

have been at work to spread it elsewhere, to an extent unprecedented in the history of the world's industry.

It was a remarkable coincidence that at the precise time when Arkwright and Watt were elaborating and perfecting their magnificent improvements of the spinning-machine and steam-engine, the British arms were subjecting vast empires in the East to our dominion, countries which possessed within themselves the germs of an almost boundless production; lands which, from their suitability and fertile nature, might well be expected to furnish illimitable food for the new leviathans of steam and iron which they of Lancashire were creating.

The varieties of cotton known in the commercial world may be referred to three distinct species, each having several varieties. The *Gossypium Barbadosæ* is the species cultivated in the West Indies, North America, and in one or two parts of the peninsula of India.

Gossypium Peruvianum yields the cotton of Brazil, Pernambuco, Peru, &c. This also has been introduced into some districts of India.

Gossypium Indicum is the species which, in a number of varieties, produces the great bulk of the cotton of India and China.

There is a fourth species, the *Gossypium arborum*, or Tree-cotton of India, unknown to commerce, though yielding a beautifully soft and silky fibre admirably adapted for padding cushions, pillows, &c.

The Indian species is that which now calls for our remarks. Of this there are many varieties, each possessing some distinguishing character of its own, arising from mode of treatment, soil, climate, &c.

It usually attains a height of four to six feet, is bi-triennial, but

may be equally cultivated as an annual, germinating and ripening its seed within a period of from four to eight months. The leaves are

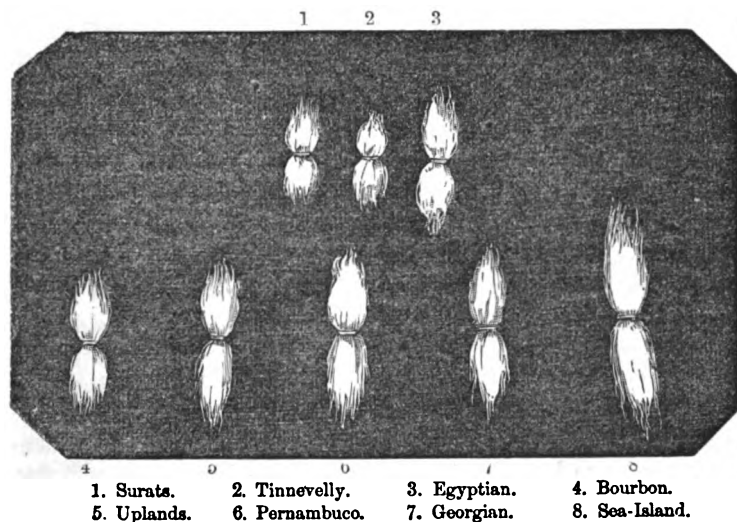


COTTON PLANT.

five-lobed; the flowers are usually found blossoming singly at the extremity of the branches; the petals being of a lively yellow colour, with a small purple spot near the claw. The seeds are five in number, and are clothed with a firmly-adhering greyish down, beneath the short white wool of the capsule.¹

The qualities by which the value of cottons are determined may be confined to three; viz. length of staple, strength of fibre, and cleanness of sample. Colour, which was at one time thought much of, is no longer looked upon as a matter of moment. Inferior as the cotton of India is allowed to be, as regards its staple and purity, there is every reason to believe that in durability it at least equals the produce of any part of America; and of this fact the Hindoos are themselves perfectly aware.

The accompanying illustration will convey to the reader a tolerably correct idea of the relative length of fibre of the leading qualities of cotton entering the markets of the world.



COTTON FIBRE.

In spite of its comparative inferiority, the Chinese have become large consumers of the cotton of India; and from taking a few hundred bales in the early part of the present century, they now consume as much as 50,000,000 lbs. annually. Some quantity is also exported

¹ Royle's Indian Cotton, p. 140.

into the neighbouring countries on the north-west of India; and if we add to these outlets the home-demand for the manufacture of a variety of dresses, furniture-trappings, &c. in daily use amongst all classes of the natives, it will be seen that the yearly production of cotton within the Indian territories must be on an enormous scale.

It has been stated by one allowed to be a competent authority on all matters connected with the natives of India,² that the average consumption of cotton by the inhabitants of Hindostan amounts to not less than twenty pounds for each person. This will give a local annual consumption of 3,000,000,000 lbs.; and, with the quantities taken by Great Britain and China, a total yearly crop of 3,110,000,000 lbs.

High as the average of twenty pounds for each individual may appear at first sight, it is not in reality a large quantity, when we remember that, except amongst the highest classes, cotton dresses form their only wardrobe; and that, in addition to this source of demand, they employ this staple in the manufacture of curtains, cushions, hangings, tents, ropes, carpets, lining for saddles, palanquins, &c., and for many other purposes utterly unknown to Europeans.

From the figures above given, it is evident that, so far as the mere growth of cotton is concerned, India does at this moment produce annually a quantity five times as great as is worked up by the united machinery of Great Britain; in order, therefore, to obtain her supply from India in place of America, England has but to induce the natives of the former country to cultivate one-fifth more of the article, to obtain what she so much desires.

The anxiety manifested by the manufacturers, merchants, and political economists of England, that a large portion of our supply of this raw material should be derived from a country under our own government, in preference to seeing ourselves at the mercy of another nation for eight-tenths of our requirements, is no new feeling. It has been dominant during the greater part of the last sixty years; and although, as regards actual results, in increased shipments to this country, there would appear to be little, if any thing, achieved, it will be as well that we take a rapid survey of the measures adopted at different periods by the East India Company for the furtherance of this object.

As early as the year 1788, the Court of Directors urged the Indian authorities to give every possible encouragement to the growth and improvement of Indian cotton, at the same time ordering a shipment of 500,000 lbs. to be made. Shortly afterwards, screws for the embalement of the article were erected, and a variety of imported seed was

² Dr. Wight.

distributed throughout the peninsula. From this time until the beginning of the present century the shipments of Indian cotton to England fluctuated between 700,000 lbs. and 3,300 lbs., the price of Surat kinds at Liverpool varying from 2*s.* 5*d.* to 8*d.* per lb.

In 1801, samples of the produce of Mauritius and Nankin seeds were received in England; and between that period and 1812 bounties were offered for improved samples, reports were received on the cotton resources of the various districts from the collectors, and quantities of West Indian and American seeds were sent out and distributed through various cotton districts, with copies of instructions carefully compiled. The shipments of cotton to England during this period varied from 27,783,000 lbs. to 694,000 lbs., with prices ranging between 3*s.* and 8*d.*

In 1813 and 1814 the war with America broke out; and strange to say, that although our supplies from the United States entirely ceased while hostilities lasted, the receipts of cotton from British India only amounted in those two years to 5,200,000 lbs., or 2,600,000 lbs. per annum. It was at this time that the first American planter was dispatched to India, with the view of aiding in the improved culture and preparation of cotton, taking with him a number of New Orleans sawgins.

A further encouragement of the efforts of private parties in this important matter was the allowance of the drawback of the whole of the internal and sea duties on cotton exported to Great Britain. This took place in 1816; and the effect of this and other measures was evidenced in the increase of the shipments to England from ten million pounds weight to forty millions in 1817, and eighty-six millions in the following year.

This increase was, however, not of a permanent character; for in the four following years the exports to Liverpool gradually declined to 6,742,000 lbs., prices in England having during that period declined from the war-figure of 1*s.* 6*d.* and 2*s.* to 5½*d.* and 8½*d.*

From this period until the year 1840 the efforts of the government and of public bodies in India, as well as in this country, were confined to obtaining fresh supplies of seed from various parts of the world, endeavouring to improve the native mode of cleaning the cotton, and the more questionable procedure of offering large bounties for certain quantities and qualities of the article grown in India. The shipments of the article to England had during all this time fluctuated to nearly as great a degree as in any previous times, the extremes being 75,746,000 lbs. and 12,324,000 lbs.; the highest price realised by Surats in the Liverpool market for this period having been 1*s.* 4*d.*, and the lowest 2½*d.*

In 1840, Captain Bayles of the Madras army, having returned from a secret mission to the southern states of America, brought with him ten planters skilled in the growth and preparation of cotton, a great quantity of the best cotton-seed, as well as a large assortment of agricultural and mechanical implements employed in the States. Experimental culture on a liberal scale was now commenced in the districts of Broach, within the Bombay presidency; in Coimbatore and Tinnevely, to the south of Madras; and in the Doab and Bundelcund, within the Bengal presidency. These were followed up by similar attempts at various other points within the three presidencies; the American planters were shifted from one locality to another, with a view of testing the comparative qualities of soil; in some instances model plantations were established and worked under the immediate supervision of these planters; in others, efforts were made to induce the native growers to cultivate some of the American varieties, with the seed of which they were supplied. In all these efforts little expense was spared; yet in spite of the lavish and continued outlay, nothing appears to have been arrived at beyond the conviction that, with but one or two exceptions, much time, labour, and money had been expended without any encouraging results.

Baffled in their attempts at the introduction of new varieties of the plant, the experimenters bent their efforts in another direction, and endeavoured to effect improvements in the culture and preparation of the indigenous species of the country. For several years, indeed up to a very recent period, this appears to have been the main object in view; the latest demonstration made by the Indian authorities has been the importation from England of two hundred cottage saw-gins, which were distributed equally through the three presidencies, and the offer made, through the Agricultural Society of India, of a premium of 500*l.* for an improved cotton-dressing machine adapted to native use.

How far these continued efforts, which have, on the whole, been spread over a period of nearly seventy years, have been attended with success, may be judged from the facts, that in 1848 the shipments of Indian cotton to Great Britain amounted to 84,101,000 lbs., being 4,500,000 lbs. less than in 1844, 13,200,000 lbs. less than in 1841, and 2,400,000 lbs. below the exports of 1818.

Taking the average of a number of years, the export of Indian cotton to England shews a sensible increase since the pacification of Europe. Thus the average shipments to Liverpool from the Indian ports during the five years immediately following the peace were 44,000,000 lbs.; whilst in the five years ending 1848 they amounted to 69,000,000 lbs.; in other words, they have averaged an increase of rather

more than fifty per cent in thirty-three years. This augmentation, however, sinks into utter insignificance when compared with the progress of the cotton shipments from the United States to England during the same period, which was, in round numbers, from 45,000,000 lbs. to 600,000,000 lbs., shewing an increase of more than thirteen hundred per cent.

The argument that this increase of Indian cotton is highly satisfactory, seeing that it has taken place in the teeth of constantly falling prices in Europe, goes for very little, inasmuch as America has had the same disadvantage to contend against; for the relative values of the two articles remain much as they were thirty years since.

In the case of America the depression of the European markets has been met by improved and more economical methods of culture and preparation, the result of scientific skill and untiring energy. In India these elements have never been brought to bear beyond the model farms, for reasons which will be presently shewn. Other causes have, however, been at work, and enabled the export to be carried on in spite of the continually depressed markets. These have been a fall in the rate of freights from 14*l.* to 4*l.* 5*s.* and 2*l.* 15*s.* per ton, in other words, from 2½*d.* to ¼*d.* and ½*d.* per lb.; a decline in the exchange between the two countries of quite 8*d.* in the rupee, equal to nearly 2½*d.* per lb. on the cost of the cotton; the diminution of the cost of inland carriage and insurance, owing to the complete pacification of India: this item gives a saving of 8*d.* per ton per mile on the land-carriage from Berar to Mirzapore, and of 3½*d.* per ton per mile on the water-conveyance thence to Calcutta, equal together to nearly 2½*d.* per lb. on the entire journey; and lastly, the change of route of Berar cotton, to Bombay in place of Calcutta, has effected a saving of ½*d.* per lb.; making a total economy of about 7*d.* per lb. on the charges attaching to the bulk of the Indian cottons shipped to England, and which has thus enabled the article to be so exported in the face of lower prices.³

By far the greater portion of the English supplies of Indian cotton are shipped from the port of Bombay, as may be seen by reference to the following figures:—

From Bombay	55,201,231	} representing an average of 13 years ending 1846.
„ Calcutta	1,293,982	
„ Madras	3,973,074	
„ Tinnevely	1,110,084	

Having thus seen that, at the end of labours spread over seventy years, after a large outlay of money and labour, after the importation

³ Chapman's Cotton and Commerce of India, pp. 68-77.

of seed, tools, and superintendence, the quantity of Indian cotton obtained for England amounts to but one-sixteenth in value of her total requirements ; that in but few respects does the bulk of this excel in quality that which was exported fifty years since ; and that the culture of the plant has been very partially extended or improved in the chief cotton-growing districts, scarcely at all in provinces to which that cultivation is less known,—it behoves us to examine into the causes of this wholesale failure.

It must be borne in mind that the question of improvement of Indian cotton should be considered under three distinct heads : the introduction of better varieties, the amelioration of the quality and condition of the indigenous produce already grown, and the increased culture of the plant.

The opinions of the American planters who were engaged by the East India Company appear to have been that the soils selected for trial of new seed were adverse to the chances of success. That this has been so in several instances, and with some shew of reasoning, there can be little doubt ; the black cotton soil has been, in not a few cases, supplanted by the red soil, especially of southern India, where some success has attended the trials thus made. There does not seem, however, to have been much, if any, attention paid to the peculiarities of climate, the degree of moisture, the temperature, nor of these points taken in connexion with varieties of soil.

It will require no argument to shew that conditions affecting the vegetable economy of sugar, coffee, or rice, must be not altogether without their value in regard to the development of the cotton-plant, whether in India or elsewhere. Yet it does not appear that this consideration has entered into the calculations of the many practical men engaged in the long labours of the cotton experiments of India.

It cannot be that, as has been said, any portion of these failures is attributable to the supineness of the agency employed. If the bulk of the experimentalists have been in the employ of government, and therefore not so likely to have taken a lively interest in the matter, what is to be said of the want of success attending private enterprise ? All appear to have shared in the common disappointment ; and it is clear that we must look elsewhere for causes of failure.

Whilst climate and soil, separately or together, have been at work in retardment of new culture or the introduction of new varieties, there are antagonisms to be found in other quarters, affecting not only these, but the improvement of the indigenous cotton by culture, and by care in picking, equally with the increase in the amount of crop produced.

Foremost amongst these are undoubtedly the almost total absence of roads and canals through the heart of India ; absence of interest in the experiment on the part of the ryots, owing to causes I shall presently notice ; and lastly, want of all security for the investment of European capital in the cotton-trade of the interior.

