley of military and civil labours, the whole sum expended, did not amount to anything like the millions which a few private Capitalists had expended on the thirty miles of Railway between Liverpool and Manchester. The greatest drawback against India was, that the people of this country took no interest in its good or bad administration, exercised no surveillance over its Government. A double Government in London: one in

Leadenhall-street and one in Cannon-row, bandied responsibility backwards and forwards between them, and were far more anxious about *dividends* and patronage than about the people of India. It was mystery and concealment, not publicity, which these men naturally desired. It was on this account, that he rejoiced at the establishment of the present Society, which would drag the Indian administration before the bar of public opinion, and eventually effect for the Indians, what the same men had effected for the African Slaves. The local Governments of India were, he was bound in justice to add, actuated by a far better spirit than the home authorities; and this, simply because, from their position, they were more amenable to the public opinion of their countrymen on the spot. Among the calumnies circulated by the Government, he would take this opportunity of noticing one, and it was this, that the European Colonists settled in India were men claiming exclusive privileges for themselves and at variance with the interests of the Indian inhabitants. The very reverse was true. The men who were thus represented as desiring to establish a White Aristocracy, were the men, who for the last twenty-five years have been struggling for the freedom and equal rights of the Hindus—who extorted the freedom of the press from the unwilling East India Company—who ferretted out the nefarious Hill Cooley traffic, which had been patronized by Her Majesty's Privy Council, and winked at by the local Governors. It is the same class which is now aiding the Indians, and endeavouring to protect them against one of the most sweeping systems of public plunder on record, the resumption of rent-free lands already alluded to. He, Mr. Crawford, was the joint Parliamentary Agent of the Europeans and Natives, and he could safely assert, that nothing could exceed the unanimity which prevailed between them. On his arrival from Italy a few days ago, he found a letter addressed to him by a distinguished member of this Society, and which asked, whether he, Mr. Crawford, from his acquaintance with India, contemplated the possibility of any danger from the establishment of the present association. He would take this present opportunity of replying to the question so put to him. He was sure, then, that no danger

whatever, but the utmost advantage both to the Government and the people of India, would accrue from that publicity, which would flow from the labours of this Association. It was quite certain that the more that was known in England respecting India and its Administration, the better would the latter be conducted. He had never known a case of public danger to our Indian Government, the result of the conduct of private individuals, however censurable or irregular, and he would defy any one to produce a single case of evil, or, for that matter, inconvenience arising from free and open discussion, even in the midst of Hindus themselves, but it was on record that several formidable insurrections had arisen from the corruption or other misconduct of public functionaries.

MAJOR-GENERAL BRIGGS rose and stated, that it was not his intention to have addressed the meeting, but he felt bound to do so from what had fallen from his Honorable friend (Mr. J. Crawford) who stood on his left hand. That gentleman had commented on the remarks of Mr. George Thompson, respecting the native Institutions of India; and remarked that, however much he was disposed to view the people in a favourable light, he believed they had few institutions worth preserving, and that they were mainly indebted to us for the little they had of any system of civil order. Now as he, (Major-General Briggs,) could not allow such an opinion coming from a gentleman of such high character and experience, as Mr. Crawford, to go abroad as authority, without being replied to, he thought it right to say something about these institutions, for two reasons:—First, because he believed Mr. George Thompson had formed his opinion mainly from what he (Major-General Briggs) had himself written, and said, on that subject; and secondly, because he believed that the village municipal institutions of India were inferior to none that existed on the face of the globe, in which he did not even exclude our own, which we deemed so perfect. He was prepared to show, that in every Hindu village there was a regularly constituted municipality. At the head of which, was a council, elected originally by the commune, among which was a head-man, literally so denominated in the vernacular language. This com-

mune embraced all the freeholders of the town; and, in order to secure the services of each of the useful artisans and officers, requisite for conducting the concerns of the village, a portion of freehold land was allotted to each, besides a part of the crop of each field. These officers consisted of a Registrar or Accountant, who kept in detail all the public accounts of each cultivator, and who recorded copies of all sales or transfers of real property, and was the assistant to the head-man, in conducting all affairs which required to be written. The other officers were a priest, a schoolmaster, a carpenter, a blacksmith, a washerman, a barber and surgoen, [in the same person,] a potter, a cordwainer, a watchman and a waterman, to distribute the water to irrigated lands. Independently of the contributions in kind, the whole of which formed a tithe of the crop, these officers received wages or fees, according to the duties required of them, from the individuals employing them; the lands and grain were merely granted as retainers to ensure the permanent residence and service of each when required. Besides these contributions by the cultivators or occupants of the land, (whether freeholders, copyholders, or tenant-at-will,) taxes in money were raised in the village to meet extra expenses during the year, necessary to the welfare of the community at large; but the freeholders alone were called on to contribute or to legislate in such affairs. At the end of one year, and at the beginning of the next, the village council-elect, calling together the freeholders, exhibited the state of the funds and the demands for the ensuing year; and whenever a balance remained over, it was either assigned for some new and useful purpose, or was divided on the spot among the freeholders. Thus all accounts were closed annually, and a new one opened, without any feasting of Aldermen or Common Council.