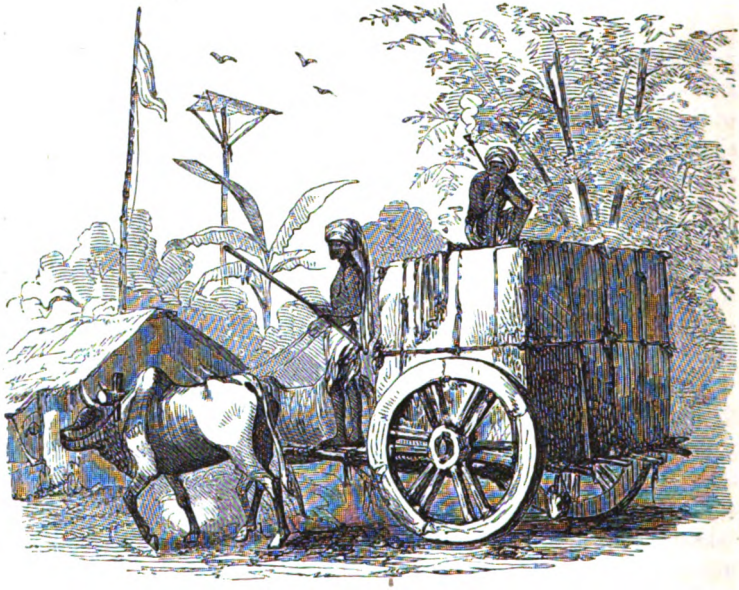
The first of these, although it might be supposed not to affect the produce of some of the cotton districts which are situated along the sea-board, has, nevertheless, a very material influence on the crops of these countries ; but still more so in those more distant and extensive districts which furnish large quantities of exportable and locally consumed cotton. In the countries of Central India, not less than in those to the north and north-west, owing to the absence of all roads for vehicles, the ordinary means of conveyance is by pack-bullocks, who in vast droves track their slow and weary way across sandy, sterile tracts, through wild jungle-paths, and over steep ghauts, for hundreds of miles. To bring the cotton of Berar alone to Bombay, it is computed that the services of 180,000 head of cattle are required ;⁴ and when we remember that their journey is for a great distance performed through districts in which both water and fodder are always scarce, it will not be surprising that the utmost uncertainty prevails as to the receipt of crops at the port of shipment. This primitive mode of conveyance is not only the most tedious, but the most costly of any in existence ; yet by far the greater part of British India possesses no roads which will allow of the employment of carts.

It is in vain that British enterprise and capital are brought to bear upon the great experiment of cotton, so long as the universal cry for roads is disregarded. British merchants have been found with energy sufficient to brave the difficulties attending the establishment of agencies in the interior ; but their ardour is damped, their efforts thwarted, and their capital jeopardised, by the one great crying evil, the utter absence of roads available for carriages. The old mode of transport is of necessity resorted to—that of pack-bullocks ; and so slow and costly is this, that long before one crop of cotton be dispatched from the place of growth, the following harvest will have commenced ;⁵ ships which have been provided in anticipation for the conveyance of this cotton to Europe are meanwhile awaiting its arrival in the harbour of Bombay until the shipping season shall have passed ; and the interest on the capital thus indefinitely locked up accumulates, until it forms a heavy and grievous item amongst the charges of the operation.

⁴ The Cotton and Commerce of India, p. 79.

⁵ India under a Bureaucracy, p. 105.

It is not, however, in the disregard to the want of proper means of conveying produce from one province to the other that the authorities evince their apathy, and from which the development of the cotton re-



LOADED COTTON-HACKERY.

sources of India languishes. There are many other ways in which the industry of the country suffers; and, perhaps, in none other more surely and severely than in the surrendering of some of the finest and most promising districts, as regards cotton capabilities, into the hands of young and inexperienced civilians.

Facts speak more plainly than theories or arguments; and the following, which bears upon one of the most hopeful tracts of western India, is a case quite to the purpose. "The province of Candeish contains 12,078 square miles, of which it is estimated that the arable portion is 9772. Of this arable area, 1413 square miles are cultivated, and 8359 are lying waste. The population of the whole province was 785,991, according to a census taken in 1851. The number of villages in the whole province is 3837, of which 1079 are now uninhabited. The soil of Candeish is stated to be superior in quality to, and yields

heavier crops than that of the Deccan and southern Mahratta country. Although so much of the country now lies in waste, the traces of a former country are to be seen in the mango and tamarind trees, and the many ruined wells which are still to be met with in the neighbourhood of almost every village. Of the five-sixths of the arable land, the five millions of square acres now lying waste, Captain Wingate remarks, *nearly the whole is comparatively fertile*, and suitable to the growth of exportable products, such as cotton, oil-seeds, &c.* Here then is a vast tract of most promising country with but one-sixth of its surface brought under cultivation, and having one-third of its once thriving villages entirely deserted! Can any thing speak more plainly than this does, of the neglectful state in which promising districts are left by the rulers of the country? It would be useless to inquire from what cause has arisen the desertion of those 1079 villages; although it is probable that the same indifference which looks calmly on, and provides no amelioration, had something to do with bringing about that melancholy state of things.

Of the immediate prospects held out to this district, which it must be remembered is equal in area to nearly half of Scotland, the reader may form some opinion from the quality of the functionaries placed in charge of it. At the end of July 1850, the Bombay government placed the province in the hands of a young gentleman, no doubt of exceedingly good family, and possibly possessing a first-rate classical education, but who, having only entered the Honourable Company's service in 1847, could not be expected to know any thing of the details of administration, or of the people and the country. This gentleman's assistant was still more juvenile in years and Indian experience, having had about fourteen months' acquaintance with the country. It is needless to speculate upon the amount of public mischief which the administrative experiments of these budding functionaries may bring about, or upon the number of ruined villages, or neglected fields, they may successively try their "prentice hands" upon.

With regard to the reputed indifference of the ryots to make any attempts at improved modes of culture, or the introduction of new varieties, some grave doubts may well arise. From all available data it would appear, that it is the opposition of the native capitalists, and not the cultivators, that has to be encountered. These men are opposed to change of every kind, dreading the possible loss of any portion of their influence and gains; they are particularly averse to the introduction of any new varieties of the plant, as likely to interfere with the indige-

* "Cotton Circular" of Messrs. Ritchie, Stuart, and Co., Bombay, 1852.

nous kind, and which they pretend would bring down upon the country the "evil eye." So determined was the opposition of these bigoted men, that in many places they employed people to go out at night and root up the young American seedlings from the experimental fields.

The ryots indeed are entirely in the hands of this unscrupulous race of men, who alone profit by any improvement in their means, and who by a careful scrutiny of the proceedings of the former, generally contrive to leave them at the end of crop-time as poor as they began.⁷ If there is any real indifference on the part of the poor cultivator to improvements, it is the result of the smallness of his wants, added to the utter hopelessness of any attempt at bettering his condition. There is, however, another and stronger cause at work than these; and that is, the want of a certain and sufficient price to compensate for any departure from old-established practices. It has been shewn that the proportion of cotton taken annually for export to Europe does not exceed one twenty-fourth part of the gross produce of the article; and that, for all local purposes, the fibre is as well adapted, or realises as much, when dirty and discoloured as when carefully prepared. As nearly all cultivation is carried on under loans from mahajuns, and other monied men, who purchase the crops at their own price, it follows that the ryot has

⁷ "The cotton is produced by the ryot. He is always in his banker's books as deep in proportion to his means as his European master, and can do nothing without aid. The brokers, or cotton-cleaners, or gin-house men, are the middlemen between the chetty and the ryot. The chetties being monied men, make an advance to the broker. The broker is particular in classifying the seed-cotton, and pays for it according to cleanliness, and then he has much of the trash and rotten locks picked out, not to make the cotton better, but because the rubbish chokes the churka, and prevents it from working. The good cotton is then separated from the seed, and the bad stuff which had been taken away from the good is beaten with a stone to loosen up the rotten fibre from the seed, and then it is passed through the churka. The good cotton and this bad stuff are both taken into a little room, six feet by six, which is entered by a low door, about eighteen inches by two feet, and a little hole as a ventilator is made through the outer wall. Two men then go in with a bundle of long smooth rods in each hand, and a cloth is tied over the mouth and nose; one man places his back so as to stop this little door completely to prevent waste, and they both set to work to whip the cotton with their rods, to mix the good and bad together so thoroughly that a very tolerable article is turned out; even after all this bedevilling, if the people get a living price for it, they let it go as it is. But, as is usually the case, they are shaved so close, that they are driven to resort to another means of realising profit. They add a handful or two of seed to every bundle, and this is delivered to the chetties, and the chetties deliver it to their European agents, and the European agents save their exchange, and their object is gained. The cotton is taken by the manufacturer at a low price, because he knows not what he is buying."—*Letter from an American Planter to the Madras Government on Culture of Cotton in India*, p. 37.

little prospect indeed of releasing himself from the thralldom of these harpies, and coming in contact with buyers for the English markets.

To suppose that the agriculturists of India are incapable of being stimulated to any effort at improvement, to believe that they would not strive to better their condition if it were in their power to do so, is to consider them as differing from all other men in every part of the world. It is not found to be so with the Hindoo worker in cities; and unless it can be shewn that a rural life has the power of subverting the natural feelings of mankind, this hollowest of all hollow pretences must fall to the ground.

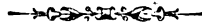
The want of roads, which has so long operated against the introduction of European agency and capital into the interior, is scarcely of such serious moment as the insecurity attaching to all advances made by the English dealers. It has been the profession of the government to desire that British merchants should open up the country by the establishment of agencies for the purchase of cotton in various districts; yet when the uncertainties and procrastination of the local courts of justice were pointed out, and a request made that private capitalists should be allowed to avail themselves of the summary and only effectual process for recovery of advances which was pursued by the government collectors under similar circumstances, the authorities consistently with the red-tapism which pervades the whole system, declined to accede to so reasonable a request.^a Nevertheless we are told that the government is most anxious to aid in developing the resources of India!

Looking at all the facts that have been thrown together in this chapter, and summing them up, we find the great cotton question to stand thus. British India, although admitted to be capable of supplying England with the whole of her cotton, furnishes but one-eighth of her imports of that article, the shipments of India cotton to this country in 1847 and 1848 being actually less than they had been at four previous dates; whilst those of 1845 and 1846 were considerably below the exports of the five previous years. The quality of the article, with a few solitary exceptions, varies in no respect from that of fifty years since. English capital and skill have been in vain introduced into the interior, where government, whilst professing a desire to assist, has in reality refused all aid. The Honourable Company have, during a period of about seventy years, introduced a dozen American planters, a score of ploughs, a few hundred bushels of seed, opened a model-farm or two, offered some paltry premiums, and lately dispatched two hundred cotton-gins for distribution amongst two millions of cultiva-

^a India under a Bureaucracy, p. 108.

tors ; and when all these gigantic efforts, paraded through whole hecatombs of dispatches, that would supply ample fuel for a hundred suttees,—when these have all failed, the red-tapists protest that all has been done that can be done ! It does not appear to have occurred to the rulers of India, that the same means which have so completely changed the aspect and destiny of other countries might not have been without influence in this tax-devoured land ; that what saw-gins, and ploughs, and model-farms, failed to achieve, might peradventure have been accomplished by purifying the courts of law and making a few roads.

The utter neglect of this branch of public works, despite the reports and complaints on the subject from all parts of the vast continent of India, needs a separate chapter, where it will be seen that information upon this vital necessity of the state has long since been furnished to the hands of those whose duty it should have been to have apportioned some honest fraction of the millions wrung from the industry of the people to the satisfying their wants. The remedy was within their grasp ; but they preferred the quackery of theoretical experiments, the parade of official dispatches, the mockery and mystification of parliamentary blue-books. One brief emphatic order, meant for obedience, which said, "Let there be roads," would have changed the face of the country, ameliorated the condition of the people, and made the cotton-trade of India with Europe a splendid fact, instead of, as at present, a disgraceful failure.



CHAPTER V.

ROADS, RIVERS, AND RAILWAYS.

To dilate upon the advantages arising from facility of communication through a country so extensive, and in many parts so densely peopled, as India, in a book intended for the millions of Great Britain, would be a task so totally unneeded, that I may at once proceed to that which will most fully illustrate the present subject, and examine to what extent and in what manner the former rulers of India undertook such works of public utility as roads, canals, &c., before proceeding to notice their present condition.

In regions so exposed to seasons of great drought, or, on the contrary, to destructive floods, it might naturally be expected that wherever agriculture was followed, wherever the hand of man sowed the seed that was to minister to his daily wants, there some provision, however rude, however ineffective, would be resorted to in order to guard the husbandman against the consequences of either of the above casualties. The earliest records of Hindoo history tell how works of embankment and irrigation were executed, and how careful were the inhabitants, even in those remote ages, of the fructifying showers, which but for some provision of industry would to a great extent have been lost to the country.

It requires no stretch of the imagination to paint the feelings of a people chiefly occupied by agriculture, who, situated in the vast plains of central and northern India, saw the genial showers of each monsoon falling upon the elevated table-lands, and rushing past them to the great rivers, lost to all useful purposes, and serving but to cause a temporary burst of vegetation in their immediate vicinity, flooding the lands along the river-banks, and then rolling onwards in their downward course over rocks and precipices, until at last they were lost in the mighty ocean far in the south.

Many, though simple, were the early earthworks of the Hindoo

husbandmen: huge dams of stone, timber, and soil were flung across the mouths of mountain-gorges; and in the artificial tanks thus formed vast bodies of water would be gathered, for use during the dry seasons by means of channels cut along the slopes of the rocky heights, and led down to the required spots by earthen aqueducts. In other cases the waters of some of the principal rivers were carried by similar channels to spots which were otherwise out of the reach of the fertilising powers of those streams.

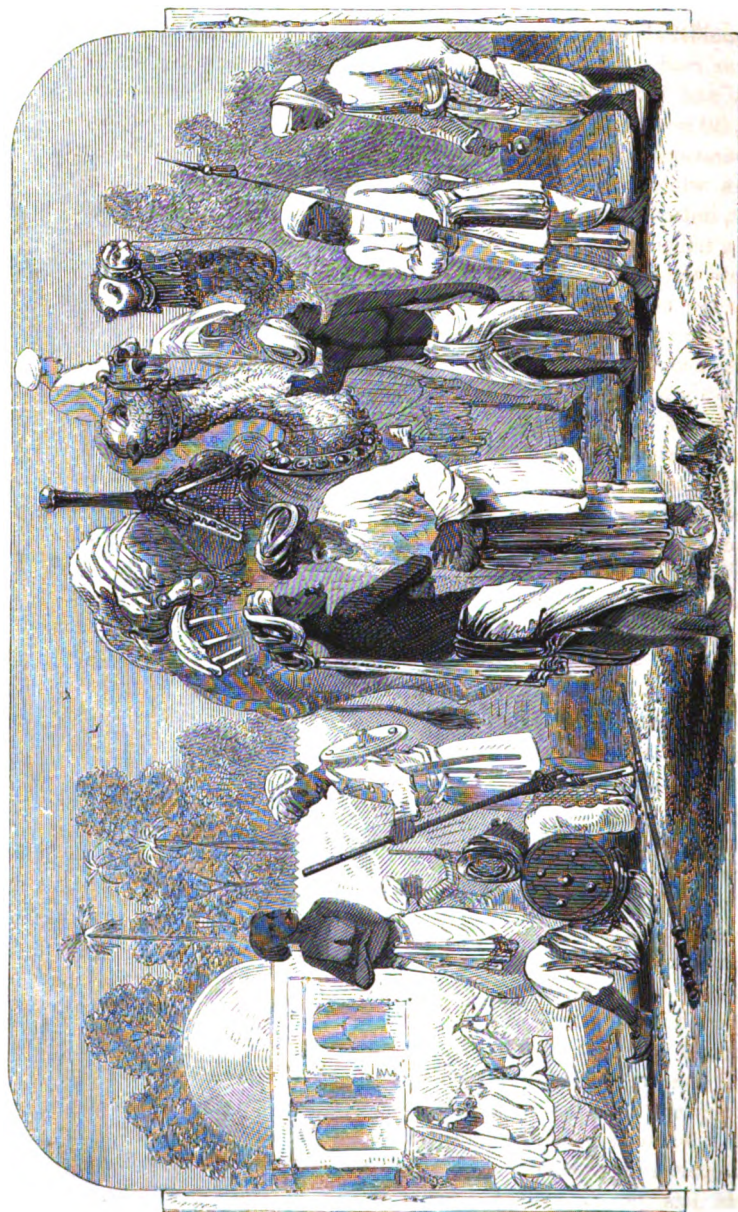
The traffic in that more remote period, carried on, as it was, by the rudest vehicles near the largest towns, and by coolies in remote



THE SUGGAR, OR VILLAGE-CART.

districts, does not appear to have called for any extensive roads, nor were bridges in much use; but as time rolled on, as the human race increased with tropical fruitfulness in that teeming land, the wants of man became multiplied and enlarged, and his industrial powers were called forth to satisfy them.

The Mahomedan conquerors of India were ever alive to the necessities of the country; and we find that even those monarchs who were most occupied by war were never unmindful of their subjects, but found



INDIAN CARAVANSERAI AND TRAVELLERS.

time, amidst all their conquests, for works of public utility. Of Feroze Shah we read, that among other undertakings for promoting the prosperity and happiness of his people, he constructed 50 dams across rivers, 30 reservoirs for purposes of irrigation, 40 mosques, 30 colleges, 100 caravanserais for travellers, 100 public baths, and 150 bridges. Besides which, he formed a canal of considerable magnitude—the largest, indeed, at that time in existence—stretching from the Chetang Nala, a tributary of the Sub-Himalayas, from which it derived its supply, into the country west of the Jumna.

To the enterprise of the emperor Akbar, India is indebted for a series of canal-works of greater extent and utility than any previously in existence; he appears to have placed these public works under regularly appointed superintendents called “Chiefs of the Waters,” in whose hands were the regulation of the supply, the levying of the rates on the districts irrigated, the maintenance of the embankments, the protection and repairs of sluices and bridges, and all police details in connection with them. Nor was the useful only attended to: the pleasure and comfort of the traveller who might wend his weary way along these works were not forgotten, and the careful monarch ordered by special edict, in reference to the great Jumna canal, that on both sides, as far as the city of Hissar, “trees of every description, both for shade and blossom, be planted, so as to make it like the canal under the trees in paradise; and that the sweet flavour of the fruits may reach the mouth of every one; and that from these luxuries a voice may go forth to travellers, calling them to rest in the cities, where their every want will be supplied.”

Not less extensive, and of far greater solidity and finish, was the famous Delhi canal constructed by the emperor Shah Jehan, under the superintendence of his architect, Ali Murdan Khan. This truly noble work took its course from the Feroze canal, southerly, until it reached the base of the Aravilli Mountains, through a shoulder of which a channel sixty feet deep was cut; and thence masonry-work carried the great body of waters through the very heart of the capital, Delhi, at that period in the height of its imperial splendour. Here, after having ministered to the necessities of the husbandmen during a course of several hundred miles, this magnificent aqueduct was made subservient to luxury and taste. A thousand streams flowed from its solid bed on either side, and spreading themselves through masonry channels into every quarter of the royal city, disported, in varied shapes, through marble jets, or cooled the fevered limbs in sculptured baths, or trickled over the gorgeous flowers in harems, lawns, and terraces, or

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anon flowed to the humble homes of labourers, and slaked the poor man's thirst, and bathed the poor man's brow.

To this day there remains abundant evidence of the multiplicity, the extent, and the fertilising powers of the water-courses fed by the great Delhi canal; traditionary reports amongst the people in the neighbourhood tell that the revenues derived from the villages skirting its banks sufficed for the maintenance of 12,000 horse-soldiers. Some idea of the magnitude of these works, and of the efficiency of the system by which they were regulated may be formed, when it is stated, that on this one canal there were placed a working and protective force of 1000 armed peons, 500 horsemen, a proper staff of officers, and a large body of excavators and masons.¹

The Eastern Jumna or Doab Canal was another work of the same monarch, though not equal in extent or value to those previously described. The lands of the Punjab were not neglected amidst all these vast undertakings; for although we have no records relating to the works of irrigation in the country of the Five Rivers, there are abundant proofs of the public spirit of the Mahomedan rulers of the country.²

It might not be altogether uninteresting to compare the noble and enduring works of these Eastern despots with the progress made in a like direction in our own country, or, indeed, in any western kingdom, at that period. The two pictures, it is greatly to be feared, would not bear comparison. In this country, we know, at any rate, that at the epoch alluded to we possessed not a single canal; that our roads were, with few exceptions, mere cattle-tracks; that our largest cities could not boast of the supply of water, or of the police protection accorded to the humblest towns within the empire of Delhi; nor had an English traveller, in journeying from London to Highgate in those early days, so great a certainty of reaching his destination in safety as had any of Shah Jehan's meanest subjects in travelling from the Punjab frontier to Delhi, or from the latter city to Allahabad.

Each of these barbarous sovereigns expended as much money in works of public utility as would have supported any of the standing armies of Europe in those days.

Throughout many other parts of Hindostan, in the peninsula of India, as well as in the western portions of the country, exist the remains of extensive canals, of massive bunds or dams, and artificial tanks. At no time, until the last convulsions of the Tartar empire, ushering in its approaching decadence, were those works lost sight of by the successive emperors of Delhi. Their public spirit would be well

¹ Calcutta Review, vol. xii. p. 83.

² Ibid. vol. xii. p. 142.

imitated by the present rulers of the Indian empire, who, with the narrow views which prompt them to look no further than "to-day," frequently undertake canal work, which furnishes them with a large surplus revenue from water-rates, but dare not venture to copy the liberality of their Tartar teachers, and give back to their subjects some portion of the fees in useful roads or wells. In no instance does the petty shop-keeping genius of Leadenhall-street stand forth in such deformity as in this; that whilst large sums have been disbursed for purposes of irrigation, whence an income is at once derived far more than sufficient to cover the whole of the outlay, and yield a steadily-increasing annual revenue, the votes for roads and bridges have been on the most paltry scale.

It is by no means an easy task to ascertain the precise sums which have been spent upon public works in India, seeing that in three different official statements, all emanating from the Court of Directors, we find as many different totals of their annual cost during the fourteen years ending 1850-1, varying from 346,092*l*.³ down to 197,936*l*. Deducting from the largest sum one-third, which is the usual cost of superintendence, we have 230,667*l*. spent throughout India, about equal to the upkeep of the streets of a large English town.

A reference to official documents shews that in the Bengal and north-west provinces, during the ten years ending 1848-9, the expenditure on roads and bridges was at an average rate of 94,485*l*. per annum; which, as compared with the taxation of these provinces, amounted to something less than three-quarters per cent of the gross revenue; the works of irrigation, by a like calculation, had cost on the average 51,922*l*.; being below the rate of one-half per cent on the gross revenue.

From evidence given recently before the Commons' Committee on Indian affairs, by civil servants of the government, we were told that Bengal, a tract of country far larger than England, possesses but *one* road worthy of the name; and that road chiefly kept up for military purposes. What its real value is to the community may be gathered from the fact, that during certain seasons of the year this military road is for many miles quite impassable for vehicles.⁴ Instances are not

³ Public Works in India, p. 208.

⁴ "There is only one metalled road in the Lower Provinces, the grand trunk road, and it is the only road supported at the expense of government. The other roads are made by the landholders on the requisition of the magistrate, or with local funds. It is a striking proof of the little regard paid to the public convenience so far as this

wanting of gentlemen being compelled to leave their carriages deeply imbedded in the slough of this great military trunk-road, and tramp it on foot for a distance of sixty miles towards Benares.' This is in a province of Hindostan which has been in our possession for nearly a century, and yields a yearly gross revenue of 14,695,870*l.*, equal to the income of Great Britain, not many years since.

What would have been thought of the imperial executive, had they limited this country to one road between London and York, whilst absorbing fourteen millions in taxation! Can it be matter for astonishment that India has been sinking, year by year, in real prosperity; that her industrial classes have become gradually impoverished and fewer in numbers; that the resources of the country have become stagnant, and that whilst the revenues shew an annual decline, there appears no way for remedying this alarming state of things, but by stopping the greater part of the public works!

As to cross-roads, there are literally *none*. It is stipulated that the zemindars shall maintain the village-roads of their districts from the proceeds of the farmed revenue of land; but it is notorious in India that the fulfilment of this is never attempted; and no steps are taken by the authorities to enforce the regulation. Some of the statistical returns relative to Indian roads are very voluminous, and go into many imposing details, with a view of bewildering the reader with the immensity of the great Indian highways. Some of the roads therein are stated to be 1200 to 1400 miles in length,—very formidable distances doubtless to English minds; but inquiry shews that but little more than half of those roads have ever been constructed; whilst the occasional condition of the completed portions may be judged from what has been previously stated.

With regard to the mail-lines, of which a good deal is made in Blue Books and elsewhere, they are simply bullock-tracks, available only for the camel-couriers employed by government, and the Dâk-

great highway is concerned, that of two small bridges which were carried away by floods in 1847, neither is yet rebuilt, though the situation is in one of the most populous and highly cultivated districts, where the traffic is great, and within thirty-five miles from Calcutta; but in the place of one, only a ferry was for some years established, though both these bridges appeared in the report published by the House of Commons as public works which had been sanctioned; and to the present day they are replaced only with temporary erections, insufficient for the traffic; and on one of them tolls are established where there were none before."—*Petition from Inhabitants of Bengal and Agra, 1853.*

⁵ Delhi Gazette, July 1852.

runners (letter-carriers), who convey the mail-bags on their heads or shoulders, from town to town, or between one district and another.*

In no instance has the universal want of roads been felt so cruelly as during the famines which unfortunately occur in many parts of India



CAMEL-COURIER.

every ten or dozen years. At such times, although food may be plentiful to wastefulness in one district, in another not more remote than Middlesex and Lancashire, gaunt famine may be sweeping the land by thousands and tens of thousands of human beings; and no price that can be given, not even the ransom of kingdoms, will suffice to bring from all that abundance one single bushel of grain. The roads are im-

* "The Calcutta and Bombay mail-road was 1,170 miles in length, of which 168 miles had been previously constructed, and how much completed was not stated. ‡ In 1845 the Court were said to have directed that the expenditure on this line should be restricted to the formation of a road adapted to the transit of the mails. Their lordships would perhaps associate the idea of mails with macadamized roads, a mail-coach, a smart coachman, and a guard behind with a blunderbuss to fire at the Thugs and robbers. But the fact was, that a conveyor of mails in India was a pedestrian very lightly clad, carrying a pair of baskets balanced on his shoulders by a bamboo, and a mail-road was but another word for a footpath."—*Speech of the Earl of Albemarle on Indian affairs in the House of Lords, May 2d, 1853.*

passable, the cattle are alike starving, and cities and provinces are depopulated almost within sight of plenty.⁷ In 1823 rice sold in Candeish at the rate of 50 lbs. for a shilling; whilst at Poonah, not 200 miles distant, owing to the want of roads, the supply of grain failed them, a famine ensued, and rice sold at 4 lbs. for a shilling.⁸ In connection with this very country of Candeish may be mentioned another fact illustrative of the effects of neglecting roads. In the year 1847 the collector of the district was compelled to grant the cultivators remissions of the land-tax; not from any successive failure of crops, but the very reverse. The yield of the province had become augmented so far beyond the local requirements, and the state, or rather the total want of roads, was such a barrier to the disposal of their produce elsewhere, that their crops lay useless on their hands, and they found themselves without the means of meeting the assessment.⁹

In the presidency of which this district forms a portion the cost of superintendence of public works amounted to fifty per cent on the work performed, and yet we learn from the report of Sir George Clerk that a great portion of the outlay had been lost by the bad quality of the work.

Examining the state of roads in the Madras presidency, we find that an outlay of about a half per cent of the revenue is all that is accorded the people, although in many parts the land is fertile to a degree, producing the finest indigo and cotton, and an abundance of good sugar. As a consequence, the roads here are in a most disgraceful state, impassable during the rainy season:¹⁰ and what renders this the more

⁷ "Famines occur decennially, some of which, within our time, have swept their millions away. In 1833, 50,000 persons perished in the month of September in Lucknow; at Khanpore 1,200 died of want, and half a million sterling was subscribed by the bountiful to relieve the destitute; in Guntoor 250,000 human beings, 74,000 bullocks, 159,000 milch cattle, and 300,000 sheep and goats died of starvation; 50,000 people perished in Marwa; and in the north-west provinces half a million of human lives are supposed to have been lost. The living preyed upon the dead; mothers devoured their children; and the human imagination could scarcely picture the scenes of horror that pervaded the land. In twenty months' time a million and a half of people must have died of hunger, or of its immediate consequences. The direct pecuniary loss occasioned to government by this single visitation exceeded 5,000,000*l.* sterling,—a sum which would have gone far to avert the calamity from which it arose, had it been expended in constructing thoroughfares to connect the interior with the sea-coast, or districts where scarcity prevailed with those where human food was to be had in abundance."—*East Indian Petition presented to the House of Lords*, 1863.

⁸ Cotton and Commerce of India, p. 114.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ "The road from this extensive district (Cuddapah) to the presidency is in no better state. It is, in short, proverbially bad, even among Madras roads; and there is one part of it which is literally used by the Military Board as a trial-ground to test

cruel is, that the Mysore country possesses some most excellent roads, but which are rendered useless as regards communication with the maritime and trading districts, seeing that in the country contiguous to it there are no roads to meet its own, and therefore they are unavailable beyond its own territories.



AN INDIAN ROAD.

Having thus shewn how cruelly the executive have neglected to carry out the most ordinary construction, or upkeep of roads and bridges, which however essential to the welfare of a people, do not realise any immediate and direct return to the coffers of government, it shall be my task to shew how much more has been done in works producing an early and certain return.

Upwards of forty years have elapsed since the attention of the British government was first seriously directed towards the restoration of the canals and tanks of their Mahomedan predecessors. Surveys were ordered, reports and estimates were sent in, a few experimental

the powers of new gun-carriages, which are pronounced safe if they pass this severe ordeal!"—*Calcutta Review*, December 1851.

canal-pieces were opened, and it was soon made apparent, that however slow a road might be in replenishing the treasury of the Company, there was no question as to the profit attaching to water-works for purposes of irrigation, and that the executive might look to them for results as brilliant as those of any mining operations. Whatever doubts may have existed in the minds of the authorities, in the first instance, as to the propriety of undertaking these truly national works, must have long since vanished; and although much false economy was then practised, to the detriment of these operations, they have, in nearly every case, yielded an annual income equal to the whole sum expended upon them.