The village funds consisted of the rent of lands belonging either to the members of the commune who had quitted them, and had left no representative, or to families entirely extinct. Such lands became the property of the commune, and might be let or sold according to circumstances, by the Common Council, with the consent of the whole commune; but the return of any one who

could establish his claim to land, even though sold, might recover it on certain conditions, which are well established, and generally known to all who hold shares in any commune. All disputes whether regarding property, contract, &c. between two persons of the same village, are settled by arbitration in the village itself, according to certain forms and rules, which are recognised under every well-regulated native Government. So that each village is a small republic, and a congeries of these constitute a county, at the head of which is a Chief or Count, with a Register and a local Court, in which county disputes are decided by arbitration as in villages, and copies of all transactions of sale and mortgage of landed property are recorded, as they are taken from the village registers. The Major-General read some extracts out of a printed pamphlet, which was understood to be a Supplement to his Work on the Land-Tax of India, now out of print. He concluded his observations, by asking if he had not redeemed his pledge, to show that the rural municipal institutions of India were most admirable. He stated that he had found similar institutions, perhaps not altogether so perfect in his travels in Mesopotamia, Arabia, and throughout Persia, where he had resided many years ago; he appealed to his learned and honorable friend, Dr. Bowring, to confirm the fact, from his own local knowledge of those countries, and he maintained that the Sheikh-ul-Balad of Arabia, and the Rish-Safid of Persia, each answered to the office and character of the Head-man in India, whatever might be his name in the colloquial dialect of the country. He (the Major-General) was not disposed to go so far, as to say positively, that the municipalities of Europe derived their origin from the East; but this he would say, that the more we obtained information regarding India, the more we should feel disposed to recognise the truth of the motto, "*Ex oriente lux*," adopted by an Institution, with which he was connected in another place,* and confess, after all, that in every sense of the word, "*Light comes to us from the East*."

* We understood the Speaker to allude to that noble Institution, the Oriental Translation Committee connected with the Royal Asiatic Society.

JOSEPH PEASE, Sen., Esq., of Darlington, rose and observed, that he was anxious that all present should carry away a correct idea of the real cause of the dreadful Famines, of which they had been hearing an account. The reason why hundred of thousands had perished of hunger, was simply this, that they had been deprived by the Government of the power of purchasing food, although a rupee's worth of rice would support life for thirty days; in other words, a man might live at the cost of three farthings a day. If the land of India were restored to its rightful owners,—the Natives, and they were allowed to enjoy its fruits, we should hear no more of Famines; but how was it possible that such calamities could be prevented, while the Government took *from sixty to ninety per cent. of the entire produce* from the industrious peasant? This simple fact was quite sufficient to account for the wretchedness and misery of the people of India. There must be a radical alteration in the present system. Justice demanded that the land should be given up. It was distressing to know, that millions of acres of the richest soil were lying uncultivated, and in the possession of wild beasts, while human beings were famishing and dying all around.

THOMAS FRANKLAND, Esq. observed, that he had heard it stated as an objection to efforts like those which had been recommended, that the scene of action was too far distant, and that we had better bestir ourselves in behalf of *home* objects. To such an objection he would reply, that England had by her commercial transactions made herself neighbour to the ends of the earth, and that the command was, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." No part of the world should be considered beyond the reach of our benevolent offices, or destitute of claims upon our sympathetic and fraternal regards. The objects of the proposed Society, as he found them stated in the Provisional Committee's Prospectus, were in the first place,—“To bring together, analyse, condense, and diffuse the facts already at hand. To adopt the best means of obtaining regular and systematic information from all parts of India. To begin a collection of the most useful works on every branch of the subject. To issue, under proper management, a Periodical Publication, containing the most recent, important, and

interesting Indian intelligence. To reprint, in whole or in part, such Works as may be calculated to elucidate particular portions of the great subject. To employ an active, experienced, and effective Agency, for the organization of Provincial Auxiliary Societies." These objects were highly interesting and important, and would doubtless lead to others of a practically beneficial character. There was another part of the Prospectus to which he would draw attention, but upon which he would offer no remark:—
" Finally, the Committee respectfully solicit pecuniary assistance."

The business being declared at an end, the meeting separated.

BRITISH INDIA PROVISIONAL COMMITTEE.

A few Individuals, who have been interested by their inquiries into the state of the Natives of British India, have formed themselves into a Provisional Committee, for the purpose, and with the hope of organizing a Society, to be called the **BRITISH INDIA SOCIETY**, for bettering the condition of more than a hundred million of the Natives of the East, who are under the Government of this Country, and who are suffering not only from constantly recurring Famines, but from a great variety of *other evils*, which have yet to be explained and removed.

The Prospectus of the Committee, which has already been extensively circulated, states, that "the primary duty of a **BRITISH INDIA SOCIETY** will be,—to obtain from every available source, authentic and impartial information, respecting the present actual condition of the Natives of India and the circumstances of the Country; and to give to the information so obtained, the widest possible circulation. The means of accomplishing this necessary preliminary object appear to be:—viz.

"To bring together, analyze, condense, and diffuse, the facts already at hand.

"To adopt the best means of obtaining regular and systematic information from all parts of India.

"To begin a Collection of the most useful Works on every branch of the subject.

"To issue, under proper management, a Periodical Publication, containing the most recent, important, and interesting Indian intelligence.

"To reprint, in whole or in part, such works as may be calculated to elucidate particular portions of the great subject.

"To employ an active, experienced, and effective Agency, for the organization of Provincial Auxiliary Societies."

The Committee have already entered upon the discharge of the Duties which are here set forth. They are occupied in the collection, arrangement, and diffusion of information, throwing light upon the real condition of the people of India. All who are acquainted with the mechanism of benevolent Institutions, must, however, be aware, that both time and pecuniary means are required, to conduct the operations which necessarily precede the beneficial application of national sympathy. It will be seen that several sums have already been subscribed for this purpose; and the Committee trust that their Cause, though in its incipient stage, will present sufficient claims to the enlightened Philanthropist to ensure early and liberal assistance.

The Prospectus of the Provisional Committee, with Pamphlets containing information upon various branches of the subject, may be obtained at the temporary Office of the Committee, Guildhall Coffee House, King Street, Cheapside, where Subscriptions will be gratefully received, by the Assistant Secretary.

Provisional Committee.

With power to add to their number.

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