At the present time the generality of these canals are in admirable order, and no doubt quite equal to their condition under the Tartar emperors. Some idea may be formed of the extent of these works, and the general efficiency of the arrangements, when it is stated, that on one line, that to the west of the Jumna, there are not less than 214 masonry and timber bridges, 672 stone outlets for irrigation, 11 mills, and 23 mill-bridges, besides an infinity of small cuts and outlets for various purposes.

The extent of land receiving irrigation from this one source was, according to official returns, 1015 square miles; the population benefiting by it nearly 300,000; and the amount of revenue drawn by government from the land so watered was 93,791*l.* annually, nearly all of which was attributable to the use of the stream.

The chief source of direct revenue from these canals is, of course, the water-rent from the villages partaking of the irrigation; and this rent is levied either on the extent irrigated, according to the nature of the cultivation, or by the area of the aperture for feeding the cross channels; these rates vary from two to four shillings per annum per square inch of the opening, and one to ten shillings per acre, per annum. Revenue is also derived from the watering of cattle, for the supply of tanks, from mills erected on the canal worked by the stream, from fines and from transit-dues of goods conveyed on them. In 1826-7 the total revenue from all these sources on this one canal amounted to 4215*l.* In 1846-7 the income was 30,288*l.*, leaving a net revenue of 12,027*l.*¹¹

To this income, however, must be added the known addition to the land-tax, arising from the increased culture by irrigation; and this in the districts now treated of amounted, a few years since, to not less than 29,691*l.*, which, added to the water-rents, &c. 30,288*l.*, bring up

¹¹ Calcutta Review, vol. xii. p. 99.

the total to nearly 60,000*l.*; being at the rate of thirty-six per cent on the capital originally sunk in the work, after deducting the yearly working expenses.

The entire length of this canal and its branches is 445 miles, exclusive of the main water-courses, for feeding the village sluices. This extensive line is under the control of a superintendent, five deputies, and seven overseers, all Europeans; besides about 113 native clerks, overseers, and artificers, who are divided into separate districts or *zillahs*; and have their regular functions of police, revenue, or labour to perform. In addition to their canal duties, they have also charge of extensive plantations of building-trees planted along the banks; and from the sale of the timber thus grown a yearly revenue of fifty per cent on the outlay is derived.¹²

This sketch of the Western Jumna canal will serve for a description of the remainder in Central and Western India and the southern peninsula. Looking at the successful results of these undertakings, and the large amounts of revenue derived from them, it does appear criminal indeed that a more liberal provision for the formation and up-keep of roads is not made in those districts whose necessities cry so loudly for relief.

The same remarks may be applied with equal justice to the revenues derived from the tolls on navigable rivers, which are levied for the ostensible purpose of keeping open the navigation, and originally with the understanding that the tolls were to be devoted to such purposes alone. That this appropriation of tolls is no longer observed may be seen by a statement¹³ shewing that in the case of the Nuddea rivers, small tributaries of the Ganges in the lower provinces of Bengal, not one-fourth of the income is applied legitimately, the large balance being paid in to the general treasury, to swell the ways and means of the government, who conveniently loses sight of all stipulations on this head. The effect of this state of things may be inferred from the fact of these rivers being under the superintendence of an Englishman at a monthly salary of 100*l.*; whilst the whole labour establishment under him is kept down to 28*l.* The consequence of this is, that for four months in the year those rivers are quite impassable, although 80,000 boats depend on their waters for navigation, and actually pay tolls for the purpose of keeping open the channels, to the yearly amount of 23,873*l.*; government expends out of this sum but 5848*l.*; of which 1200*l.* is for European superintendence.¹⁴

¹² Calcutta Review, vol. xii. p. 97.

¹³ Calcutta Englishman, Jan. 5, 1853.

¹⁴ "The first superintendent ever appointed was a *protégé* of the Marquis of Hast-

That a system so vicious, so opposed to all sound and enlightened views, should prove ruinous to every branch of industry cannot be matter for wonder; we accordingly find many cities once famed for their arts and manufactures left without trade, half depopulated, and bereft of every vestige of their once happy condition. It is related by a writer of the present century, that in one city alone he was acquainted with the failure of between fifty and sixty bankers and wholesale merchants, and that similar disasters were occurring in other places.

Closely allied to the reconstruction and enlargement of canals of irrigation, and not one whit of less value to an agricultural country, is the embankment of rivers, by means of what are termed *bunds* (masonry work). These bunds, by confining the waters of the river within their proper channel, not only preserve the growing crops of large tracts of low-lying country from destruction during the wet months, but at the same time economise the contents of the rivers against the dry season, when they are turned to account by means of sluices and aqueducts similar to, and under the like arrangements, as those of canals.

Many of the larger rivers of Bengal, and some of those in the Madras presidency, have been thus embanked, and with the happiest results. The protection which has been thus afforded the native land-owners and ryots has induced them to undertake culture on a scale and system which, under the insecurity of the old régime, could not have been attempted. In the Tanjore country the fruits of this policy have been most abundant. During a period of forty-five years the local government has expended on embankments and the attendant works not less than 390,000*l.*, or at the rate of 8600*l.* per annum. The result has been an increase in the revenues of the district from 314,000*l.* to 493,000*l.*, or 179,000*l.* per annum; whilst the population has swollen from 800,000 to 1,300,000.¹⁵ A portion of this increase of revenue and

ings, and the present one was aid-de-camp of Lord Hardinge; an able man, as his report testifies, and a gallant one, by his antecedents, and therefore, we must be permitted to say, out of his proper position. If European superintendence is required, the office is fit for a respectable English workman; and in England a pound or thirty shillings a week would be his remuneration. In connexion with this view of the office, it may be mentioned, that the superintendent is subordinate to the superintending engineer of the lower provinces, to whom the report above alluded to is made, and who reports to the governor of Bengal, who reports to the government of India, which reports to the Court of Directors, which sends the dispatch to the Board of Control, which of course understands and cares nothing or little about the matter; and so this system of taxation on trade and commerce and of jobbery continues, and we fear will continue, unless Parliament institutes searching local inquiries."—*Calcutta Englishman*, January 5, 1853.

¹⁵ *Calcutta Review*.

population may no doubt be attributable to other and ordinary causes; but there can be no question that by far the greater share is due to the politic outlay upon the river works.

In view of the present wretched state of internal communication in India, the prospect of a system of railroads being carried out in that neglected country appeared as something almost too good for realisation. And so thought the authorities in Leadenhall-street; for in every instance in which a railway company has been started, they seem to have treated the matter as a very playful joke, not at all likely to result in any thing serious. All sorts of difficulties and delays were heaped around these projects; and references out and home again were made with a most determined spirit: but their surest game was contemptuous neglect; for a letter to be noticed at all at the end of many months was rather an unusual thing; and more than one instance is on record when the twenty-four directors took two whole years to concoct a reply to a letter from a railway company!

Procrastination is not confined to the initiatory stages in railway operations; it assails these disturbers of official lassitude in their every stage. It spreads a net-work of red-tape across their path, from which the unfortunates rarely escape. It professes, in high-sounding dispatches meant for the public eye, the utmost desire to forward the views of the railway officials, and at the same moment pens "private and confidential" instructions to local authorities, echoing one emphatic and well-understood command—to delay. The delay, of course, is provided; and often, where least anticipated, difficulties start up which, at first of small apparent moment, give rise eventually to whole reams of official correspondence; whilst the public wonder that, with so many professions of co-operation from the government, such small progress is made with Indian railways.

Madras, which appears likely to be the last to possess a railway, was first in the field; and so long since as 1832 we find a railroad proposed to be made from Madras westwards in the direction of Bangalore. Four years later a survey was made, and a detailed report sent in to the authorities; and in 1845 a company for establishing railway communications in the presidency was formed in London by a number of influential men. In 1847 the company was dissolved, not for want of funds, or from any doubts of the success of the plan, but because the India House officials would not condescend a reply to any of their letters! A portion of the direction, however, persevered, and the result has been that the government agreed to a guarantee of $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on 500,000*l.* for ninety-nine years.

The works of the Madras Railway Company have been much retarded. Several lines have been surveyed, but that from Madras to Arcot, and eventually to Bangalore, running almost due west, has been selected as the precursor of the operations, inasmuch as it extends through a district fertile in the extreme. The first section is already partly in progress, and there is no doubt but that the line will be finally extended so as to meet the Great Indian Peninsula Line.

This latter project, originally termed the Great Eastern Railway, was undertaken chiefly in London, in 1842, with a proposed capital of six millions sterling, and an intended line of operations 1300 miles in extent.

In 1848 negotiations had so far progressed with the various authorities of Leadenhall Street, Cannon Row, and Bombay, that a guarantee of 5 per cent was granted the company upon a preliminary outlay of 500,000*l.* for the purpose of opening one section of the line as far as Callian, about thirty-five miles in extent. Operations were eventually commenced, and it was here that the first railway-ground was broken in India. At the present moment fifteen miles of this line, viz. from Bombay to Tannah, are open for traffic, consisting of a single rail, with masonry-work for a double line, and the remainder is expected to be so during the current year. At Callian it is proposed to extend the railway in two directions—one line running in a north-easterly direction to Allahabad on the Ganges, by way of Candeish and other cotton-producing districts; the second extending south-easterly, through Tannah and Poonah, and across a portion of the Nizam's dominions, until it reaches the Madras railway. In addition to the portion now in progress, contracts are in hand for a further extent of 200 miles.

The estimated cost of construction on this line is 15,000*l.* per mile of double rail, the expense of working at 600*l.* per mile; and from the extreme costliness of the present wretched mode of conveyance, there would appear to be no doubt of a handsome dividend being realised on the amount invested. Much of the expense of these works will arise from the difficulty of crossing the ghauts or elevated lands by which Bombay is surrounded; the lowest points admitting of passage, being between one and two thousand feet above the sea-level.

The first indications of a railway movement in the Bengal presidency was early in 1843. Two years later, the formation of two distinct railway companies was announced. One of these, the Great Western of Bengal, with a proposed capital of 4,000,000*l.*, was to open a line from Calcutta to Rajmahal on the Ganges, a distance of about 200 miles. The East India Railway Company proposed, with

an equal capital, to construct a line of railroad between Calcutta and Mirzapore, avoiding the valley of the Ganges, and making for its destination by a more direct, and at the same time a more difficult line; this distance was 450 miles.

Eventually these two companies became amalgamated, their capital was reduced to 1,000,000*l.*, and in 1848, under the title of the East Indian Railway Company, they obtained a government guarantee of 5 per cent on their capital, for the purpose of a line, 42 miles in length, to Pandooah, on the road to Rajmahal, and thence, by a branch-rail 79 miles long, to the Burdwan collieries. These works were commenced in September 1850, and are expected to be opened by the end of the present year.

A further capital of a million, for carrying the line to Rajmahal has been raised under a guarantee of $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent; and for this section surveys are in progress. In both instances the local governments undertake to provide the land.

The Great North of India Railway Company, projected some years since, has at length given place to the Agra, or Upper India Railway Company, which, with a capital of four millions sterling, proposes to connect the northern waters of the Indus with the navigable portion of the Ganges. Starting from Allahabad, where the deep water of the latter river ceases, the railway will in the first section reach Cawnpore, a distance of 130 miles; thence to Furruckabad, another division will extend for 80 miles. Ninety miles further, the ancient city of Agra will be reached; whence, by a fourth stage of 100 miles, Delhi, the famed capital of the Tartar empire, will be gained.

From Delhi to Lahore and the Indus, future lines are looked to as offering a tempting investment for capital. It is thought that most of this line may be completed for 7000*l.* a mile, as the country through which it will extend offers no obstacles to engineering operations, and indeed appears as though specially adapted for such works.

The Upper India Railway would certainly appear to offer peculiar advantages, inasmuch as it will commence at the precise spot where deep water ceases, and where the river steamers are compelled to halt in their upward course. From Allahabad northwards the navigation of the Ganges is so difficult and tedious, that insurance on goods so conveyed is as high as from Calcutta to England; whilst the cost of land-carriage is at the rate of from 4*d.* to 8*d.* per mile. The government sanction to this undertaking, and the consequent guarantee, have at length been received; and steps will therefore be taken towards commencing operations.

It would be difficult to over-estimate the value of railroads to British India, situated, as that vast country is, without the means of conveying its produce from one district to another, unless at a cost and with a delay which in too many instances act as a complete barrier to industrial progress. Considering the immense advantages the inhabitants of Europe have derived from railway communication, although previously in possession of first-rate roads in all directions, and of numerous rivers and canals, it is not too much to say, that to bestow the same powers of locomotion upon people entirely cut off from inter-traffic, except in the immediate vicinity of a few great rivers, is to endow them with another existence, to give them a status and a future of which they could before have had but little idea.



ESCORT OF TREASURE TO UPPER PROVINCES.

CHAPTER VI.

THE COMMERCIAL HISTORY OF THE THREE PRESIDENCIES ; WITH A
SKETCH OF THE MORALITY OF ANGLO-INDIAN COMMERCE AND BANK-
ING IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

ALTHOUGH in the records of nations, wars and politics occupy the greater share of the historian's attention ; although the exploits of the warrior and the subtleties of the diplomatist eclipse the more humble works of the merchant,—it must not be forgotten that it is to commerce the world owes all that is worth fighting and diplomatising for. It was to snatch from the proud Venetian Republic some share of their vast wealth, flowing from the monopoly of Eastern trade, that the ships of Portugal braved the dangers of the Cape of Storms, and tracked unknown and distant seas. It was trade which drew after those brave adventurers the wary Hollander, the jealous Frenchman, the hardy Dane ; and it was this commerce which captivated the timid and heavy faculties of the English nation, and drew our ships slowly but surely to engross a share of the marvellous riches of the fabled East.

It was commerce which first attracted our ancestors thither ; it is commerce which keeps us there ; and it was the pretended exigencies of this same commerce which, during the last half century, brought about the absorption of native states, of independent territories, and of friendly powers. Commerce carried the British arms to the farthest banks of the Indus, and planted our flag at the foot of the lofty Himalayas ; commerce gave us unlimited dominion through the Eastern Archipelago, and commerce swept those treacherous seas of pirates. The ruling power in Indian affairs is balanced after an awkward and unfortunate fashion between Leadenhall Street and Cannon Row ; but there is another lever brought to bear, unseen but not unfelt, whose fulcrum rests between the Liverpool Exchange and the Manchester Chamber of Commerce.

A chapter devoted to the rise and progress of the commerce of India would be incomplete without some notice of the trade opened by the

nations of continental Europe with the East. As pioneers in this commerce we find the Portuguese, who were first attracted to those remote countries by the great value of the traffic carried on by the Venetians, by way of Egypt, with various regions eastward of the Red Sea ; and we learn that their first efforts, after having reached India by the Cape of Good Hope, were directed to the establishment of factories and opening trading communications with such of the ports on the Indian seaboard as they were then acquainted with. The Malabar Coast and the Islands of Malacca and Sumatra were early settled upon on account of the spice-trade, always one of value, and said at that time to have realised two hundred thousand ducats yearly to these enterprising traders.

Along the coast of Guzerat, at Aden, and at the mouths of some rivers in Cambodia and Cochin China, this adventurous people succeeded in establishing themselves, sometimes by diplomacy, anon by force of arms, but always to the prejudice of the natives, who were no match for the strategy and duplicity of the merchants of Portugal.

In the middle of the sixteenth century the Portuguese commerce with India and the eastern islands was at its height, and extended from Japan to the coast of Africa. Scarcely a country or island but had a factory over which waved the flag of their most Christian majesties. The whole of this long string of possessions were placed under the control and guidance of the viceroy of Goa, who alone corresponded with the court of Lisbon. So lucrative was this high post, that it was an ordinary occurrence for an Indian viceroy to return to Portugal with a fortune of more than a quarter of a million sterling ; whilst the generals, governors, admirals, and other officials, were proportionately successful.

Without any exact records to guide us in our estimate of the value of this trade, it may yet be fairly assumed to have yielded an annual profit of from 150,000*l.* to 200,000*l.* ; and it is recorded by an English traveller of that period that a fleet of Portuguese merchantmen, to the number of 240 sail, was observed on their way to Surat and Cambay.¹

The annexation of the Portuguese crown to that of Spain, coupled with the general corruption of the country and the Indian officials, the advent of the English in the East, and the successful rivalry of the Dutch, —all these paved the way to the decadence of the once flourishing trade of Portugal with the Indies, until one by one the possessions of that nation were wrested from them, much as they had been gained, by force, by treaty, or by mere commercial rivalry, —until at the present time

¹ Milburn's *Oriental Commerce*, vol. i. p. 397.

there remain but one or two obscure spots in the East where their authority retains a shadow of existence; and the sole testimony to their once proud and prosperous rule is to be found in the presence of a few thousands of their hybrid descendants scattered through the suburbs of some of the large cities on the coasts and islands of the eastern seas.

If the Dutch cannot lay claim to the honour of acting as pioneers to the direct trade of Europe with the East, they may at any rate boast of having extended their commerce beyond the limits of any other nation of continental Europe, and of having brought their traffic with the people of the many lands eastwards of the Cape to a prosperity it had never previously known. Shrewd, calculating, patient, and industrious, the Dutch were peculiarly fitted to shine as traders; whilst their rivals, the Portuguese, were more engrossed by politics, by ambition, and by religious bigotry.

For some time after the opening of the Cape route and the establishment of a trade between Portugal and the East Indies, the Dutch were content to act as carriers for the rest of Europe, and plied annually between Lisbon and other European ports. Whilst thus engaged they could not fail to learn much concerning the marvellous wealth of India; and prompted by the glowing accounts related of those distant but wonderful places, a number of Dutch merchants united, and dispatched several vessels in succeeding years to endeavour to discover a passage to the China seas by way of the north. It is needless to relate how these attempts failed; but the indirect result was, that the Dutch succeeded in navigating the southern seas, and availed themselves of the new highway by the Cape to open a trading communication with the many islands and countries of the East, where they not only met with no opposition from the natives, but found every where a marked friendliness and disposition to barter with them.

It was early in the year 1596 that the first Dutch fleet of four ships, well freighted with coin and European commodities, sailed from the Texel, under the command of Cornelius Houtman.² This was followed by other adventurers from Rotterdam and Zealand; and on the return of the first ships in the following year, laden with the most costly and profitable cargoes, many other fleets sought the same good fortune, and the Dutch commerce with India, sealed as it was by the formation of two distinct trading companies, became henceforth a great fact.

In 1602 the different bodies of merchants interested in these undertakings, uniting in one body, made common cause, and under the title of the "Dutch East India Company," received a charter of incorpora-

² Milburn's Oriental Commerce, vol. ii, p. 367.

tion from the States-General, to continue in force for twenty-one years. This gave them the complete monopoly of the eastern trade; whilst the government stipulated in return for a duty of three per cent on all their exports, and a moderate share in their capital, which at that time amounted to 600,000*l*.

Acting in common concert, and pursuing the most vigorous and prompt measures, the new corporation established themselves in many parts of the Indian seas. Before the expiration of a dozen years, the Dutch, in spite of the secret and open opposition of the Portuguese, had succeeded in forming settlements in Persia, Arabia, Western and Eastern India, Pegu, Burmah, Cambodia, Siam, Cochin-China, Japan, and many other islands.

The acquisition of Java, and the expulsion of the Portuguese from all the spice-islands; the establishment of the supreme government of India at the newly-erected city of Batavia in Java; and lastly, the subjugation of the European possessions in Ceylon, followed in rapid succession; and though these successes were clouded with the cruel and unjustifiable massacre of the English at Amboyna, their prosperity received no check; and for the time it appeared that Holland was to enjoy the supreme monopoly of by far the most valuable portion of oriental commerce.

So prosperous were the affairs of the Dutch in the East, that at this time (1653) the declared value of the homeward cargoes had risen from one million to four millions of florins. Their merchantmen numbered thirty sail; whilst fleets of many armed vessels, mounting from sixteen to thirty guns, served to protect their trade, and at the same time to harass that of the English, who were now their only formidable rivals. Their military establishment consisted of six thousand European troops, well disciplined and officered, besides a large body of native militia commanded by Hollanders.

The jealous and cautious policy of the Dutch made them view with the utmost alarm every step taken by the British. No pains were spared to imbue the natives with feelings inimical to the English factors; and whenever the opportunity occurred, they seized upon it to expel the latter from any participation in the commerce of those seas. For a time it seems this policy succeeded to the utmost: the affairs of the Dutch East India Company wore a most prosperous appearance, though hampered by very heavy payments to the government upon each renewal of their charter, and the cost of large armaments dispatched against the English in those seas. At the conclusion of the war with Great Britain their shipments home were valued annually at about

85,000*l.*, consisting chiefly of tea, coffee, spices, sugar, saltpetre, cloths, and silk. The sale of these generally realised 1,700,000*l.*, or one hundred per cent on the invoice or declared value, and probably two hundred per cent on the prime cost.

The expense of their various establishments in the East at this time amounted to about 630,000*l.*, to meet which local revenues gave them nearly 500,000*l.*, the balance having to be provided from the profits of the company, and which it was believed, after paying all foreign and home charges, left a clear million sterling annually.

The war which broke out between England and the States-General in 1795 heralded the downfall of that supremacy which the Dutch East India Company had so long and so successfully maintained. The British had since the previous hostilities greatly strengthened themselves in India; and now that war was again declared, the most active steps were taken to expel their old antagonists from their many strongholds. Ceylon, Amboyna, Banda, Malacca, and other places fell into the hands of the English; and although by the treaty of Amiens many of these were given up to their former masters, it was but for a brief period. On the re-commencement of hostilities in 1804 they were again taken possession of; and finally, in 1811, the last and most important of all, Batavia, fell into the hands of the British, to be, however, again given up by treaty to Holland; and this now remains the sole remnant of the once proud and valuable Dutch East Indies.

The attention of the French was directed to the trade with India by Francis I., and subsequently by Henry III.; but no attempt to take any part in that commerce appears to have been made until early in the seventeenth century; and then so badly managed were the various companies which were formed for the purpose, so ill-equipped were their ships, and so unfortunate the results of most of the voyages, that it was not until 1665 any decided footing was obtained in the East. The company then formed under a royal charter from Louis XIV. succeeded in establishing themselves in the Islands of Madagascar and the Mauritius. Thence expeditions were dispatched to Surat, Masulipatam, St. Thomé, and Pondicherry. At the latter place a permanent establishment was made, a fort erected, factories built, and eventually the seat of the French government in India was firmly established there.

A trade was also opened with China, whence the French carried home some valuable cargoes of teas and silks. The latter goods, however, appear to have alarmed the French manufacturers, who protested so loudly against this branch of the India trade, that the goods were prohibited, and thus a very prolific source of profit was lost to them.

Up to 1730 the affairs of the French company wore an uncertain aspect: during several years they had failed to dispatch a single ship to the East; their finances were in a desperate condition, and despite their privileges and immunities, they found it extremely difficult, and at times quite impossible, to meet all their monetary engagements. About this time, however, more energy appears to have been infused into their proceedings; their fleets became more regular in their departure and return, and from three or four, they gradually extended to a dozen, all of which returned home most profitably laden.

The growth of the French power in the Indian peninsula; the close alliance of their commander with the Great Mogul and the Nabob of Arcot, and the subsequent hostilities with the British forces in India, are all matters which relate to history, and will be found detailed in their proper place. The result of the various struggles in which the forces of the English and French companies were engaged between the years 1740 and 1779, was the all but total loss of the French possessions in continental India.

In 1780 the French trade to the eastern seas was thrown open to private enterprise, which seems to have given a stimulus to the mercantile interest of that country; for we find that from six or seven vessels annually, as many as thirty-eight were in the year 1783 dispatched to India, bringing home large cargoes from the Mauritius, Bengal, Pondicherry, Mozambique, Batavia, and China. This freedom was, however, cancelled in 1785, under the pretext that the goods brought home were ill-selected and not adapted to the wants of the country. The new company, though prosperous in its affairs, did not long enjoy the new privileges; for in 1790 the National Assembly declared, that in two years from that date the Indian trade should again be thrown open to the private merchants of the country, and thus it has remained to the present day.

Pondicherry, Carrical, and other possessions in the peninsula, fell into the hands of the English during the war which followed. In 1810 the islands of Bourbon and Mauritius were captured; the former has since been restored to them by treaty, and this, and the inconsiderable settlement of Mahé, are now the only French possessions to the eastward of the Cape of Good Hope.

Denmark as early as the year 1615 entered upon the trade to India; a few vessels were equipped by an association at Copenhagen, and dispatched to the Coromandel coast, where they succeeded in obtaining a valuable freight. Four years after this the Danish settlement of Tranquebar was formed, and a regular trade opened with

many places on that coast and with the Moluccas. The Danish Company had their charter renewed on several occasions with increased powers and privileges; among others, the right of making treaties, and raising troops for the defence of their factories.

Between the years 1732 and 1753 they dispatched sixty ships to India and China, of which not less than thirteen were wrecked or burnt, the remainder returning with valuable cargoes.³

At this time the Danish trade to India and China appears to have amounted to about 82,000*l.* a year, leaving the company a clear annual gain of 21,000*l.* During the eleven years ending 1806, the value of the entire trade between Denmark and the Indian ports was, of European goods shipped outwards 57,000*l.* per annum, and that of merchandise imported 104,000*l.* a year. The hostilities which took place in Europe in 1807, ending in the battle of Copenhagen, and the capture of the Danish fleet by Lord Nelson, were followed in the succeeding year by the fall of Tranquebar and Serampore, which from that time have remained in the possession of the English, the trade of the Danes with India having declined to the freighting of one or two ships annually.

When India first became known to the inhabitants of Britain does not clearly appear from any historical records: some writers have alleged that it was not unknown to western Europe even in the time of the ancient Britons; and if we are to believe that the Phœnicians traded with Spain, Cornwall, and the south of Ireland, the account seems to be plausible enough. William of Malmesbury relates, that in the year 883 of the Christian era, Sighelmus, Bishop of Sherborne, in Dorsetshire, was sent by King Alfred to Rome with presents to the Pope, and thence to the East Indies, to visit the tomb of St. Thomas at Meliapour, and that by his means the English people obtained their first impression of the riches of Hindostan.

For many years all intercourse with the East Indies was carried on by an overland route, identically the same as that which has recently been so profitably opened through Egypt; and during that time England was chiefly supplied with oriental produce by a ship which went once a year to Venice, and brought thence a cargo which her owners sold at an enormous profit.⁴

Thus the trade continued until the discovery of the Cape passage, when the English merchants drew their supplies from Lisbon, and where doubtless their impressions of the magnitude of this commerce.

³ Milburn's Oriental Commerce, vol. ii. p. 372.

⁴ Ditto, vol. i. introduction.

became greatly wrought upon by the vast stores of precious commodities which met their view.

It was nearly the end of the fifteenth century before the English, under the auspices of Henry VII., attempted to take any part in this valuable trade ; but endeavours both in his time and that of his son Henry VIII. proved abortive ; and Sir Francis Drake, who fitted out an expedition at his own expense in 1577, was destined to be the first to open any direct communication with the East Indies. Having sailed through the Straits of Magellan, he touched at Ternate, one of the Moluccas, to whose king he rendered valuable assistance in his war with the sovereign of Tidore. In return for this favour the monarch of Ternate agreed to supply the English with all the cloves exported from his country. Sir Francis accordingly took a considerable cargo of that spice on board, and in February 1580 sailed for England, where he arrived on the 3d of November following, by the way of the Cape of Good Hope ; having thus not only established his reputation as being the first person who had sailed round the world, but also having gained the credit of opening a direct commercial communication between England and the East.

The enterprise of Captain Cavendish, who made a voyage round the world in concert with Drake, though undertaken more for the purpose of harassing the Spanish and Portuguese, with whom England was then at war, than for any other purpose, afforded such an insight into the trade of India, that a company of British merchants determined to attempt a voyage direct to India by way of the Cape of Good Hope, in defiance of the Portuguese, who claimed the exclusive right of trading by that route. They accordingly dispatched four ships, but with unfortunate results. The design, however, was not abandoned, and some private ships of war having captured a large Portuguese carrack called the *Madre di Dios* of 1600 tons burden, they brought her into Dartmouth. Her cargo, which consisted of spices, calicoes, silks, gold, pearls, China-ware, and other valuables, by a moderate computation was said to be worth upwards of 150,000*l.* sterling ; and the possession of this prize encouraged the English to renew their attempts to the East Indies.

In September 1599 the merchants of London resolved to form a company for the purpose of trading with India direct, and the sum of 30,133*l.* was raised for that purpose. The queen was petitioned for a charter, which at the end of the following year was granted, and they were accordingly incorporated under the title of "the Governor and Company of Merchants of London trading to the East Indies." They were

permitted to use a common seal, and obtained the exclusive right of trading with India by sea for the term of fifteen years. They were empowered to make bye-laws, and inflict punishment both corporal and pecuniary. They were also allowed to export goods duty free, and were beside endowed with many other important privileges.

In consequence of this charter the merchants began to raise a joint stock for the execution of their design, which became so popular, that in a very short time as much as 72,000*l.* was paid into the treasurer's hands. A fleet of five ships was dispatched under the command of Captain James Lancaster, who was furnished with letters and presents from the queen to the kings of Acheen and Bantam. The fleet sailed from England in February 1601, and arrived at Acheen in June of the following year, where Lancaster was received with marked distinction. They formed a treaty, and having left factors both there and at Bantam, sailed for England, and arrived in the Downs, after a prosperous voyage; on the 11th of September 1603, having taken possession of the island of St. Helena on their way home.

In 1606 Captain Hawkins was dispatched with the *Dragon* and *Hector* to Bantam and the Moluccas; but having experienced much opposition from the Dutch, Spaniards, and Portuguese, all of whom held settlements in those parts, the *Hector* proceeded to Surat; and Hawkins, having succeeded in reaching Agra, presented the letters which he carried from King James I. to the Great Mogul, by whom he was favourably received, and who granted him permission to establish a factory at Surat.

Several other voyages were undertaken, which were eminently successful; and the profits divided were so considerable, that the Company were able to increase their capital by 25 per cent. In 1609, having been much interfered with by private traders, although the fifteen years of their charter had not expired, they petitioned the king for its renewal, which the monarch readily acceded to. Further to prevent any apprehensions that might be entertained of private traders superseding their powers by licenses obtained from the crown, it was expressly stated, that none should be given without the consent of the Company. It was, however, stated, that notwithstanding these privileges, if the trade should not be found profitable to the realm, such exclusive privileges were to cease and determine after three years' warning.

At this period, when their trade had become extensive, the East India Company began to feel the want of one great advantage which the other nations who traded to the East enjoyed; for the Spaniards and Portuguese had harbours of which they were the absolute masters, and which were defended by fortifications well garrisoned; and the

Dutch had also begun to fortify themselves in different places. The ships of the English had hitherto been necessarily exposed to many annoyances, and were often excluded from the eastern ports by the hostility of the other powers, who, in consequence of the possession of their forts, could exclude them from the harbours at their pleasure. The East India Company soon became convinced by experience, that in the distant regions to which their vessels were sent, there was an absolute necessity to support their rights by the exhibition of power, and they determined, accordingly, to have a fleet of their own.

In 1615, the king, upon an application from the Company, sent Sir Thomas Roe as his ambassador to the Great Mogul, by whom he was very favourably received, and who ratified with him a commercial treaty, by which the English gained many important advantages.

Captain Keeling, who commanded one of the ships that sailed with Sir Thomas Roe, arrived at Cranganore in 1616, and obtained permission to trade and erect a factory there.

The Dutch saw with dismay the rapid advance of the English in the trade to India, and took every opportunity to harass and distress them, breaking out at last into open hostilities, seizing the English factors at Jacatra, and destroying their factory. King James, with a view to repress these outrages, granted a commission to sail to the Indian seas with several armed vessels to Sir Thomas Dale, who, on his arrival at Bantam, being joined by the Company's ships, had thirteen sail under his command, and with these he defeated the Dutch fleet. Another engagement ensued, in which the Dutch were again worsted; and though they were afterwards favoured with partial successes, they never after this time appear to have been able to arrest the onward progress of the British in those seas.

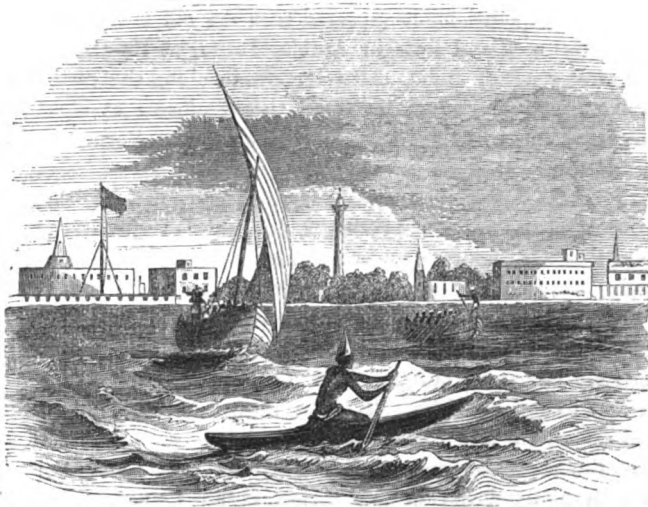
The period to which the Company's stock had been limited expired in 1617, when a fresh subscription was opened; and so eager were persons of all ranks to participate in the large profits that had resulted from the Company's operations, that no less a sum than 1,629,040*l.* was underwritten by dukes, earls, knights, judges, countesses, doctors of divinity and physic, merchants, and others, to the number of several thousands.

Surat and Bantam were selected by the Directors as the principal seats of their trade, and all the out-stations in the possession of the Company were placed under the control of their governors.

Thus was laid the foundation of that colossal trade which was afterwards to absorb every other in the East, but which none at that time could foresee, and which few even now can rightly comprehend.

On the 2d of February, 1634, permission was obtained from the Mogul for the Company to trade in the province of Bengal ; a license of which advantage was at once taken, and which eventually proved of great national importance.

This permission was soon followed by the acquisition of the town of Madras, where factories and fortifications were erected under the name of Fort St. George ; on every side fresh connexions were formed, new branches of commerce were opened. At this period the ships of the Company ceased to make their accustomed circuitous voyages of barter from port to port, which had entailed great delay and heavy expense. They now made their course direct to Calcutta or Madras, between which ports and the minor places of resort, the traffic, or country trade, was henceforth carried on by small native craft.



MADRAS ROADS.

From accounts which were made public in 1676, it appeared that the Company's affairs were in a most flourishing state. They employed from 30 to 35 ships of between 300 and 600 tons burden, which carried out annually bullion to the value of 320,000*l.*, and woollen and other goods worth 100,000*l.* Their returns consisted of pepper, indigo, silks, raw and manufactured, calicoes, &c., which produced 860,000*l.* The cost of their factories, garrisons, &c. in India was 60,000*l.* The value of the various kinds of eastern produce consumed annually in

England at this period was, calicoes, 160,000*l.* ; silks, 30,000*l.* ; pepper, 6,000*l.* ; indigo and drugs, 15,000*l.* ; saltpetre, 30,000*l.*

In 1686, a fresh charter, being the sixth, was granted on a far more extended basis, rights being conceded to them which had before been denied ; such as the privilege of making war, coining money, &c. The accounts of the association shew that their profits then amounted to a clear 100,000*l.* a year.

The importations of Indian silks and calicoes had now so greatly increased, that the English weavers grew alarmed lest their occupation should be taken from them ; and so great was the clamour, and so general the wear of such goods, that it was deemed necessary to prohibit for the future, all importations of these goods.

The incorporation of a new trading company, their disputes with the old body, and their final amalgamation under one general constitution and charter, were the events of the next few years. At the union of these two corporations, it appeared that the old company was possessed of factories and forts in Arabia, Persia, at twenty-four places on the west coast of India, at twelve places along the eastern coast, at twelve places in Bengal, on the Malay peninsula at eight places ; also at many spots in the islands of Sumatra, Java, Borneo, and other eastern islands.

In 1753 the Company obtained a fresh charter for thirty-three years, comprising all the previous privileges, political and commercial. Their trade at this time appears to have occupied thirteen to fifteen ships, annually carrying out merchandise and treasure to the value of 500,000*l.*, and bringing back goods worth 1,500,000*l.*

From this period until the close of the eighteenth century, the commercial operations of the East India Company advanced with rapid and gigantic strides. By what means and in what manner is related elsewhere. The expense of long and dangerous wars with native powers, the confusion and neglect into which their affairs appear to have been plunged during this period, entailed upon the Company many heavy liabilities, which required all their commercial resources to enable them to meet. From mere factors and shipping clerks, their servants had become collectors of revenue, councillors, and judges ; and surrounded on all sides by temptations of every kind, the common impulse appeared to be a wide-spread scramble for wealth, regardless of the Company's interests. Fortunes were realised in a few years by all who could brave the climate and the mode of life ; the lowest appointments in the service were regarded as a certain road to wealth ; and thus, whilst its servants of all grades reaped an abundant harvest of rupees, the Company found itself badly served ; its enormous reve-

nues and valuable consignments suffering from the neglect and cupidity of those whose time was devoted to their own private ends, instead of the service of the directors. The Company's dividend was reduced from 12½ per cent to 6 per cent per annum; and owing to this state of things, a commission of inquiry into abuses was sent out to India, though with very sorry results.

Despite the annoyances and losses to which their trade was subjected from the French privateers, and the misconduct of so many of their officials, the mercantile operations of the Company had sensibly increased during this period. Their exports to India, including bullion, now amounting to a million and a half sterling; and their shipments homewards to five millions; giving employment to between thirty and forty ships of large tonnage.

The Island of Ceylon was at this time taken possession of by the Company's troops, and retained by them until made over to the crown a few years afterwards; during the time of this occupancy, the trade in cinnamon formed an important item in the Company's transactions, leaving, as it did in those days, an ample margin for profit.

The progress of the Indian trade up to the date of the general peace was not of a very marked character. The unsettled state of political affairs throughout the world, the difficulties always existing during a time of war in the way of commercial intercourse with remote countries, added to the jealous restrictions placed upon private enterprise in all that related to British India, tended to retard the natural growth of this lucrative trade, and for a long period confined it within a comparatively narrow compass.

From the year 1800 to 1810, the value of the goods imported into and exported from Great Britain, from and to India, actually decreased by two millions sterling; as may be seen by the following table :

YEARS.	EXPORTS TO ENGLAND.			IMPORTS INTO INDIA.		
	Goods.	Bullion.	Total.	Company's trade.	Private trade.	Total.
	£	£	£	£	£	£
1800—1	1,869,862	583,471	2,453,333	7,595,181	2,721,411	10,316,592
1802—3	2,288,578	1,722,085	4,010,663	6,069,636	3,580,103	9,649,739
1804—5	2,005,171	1,952,651	3,957,822	5,260,521	2,776,814	8,037,335
1806—7	2,550,271	.	2,550,271	5,181,120	1,745,285	6,926,405
1808—9	2,124,046	.	2,124,046	5,746,021	2,278,339	8,024,360
1809—10	1,894,045	.	1,894,045	5,977,280	2,247,760	8,225,040

Taking a period of fifty years up to this date, we gather from official documents that the value of the Company's import trade from India and China amounted in that time to 221,964,498*l.*, having cost 106,324,066*l.*; and that, after deducting all commercial charges belonging to the above, a clear profit was left of 37,980,337*l.* The principal articles on which this gain arose were teas, raw silk, Bengal and Corah piece-goods, or cloths, sugar, pepper, saltpetre, and indigo.

The ships in the service of the Company prior to the general peace numbered 104, their capacity amounting to 90,272 tons, and manned by 7000 seamen; their size ranged from 1200 tons to 500.

The Company's factories at this time numbered twenty-four in the Bengal presidency; twelve within the limits of the Madras government; sixteen within that of Bombay; and about a dozen others in the Eastern seas, in China, and in Persia.⁵

From the date of the earliest establishment of the Company in India, some few private individuals had at various times settled within their territories for purposes of local traffic. Fortunes were realised by them with but few exceptions; although the Company's privileges enabled them to forbid private merchants from participating in the trade with the mother-country.

The only exception to this rigid exclusiveness arose through the commanders and officers of the Company's ships, who were, by an old custom, permitted the free use of about sixty tons of room in each ship homeward-bound, and ninety-six tons outward; and which privilege they usually sold to the private merchants on very favourable terms. The unprivileged traders, unable to remit their gains to England, with the limited exception just noticed, by any other means than Company's bills, found this channel of remittance far too limited for them, as the dominion and intercourse of the British in India extended on every side; and by degrees fell back upon such means of trade or remittance as existed with continental Europe.

The renewed charter of 1793 provided for this anomalous state of things, by allowing private merchants to ship goods to England in Company's vessels, to the extent of 3000 tons a year, at the fixed rates of 5*l.* per ton outwards, and 15*l.* homewards, in time of peace. This new regulation enabled the growing commercial interest of the presidencies to enlarge their transactions; and ultimately, when members of the civil and military services were induced to join in commercial undertakings, the stipulated amount of tonnage was greatly exceeded long

⁵ Milburne's *Oriental Commerce*, vol. i. part 1, introduction.

previously to the relaxation which took place in the restrictions upon private commercial enterprise.

The relaxation of the East India Company's charter in 1814 formed a new and important era in the history of Indian commerce. Up to this date European settlers in the three presidencies were looked upon with the utmost jealousy, and only permitted to locate themselves by special license, obtained with considerable difficulty. A few merchants had settled at Calcutta and Bombay, chiefly, if not entirely, in connection with members of the Company's service. At that period commerce and banking were combined operations, concentrated under one management; for there were then no banking establishments; and the civil and military servants of the company made use of the mercantile firms as depositories for their savings. In this way the old houses had always an enormous amount of capital at their command, and but seldom needed to apply for financial aid to their banians (native capitalists), whom they treated with exceeding hauteur; and these men, millionaires though they were, regarded the European merchants with feelings of the deepest respect; never entering their offices without putting off their shoes at the door. Even the junior clerks, all of whom were Englishmen, were looked up to with veneration, as they were known to be expectant partners in the houses. From the fact of the intimate connection between the civil servants and the then merchants, the latter were necessarily admitted as equals into the first society.

The ameliorations in the old commercial restrictions at this period were not long in producing results. The enormous fortunes realised by the few great houses were not matters of secrecy; and the report of these princely results, achieved, in most cases, within a few years, induced many to leave England and endeavour to obtain a share of their good fortune. By the year 1820 a number of new firms



A BANIAN.

were established, some with a considerable amount of capital, others backed by large consignments of manufactured goods; and these, although treated by the old houses as interlopers, and jealously excluded by themselves and the services from society, soon became connected with the rich banians, who readily advanced whatever sums were needed for carrying out their commercial plans. In some cases the native millionaires were admitted as partners in these new firms; but in all instances treated on terms of equality and friendship.

From this period onwards we find the trade between India and Great Britain rapidly advancing under the influence of this partial freedom of commerce. The larger quantities of produce which the private traders brought to Europe induced an increased demand in Hindostan for goods of British manufacture; and though the shipments from England at that period did not keep pace with the greatly-augmented imports from India, they nevertheless reached a considerable amount.*

The impetus which the Indian trade received on the opening of the ports of the East to all classes was not without its evils; the prospect of rapid fortunes which opened out to the many new-comers paved the way to a reckless system of trading, and an improvident style of living, hitherto unknown. Merchants invested in enormous purchases, not only the funds of their native capitalists, but those of persons who had placed their savings in their hands, as in the safe custody of bankers. Crowds of new men flocked out from Liverpool, Manchester, and Glasgow; men whose amount of capital was on a like scale with their principle, and who, having literally nothing to lose, indulged in the illusive hope of finding something to gain.

In 1830 and the following year commercial affairs reached a crisis

* As the annexed table will shew :

	1818-19.	1822-23.	1826-27.
IMPORTS.			
	£	£	£
Company's trade	2,211,038	2,520,193	1,964,492
Private ditto	5,701,847	5,677,337	5,186,983
Total imports	7,912,885	8,197,530	7,151,475
EXPORTS.			
Company's trade	2,383,104	1,944,672	1,591,081
Private ditto	8,685,344	8,441,458	7,331,169
Total exports	11,068,448	10,386,130	8,922,250

in Calcutta. The hollowness of the fabric reared by rash speculators, demonstrated itself with a convulsion that will not easily be forgotten by those who witnessed its effects. Indigo, silk, cotton, sugar, all had been dealt, or rather gambled in, to an extent that was only limited by the impossibility of obtaining any further means for carrying on the game. It mattered little whose funds were jeopardised. The savings of the veteran officer, that were to have purchased promotion for his son; the widow's store; the orphan's sole fortune; the private soldier's pittance, scraped from his pay and prize-money; all these were converted into sugars, shipped home in the shape of dyes, or, perchance, sunk in the alluvial soil of an indigo factory.

The bubble burst, scattering ruin and desolation amidst the homes of thousands of helpless victims. None were prepared for the catastrophe, and least of all the heartless men who had caused the mischief. They were not moved; few of them had lost much. The storm overtook them steeped in princely luxuries, deep in selfish physical enjoyment. Bankruptcy stared them and their victims in the face; but how different the result! A month or two without their race-horses, their dinner-parties, and their ducal establishments, and the Insolvent Court kindly enabled them to make a fresh start, as bold, as unabashed as ever; whilst their *constituents* (i. e. their victims) became pauperised, and dependent upon charity for a subsistence.

Honour to whom honour is due. Unwilling to snatch a single laurel, however faded, however stained, from the brows of the wearers, I will do what in me lies to render tribute to the fame of those commercial Philistines, the "great houses," as they were called, of Calcutta.

Foremost among these stood the respectable firm of Alexander and Company, who, scorning to "pull-up" for any insignificant amount, earned for themselves the title of Alexanders the Great, by failing for a round sum of four millions sterling. The most fitting commentary upon the career of this truly princely house is the fact of its dividend amounting to precisely six per cent of its liabilities! In other words, the whole amount saved out of this gigantic wreck was 240,000*l.*; the sum irrevocably lost, and the greater part of which was the property of other and innocent parties, was therefore 3,760,000*l.*!

Ferguson and Company's liabilities were 3,600,000*l.*; Palmer and Company failed for something under 3,000,000*l.* sterling; and Mackintosh and Company were involved to the extent of 2,500,000*l.*; but these three firms rather astonished the mercantile world of those days, by paying 36½ per cent, 30 per cent, and 14 per cent, respectively. Altogether, the six "great houses" of Calcutta failed for an aggregate

amount of nearly 15,000,000*l.* sterling ; paying among them an average of five shillings in the pound ; and consequently entailing on their creditors losses to the extent of 11,250,000*l.* sterling !⁷

What, it may be asked, was the immediate result of this state of things ? I have said that, personally, the great defaulters passed comfortably through the wide and friendly portals of the Calcutta Insolvent Court. Their social position remained as good as ever ; the world termed them *unfortunate* ; from the governor-general downwards, they were greeted with all the sympathy which men usually shew to martyrs. Commercially, however, they had lost ground. The native banians drew tight their purse-strings ; Hindoo baboos began to shew caution ere they "took up" a new house ; and even the high civilians and military officials of the government who fraternised so blandly with, who dined and champaigned, the men of fifteen-million celebrity, were not again to be caught, by using the merchants as their bankers.



A BENGAL SIRCAR.

The immediate consequence of these disasters was the establishment of the Agra Bank, chiefly by military men and civil servants, with branches at other stations. The success of this one establishment was followed by the formation of the Bank of Bengal, with a capital of half a million ; one-fifth of the shares and the direction being in the hands of the local government. The Union Bank, the North-western Bank of India, and others, quickly followed, opening up a new phase in the history of Indian commerce. It may be well to notice here, as tending to explain the final results of most of these new undertakings, that these institutions could scarcely deserve the name of banks, and might with

far greater propriety have been denominated "loan societies," their business having been almost exclusively confined to the granting of loans on the personal security of the negotiators, with some collateral

⁷ Calcutta Review, vol. ix. p. 318.

security of no very tangible nature, the loans being mostly repayable by instalments covering a period of several years. These institutions, of course, found no lack of customers; their transactions grew far beyond the expectations of their projectors. More capital was added by issuing fresh shares, which were divided at par amongst the original proprietors; many of whom, not possessing the means of paying the "calls" on them, were kindly allowed to remain indebted to the bank for the amount until they could dispose of the paper to a profit, which was not then a difficult matter, seeing they had been worked up to a considerable premium.

Whilst this was the course of the banking establishments, let us see how fared the many new houses which rose from the ashes of the old firms—the fifteen-million-men of 1830-1. Mercantile credit was no longer on the old basis; it had been shaken too deeply to be again replaced as it stood before. Many of the most wealthy banians had suffered very severely by the above failures; and most of them withdrew their remaining capital from such hazardous risks. The game was, however, taken up by an inferior class of natives; men of far less means, but possessed of ability, and some amount of credit among their countrymen. These new banians had the game pretty much in their own hands, for the new houses were mostly in their power. Although many of these had been mere sircars, or accountants, they assumed airs which their more wealthy predecessors had never taken on themselves; they treated their European connections not only with contemptuous disregard, but often with much insolence. The Hindoo star was in the ascendant, and these men made the most of it.

So little Calcutta credit was there at that time left to the English merchants, with a few solid exceptions, that they would have found it impossible to have made a purchase of produce without the intervention of their banians, had they desired to make the experiment. But this is never attempted; no one buys or sells save through their banian, who is broker, banker, manager, and every thing else, to these new firms. The profit of the agent comes, to a very limited extent, out of his brokerage, interest, and commissions. There are means, far more ample than such for realising handsome returns. To wit: the firm are desirous of shipping 100 tons of sugar, and apply to their banian, who at once takes the matter in hand, and produces a sample from the bazaar which can be had for nine rupees the maund.⁸ The partner sees at once that the quality is equal to but eight rupees and a fraction; but he is largely in the banian's books, and

⁸ A Bengal weight equal to 82 lbs. English.

dares offer no remonstrance ; so the sugar is bought and shipped. If the banian contented himself with putting on board at nine rupees the article worth but eight, the affair might be bad enough ; but not so. The grasping broker ships a miserable article not worth more than five or six rupees ; which goes home drawn against, through the banks, at the higher rate, and of course entails a heavy loss. The news of this comes out to Calcutta ; the merchant storms ; but can do nothing, for he is in the power of the banian, who calls all the Hindoo deities to bear testimony to his purity and uprightness, and vows that the London banian must be at the bottom of the mischief.

This, however, is but one trifling incident in an Indian commercial career, as carried on in the present day. It is right that the non-professional reader, who may perchance be ignorant of the mode in which large concerns are worked in the East without capital, or, at any rate, with an amount utterly disproportioned to the business done, should be made acquainted with the modern course of operations in such matters, since the knowledge may serve to explain how it so frequently happens that firms suspend payment for enormous amounts, and yield dividends of but a shilling or two in the pound.

Formerly all the London houses acting as agents for Calcutta and Bombay firms were possessed of ample means, and to a limited extent this is still the case. It was then the practice for these agents or correspondents to purchase or make advances against consignments of manufactured goods, either on their own account, or jointly with their Indian friends, who sold the invoice on arrival, and remitted home the proceeds in bills of exchange or in some article of produce. Under the new régime this is no longer the case. The London firm have a little credit and less money ; but they can accept bills drawn against goods to be shipped either on the manufacturers' or their Indian friends' account. This done, the bills are discounted, and so the manufacturer is reimbursed. The goods—grey cloths from Manchester perhaps—are shipped ; and then the London merchant, who has not paid a farthing for them, is enabled to draw against them on his India correspondent, through a bank, who takes the bill of lading for security ; and in this way the shipper obtains hard cash, with which he buys another parcel of goods—metals, possibly—ships these, draws against them, and with these fresh means repeats the operation, which, it is clear, may be thus carried on to a large extent. Before the first parcel of goods can be sold at Bombay or Calcutta, the manufacturer's bill upon the shipper falls due, and is met by a renewal ; that is, by another bill drawn in a similar manner, and understood to be for the purpose of being dis-

counted, to enable the acceptor of the first bill to take it up, in other words, to pay it when presented.

Meanwhile the goods arrive at their destination. The agent of the London bank who advanced money upon them holds the bills of lading; and to get these, and consequently the goods, the "Calcutta correspondent" applies to his banian, who at once does the needful, redeems the grey-goods from their bondage, and sells them for his principal. The proceeds are now remitted home in sugar, or silk, or indigo, the bills of lading for which are forwarded to the London house, which at once draws against it, in order to meet the "renewals" of the Manchester bills then falling due; finally, the produce-broker in Mining Lane makes an advance to the importer on the arrival of the sugar or indigo, which enables him to redeem the bills of lading from the strong-box of the bank, and the goods are sold.

So long as the selling prices at both ends leave a shadow of profit over and above the amount of commissions and other charges, all goes on well. The shipper, the banker, the correspondent, the banian, the London broker, the Manchester manufacturer, all are content. The operations are extended considerably, the commercial wheel is kept moving, money is made, the houses at both ends obtain the reputation of doing a large stroke of business, the partners are looked upon as sharp, shrewd men, and although there may be a few bad debts, a few losses, and now and then a heavy year, the books shew a large amount of commissions earned. Still the banian is a large creditor, though by interest, per centage, &c. he has cleared off more than the amount of their liabilities to him. One or two bad seasons follow rather rapidly; the house has invested largely in estates, an operation popularly termed developing the resources of the country; the banian becomes rather more troublesome and overbearing than of wont; the senior partner takes alarm, withdraws with a hundred thousand pounds, and twelvemonths afterwards the firm suspend payment for a million and a half sterling, at which nobody is in the least degree surprised, except the banian, who wonders how they managed to keep up so long. This, reader, is a faint, and no doubt an imperfect sketch of the course of operations of an Indian commercial house of the present time; and it deserves a place in these pages, as illustrative of that Saxon energy of character, that fine spirit of enterprise which so distinguishes the men of Liverpool and Glasgow, and by means of which they rear gigantic fabrics out of literally nothing. Here we have seen how a fortune of a hundred thousand, and an insolvency of a million and a half, had their first origin in nothing more than a few bales of Manchester "grey-goods."

In the above sketch no mention has been made of the Calcutta banks, although their timely aid would more than probably have been invoked, and with success. What part these huge and iniquitous "loan societies" played in the deep game of hazard that ran riot through the presidencies between 1840 and 1849, it will be now my task to describe, from such data as the chicanery of presidents, vice-presidents, secretaries, and directors, have not been able effectually to suppress.

The years 1847 and 1848 will long be memorable in the annals of Indian joint-stockery; and even now as we are writing, not only are the effects of those years still felt, but the nefarious transactions of that period form the subject of grave deliberation and legal inquiry. The storm that was approaching was ushered in by several minor failures, which to prudent men served as beacons of danger. The *public* were first made aware of the extent to which mutual accommodation was accorded amongst the directors and proprietors of a bank, by the failure, in 1842, of a firm of some *Indian* respectability, when it appeared that the house had received not much less than half a million sterling from the coffers of the Union Bank. That this was no individual or exceptional case is clear from the fact, that on the failure of this very same bank, it was ascertained that some half a dozen firms were at the time liable to it for a trifle within a million sterling.

The year 1847 dragged its slow length along, big with the fate of banks and merchants. In the middle of this year, the directors of the two most notorious banks in Calcutta found themselves in difficulties from the huge accommodations accorded their customers, i.e. their own proprietors. The half-yearly meeting of the Union Bank was held in the second week in July; but so pressed were the directors, that money had first to be raised to enable them to jog on and meet their most immediate liabilities. In spite of this, however, the accounts laid before the shareholders at the July meeting were of the most glowing description: enormous profits were announced; the amount of bad or doubtful debts was set down as quite insignificant; and a dividend of three and a half per cent on the half-year was declared. Of course, good-natured, easy gentlemen had been found to audit the accounts, and pass them as all right; the immediate result was, that the unsuspecting shareholders felt quite satisfied, and the public at large were assured, of the integrity of the bank.

Suspicion, however, was but lulled for a time. A fictitious dividend, a fancy balance-sheet failed to give stability to this institution, and towards the end of the year a run on its treasury became evident. The most desperate and unprincipled means were resorted to in the

vain hope of averting the impending crisis. Bills sent them for sale and remittance, on account of others, were disposed of, and the proceeds applied to stop a momentary gap, although the directors must have known that they were insolvent, and that a month or two at most would witness the termination of their fictitious existence, and which actually took place in January 1848.

To attempt a mere outline of the winding-up disclosures of the Union Bank would occupy many chapters ; and yet how little of the truth was really disclosed ! Whatever was gleaned was the result of accident. How planters and merchants had been befriended until the entire capital of the bank was absorbed ; how indigo-factories were jobbed on private account with the bank funds ; how bank post-bills, at a heavy discount, were received from directors as cash ; how paper of all descriptions was floated ; how liabilities of presidents and secretaries were transferred to the bank in the Company's books ; how young, half-fledged civilians were accommodated with loans at a heavy interest ; how, in short, every thing was done that ought not to have been done, and how all ordinary precaution, all proper management, was flung overboard. All this may some day be chronicled in full ; I can now but advert to it.

The last and crowning act of the executive of this notable banking institution deserves a few lines, as illustrating the men and the time. By a deed of arrangement the creditors of this bank agreed to compromise their claims for a certain dividend, to be levied by an assessment on the proprietary body. The assessment was paid to the executive committee, and the work of appropriation went on. After a considerable delay, however, some parties not feeling that confidence in the committee which they could have wished, expressed a desire to have their proceedings scrutinised, and the accounts of their trust audited. This, after some grave opposition, was permitted ; and the result was, that although every obstacle was thrown in the way of the appointed committee of inquiry, such a report was drawn up and laid before a meeting of shareholders, as in any other part of the world but Calcutta would have caused legal proceedings to have been instituted against the executive. Yet, what was the actual result ? Although that meeting was attended by two hundred persons, not *one* was found to move that the damning report be received ! On the contrary, a vote of "*confidence*" in the executive was proposed, seconded, and carried ; precisely eleven of the two hundred present voted, the remaining one hundred and eighty-nine slunk away abashed at the cool effrontery of their friends. This, reader, occurred not *years* but months since—in the

middle of 1852, and that chairman, and his executive assistants, thus publicly "damned with faint praise," are, to this day, the favoured of Calcutta society, moving amongst the *élite* of the "City of Palaces."

Before closing this chapter, it will be well to examine the position of the trade of the three presidencies, and see how far this has kept pace with the onward spirit of the age, and what influence, for good or evil, the commercial gambling I have touched upon, has exercised on the mercantile statistics of British India.

By comparing the imports and exports of India in 1844-5 with those of 1849-50, the latest date for which there are official returns, the result appears most encouraging. In the former year the value of imported merchandise into the three presidencies was 4,261,106*l.*, that of the goods exported 7,993,420*l.*; whilst in the latter year they stood at 10,299,888*l.* and 17,812,299*l.* respectively. This would appear to be a satisfactory result; yet an analysis of these returns⁹ presents us with some rather startling anomalies, which require examination and elucidation. It is evident from a glance at the tables alluded to, that not only has the great bulk of the increase been in the trade with other countries than England, but during the past six or seven years the Indian trade has made no onward move; it appears to have reached a point beyond which it is impossible, under existing circumstances, to go.

It has been a practice of late, with certain political writers, to make frequent reference to the vast aggrandisement of our trade to India, as illustrating the expansibility of our commerce under an improved system of commercial legislation. Without in any way questioning the soundness of that legislation, I may, at least, express a wish, that instead of turning back to a particular period for a convenient amount of figures, those writers would examine a little more closely the last six years of the returns in the blue books. It would in that case be seen, that the imports of British goods into the three presidencies were actually less in 1849-50 than in 1844-5, by about half a million sterling; and that in 1847-8 and 1848-9 they were less by upwards of two millions. Comparing the shipments of produce to this country during a period of ten years, similar results are obtained, the amounts having fluctuated between seven and five millions sterling. That there have been seasons of commercial disaster during these periods is true; but it bespeaks a most vicious and deplorable state of things in our Eastern possessions, when we see that during a series of

⁹ Appendix B.

years in which the Company added to their territories one hundred and sixty-seven thousand square miles, with eight millions and a half of new population,¹⁰ the imports of British goods shewed an actual annual decrease.

Calculations made in reference to the consumption of British manufactures in different countries¹¹ shew, that whilst Chili and the States of Rio de la Plata take of our goods to the yearly value of 13s. 7d. for each inhabitant; and Cuba, Hayti, Brazil, and other countries, consume for each inhabitant 7s. 3d. annually, British India takes but 1s. for every inhabitant. Small as this sum appears, it is in reality much above the actual amount taken by the population generally, which, throughout by far the widest range of the Company's territories, will be represented by no other symbol than a unit. Millions upon millions of Hindoos live and die unpossessed of the smallest fragment, the veriest shred of any British manufactures. What can the miserable ryot spare for Manchester prints, Glasgow cloths, or Birmingham ware, out of the pittance of 6d. a week, the proceeds of his heavy toil? Yet were the inhabitants of our Indian territories to take but half as much per head of our goods as the foreigners of Chili and La Plata, British merchants would export to the East merchandise to the yearly value of upwards of thirty-three millions sterling. And no one acquainted with this magnificent country can doubt that, with justice to India, this and much more might be accomplished.

¹⁰ Report on Indian Territories, Appendix, p. 330.

¹¹ Chapman's Cotton and Commerce of India.



PART IV.



M O R A L.

CHAPTER I.

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE.

THERE is no valid reason for doubting the high antiquity of the Sanscrit language, from which the Hindoo had its origin; indeed we may attribute to it a descent from the earliest dialects, if not even coeval with the confusion of tongues at Babel. It is difficult for western nations to appreciate the beauties of a language so opposed in its construction and tone to that of European tongues; hence many of the peculiarities which, in the original, impart so much of grace and charm to the Sanscrit, are entirely lost in a translation, however perfect. The figures, the associations, the colouring imparted by the Hindoo poets to their works, fail to create sympathy or admiration in the mind of an English reader, even if perused in the original tongue, wanting, as that reader necessarily must be, in the perception of ideas taking their rise from oriental life and eastern thought.

The current languages of India are thirty-one in number, and may be arranged under two distinct heads: those derivable entirely from the Sanscrit; and those, chiefly of the south, based upon a Tamil foundation, though in several instances still blended to a certain extent with Sanscrit words.

When this language ceased to be the vernacular tongue of India, it is in vain to attempt to divine; but it appears certain that at a remote period it gave way to the Prakrit, a corruption of itself; and from this latter have sprung directly the many tongues I am about to mention.

The Prakrit is no longer spoken, though it is still preserved in numerous writings. The languages of the Hindoos which are to this day in common use are derivable from the Sanscrit, though its corrupted offspring appears to be comprised within the country lying to the north of a line drawn from Chicacole, in the Bay of Bengal, to Goa, on the western coast.¹

¹ Lassen: *Institutiones Lingue Præcriticæ*, p. 12.

They are twenty-five in number, viz. Bengâli, Assamese, Orissan, and Tirhutîya, spoken in the eastern provinces ; Nepâlese, Câshmiri, and Doguri, prevailing in the north ; Panjabî, Multani, Sindi, Kutchi, Guzerati, and Kunkuna, found on the western side ; Bikanera, Marwara, Jayapura, Udayapura, Haruli, Braja Bhaka, Malavi, Bundelakhândi, Maghada, and Mahratta, all spoken in the south.

Hindustani, equally derivable from the common source, is not confined to any particular people or locality, but is found in general use by nearly all the natives of Hindostan, in addition to their own individual dialect.

The languages not derivable from the Sanscrit, although admitting many of its words into frequent use, are the Tamil, Telugu, Carnataca, Tuluva, Malayalma, and the Codugu. The Malayalma is known to Europeans as the Malabar tongue, and is found throughout the coasts of the Indian peninsula.

Sanscrit and Pali are the Greek and Latin languages of India. The latter is that in which the Bhuddistical writings are written ; the former is the Brahminical language, as well as that in which all learned works and scientific books are penned. It has been pronounced by one well fitted to form an opinion,² the most finished of all the dead languages, "of a wonderful structure, more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either."

In this language is to be found an infinity of works upon almost every branch of learning known amongst the orientals ; beyond this, however, it is no longer a dialect. There is very little doubt that, in the time of Alexander, this was the language of the upper classes, if not of the great masses of the people ; for nearly all the Indian names handed down to us by the writers of that period are Sanscrit. When this ceased to be a living tongue, when it was swept from the highway to the temple and the college, is a question which has not yet been determined.

The Sindhi language is not, as has been sometimes stated, a corruption of Hindostani, but a distinct tongue, based, like many others, upon Sanscrit, and evidently of great antiquity ;³ although so little appears to have been known regarding it, that not long since an oriental scholar declared that no such language existed, it is found spoken with many varieties, according to the different localities of the many tribes.

Besides the language of Sindh proper, the following dialects are

² Sir W. Jones's *Asiatic Researches*, vol. i. p. 422.

³ *Burton's Scinde*, chap. iii. p. 69.

spoken : the Siraiki, or language of Siro, in Upper Sindh ; the Kachi, spoken in Cutch ; the Thaleri, or Jasalmeri, the dialect of Omercoti Jesulmere, and of outcast tribes ; and the Takkarana Jiboli, spoken by the hill-tribes to the west of Sindh.

The Hindoo drama, which is the part of their literature with which we are best acquainted, possesses great and varied excellences. Their chief piece, *Sacoutalá*, has long been known to the European public by the classical version of Sir William Jones ; and we have been made acquainted with the principal of the other dramatists by the admirable translations of Professor Wilson.

The drama of India has a wide range in its existence, but there are comparatively few instances of its genius ; for though we possess plays that are as old in their composition as the Christian era, and one that was written in Bengal as late as within these fifty years, the whole of the collection which are worthy of notice does not number more than sixty.

That many have been lost there is no doubt, and partly through the way in which they were performed, being only represented once on some great festival, in the hall or inner court of a palace, and consequently losing that popularity and traditional existence which plays in our time derive from repeated performances in different cities and in public theatres. Many must also have been lost from the neglect of the learned, for the taste for this species of poetry seems to be corrupted, and almost entirely extinct among the Brahmins ; and though some of the least meritorious specimens are still favourites among the people, Professor Wilson assures us that he never met with more than one Brahmin who could be said to be at all conversant with dramatic literature.

The most voluminous as well as the most ancient portion of Hindoo poetry consists of the sacred, the epic, and the heroic pieces. Upon these Mr. Colebrooke, a very competent authority, has pronounced, in his *Asiatic Researches*, the condemnation that "their general style is flat, diffuse, and no less deficient in ornament than abundant in repetitions;" and, judging from the specimens that have been translated, there appears to be no reason to find fault with this judgment.

Next to the *Vedas* comes the great heroic poem of the *Ramayana*, giving an account of the conquest of Ceylon by Rama. Oriental scholars are energetic in their praises of the simplicity and originality of this composition, of the sublimity, grace, and pathos of many passages, the natural dignity of the actors, and the inexhaustible imagination of the authors : but judging from the specimens which they

have rendered into English, and which are mostly from the *Ramayana*, it is difficult to discover the many beauties alluded to ; we must there-



RAMA.

fore content ourselves with attributing our disappointment to the impossibility of rendering the peculiarities of the Sanscrit into modern European language.

That these works possess a more than ordinary merit is clear from the fact of their popularity to this day among the great mass of the Hindoo population. Not in the towns alone, but throughout the whole extent of the many provinces of Hindostan, the wondrous deeds of Rama, the conqueror of Ceylon, his miraculous passage to that island, accompanied by more than human aid, and the marvellous incidents of that desperate war, are committed to memory by ryot and artificer, not less by the unlettered and the rude than by the educated. What our *Robin Hood* and *The Knights of the Round Table* were to a large portion of English rural and town population thirty years since, these mystic legends of an all-but fabulous period are to the Hindoo races of the present time.

Of the descriptive powers of the Indian writers an exceedingly

favourable specimen is given in the *Méghadûta*; a poem, the hero of which is a spirit banished from heaven, who charges a cloud with a message to his celestial mate, and describes the countries and cities over which it will have to pass, interspersing allusions to the tales which are associated with the different scenes. Blended with the whole are the lamentations of the exile himself, and his recollections of all the beauties and enjoyments from which he is excluded.

The *Gita Govinda*, or *Songs of Jaya Deeva*, are the best specimens of purely pastoral poetry, and exhibit in perfection the luxuriant imagery, the voluptuous softness, and the want of vigour which uniformly constitute the beauties and defects of Hindoo poetry. There are many other poems, but none that impress us with a very high idea of their value.

For satire the Hindoos have little either of disposition or capacity; but in their tales and fables they are exceedingly rich, and in both species of composition appear to have been the instructors of mankind.

There are, besides, some very respectable writers in the English language amongst the Hindoo people; and not the least creditable portion of their labours are their poetical contributions to periodical literature. One family, that of the Dutts, numbers no fewer than five writers of English poetry amongst its members, all of whom are natives of Bengal, and were educated at the Hindoo college at Calcutta. They may be looked upon as forming a fraction of "Young Bengal;" and in addition to the ephemeral mode of their appearance in public, one or two of them have published small volumes of poetry, which, considering that their authors were composing in a foreign language, must be regarded as very creditable performances.



CHAPTER II.

RELIGION AND CASTE.

THE Brahminical religion, which is the form of worship almost universally prevalent throughout British India, is set forth in the sacred books known as the *Vedas*. They are three in number, though some add a fourth to them. They are written in an ancient form of the Sanscrit language, so antiquated in its character and structure as to be intelligible to none but the most highly-educated Brahmins. Some portions of these religious writings have been rendered into English by one of our most learned oriental scholars;¹ but these translations form so small a part of the whole, that in speaking of the contents of the whole we must be considered as being guided rather by the testimony of Brahmins themselves than by these fragmentary documents.

Each of the sacred Vedas is divided into two parts: the first is called *Moutra*, and consists entirely of hymns and prayers; the second portion, named *Brahmaná*, contains rules and precepts relative to a religious life, and an abundance of argumentative matter bearing upon their theological doctrines. In some of the books the theological disquisitions are comprised within a separate and third part, called the *Upanishad*.

The religion inculcated by the Vedas is of a loftier and purer kind than is perhaps generally supposed. The obscenities and superstition practised in many parts of India must not be taken as representing the Hindoo faith embodied in their scriptures. The leading doctrine of the Brahminical worship is the "unity of God." Their books teach that there is but one deity, the Supreme Spirit, the Lord of the Universe, whose work is the Universe.

The following sketch of the attributes of the Divinity, as rendered by a learned Brahmin, will shew how little polytheism had to do with the original faith of Hindostan.

¹ Mr. Colebrooke.

"Perfect truth ; perfect happiness ; without equal ; immortal ; absolute unity ; whom neither speech can describe nor mind comprehend ; all-pervading ; all-transcending ; delighted with his own boundless intelligence ; not limited by space or time ; without feet, moving swiftly ; without hands, grasping all worlds ; without eyes, all-surveying ; without ears, all-hearing ; without an intelligent guide, understanding all ; without cause, the first of all causes ; all-ruling ; all-powerful ; the creator, preserver, transformer of all things : such is the Great One."²

Of the process by which Brahm, the Supreme Being, created the world, Hindoo mythologists are far from being agreed. The most generally received creed, however, is, that Vishnu, the preserving spirit of God, as he slept on the face of the waters after the annihilation of a former world, produced a lotus from his body, from which sprang



BRAHMA.

Brahma, the creator, who produced the elements, formed the present world, and gave birth to the god Siva, the destroyer. After this he

² Sir W. Jones, vol. vi. p. 418.

produced the human race. From his head he formed the Brahmins ; from his arms the Cshetries, or warriors ; from his thighs the Veysias, or merchants ; and from his feet, the Sudras, or husbandmen.³

Brahma, the creator, is now but a secondary deity amongst the Hindoos, his worship being almost superseded by that of Vishnu and Siva. There are but few temples to him, and still fewer figures. In those which are yet to be seen, we find him represented as a red or golden-coloured figure, with four heads. He has also four arms, in one of which he holds a spoon, in another a string of beads, in the third a water-jug, and in the fourth the sacred Vedas.

Unlike the other personages of the triad, Brahma appears to have had very few *avatars* or manifestations. His descendants were, however, numerous, and many of them were subsequently raised to the rank of deities.

Vishnu, the second person of the triad, is represented of a black or blue colour. He is generally seen placed on a throne of his favourite lotus flower ; but sometimes he is to be found reclining on a leaf of that flower, or on the many-headed serpent Ananta, or eternity.



VISHNU.

This deity has had nine *avatars*, and at the tenth it is said the destruction of the world will take place. The ninth of these was his incarnation as Buddha, the reformer of the Hindoo faith, or rather the

³ Coleman's Mythology of the Hindoos, p. iv.

founder of the Buddhist religion. The heaven of Vishnu is described as being rich and beautiful beyond imagination. Eighty thousand miles in circumference, it is composed entirely of gold, with huge edifices of precious stones; and every luxurious adjunct which the warm and fertile invention of oriental minds could picture.

Siva, the destroyer, the supreme lord of all, vanquished only by Maha Kali, or Eternity, is usually represented of a white or silver colour. Sometimes he has five heads, at other times but one, with a third eye in his forehead; the three eyes being supposed to denote time past, present, and to come. He is often found seated on a throne, and sometimes riding on the bull Nandi. In his hands are represented a small drum, a cup to receive the blood of the slain, two human heads, and a club.*

His consort, Parvali, is also frequently represented with him. He has various names, and has had numerous incarnations. Many are



KURMAWATARA.

the temples erected to his worship, and at certain seasons of the year great festivals are held, at which thousands congregate to celebrate some one of his exploits by means of games, offerings, and acts of devotion.

The religion of Brahma, like most other forms of worship, may be

* Coleman, p. 62.

divided into two parts, the ritual and the moral, or practical. Numberless are the ceremonials to be observed by the followers of Brahma,



MATSYAVATARA.

Vishnu, and Siva. Ablution and prayer are the chief duties of all devout Hindoos. Of the class of Brahmins five sacraments are daily demanded, viz. studying the Vedas ; making oblations to the manes, and to fire in honour of the deity ; giving alms, and receiving guests with honour.

The Brahminical code forcibly dwells upon the evil results of a vicious life, both during a present state and hereafter. The upright man, it is expressly declared, need not be cast down even though oppressed with penury, while the unjust man attains no felicity, nor he whose wealth proceeds from false evidence.⁵ It is also emphatically declared in the learned and sacred books of the Hindoos, that paramount to all ceremonial observances and rites are the moral duties of man. Those duties, however, appear on closer examination to be rather of a passive than an active character ; and although strongly imbued with a generous and elevated spirit, the morality of the Brahmins is at the best little more than a guide to innocent tranquillity.

⁵ Menu, chap. iv. p. 76.

The principal changes which have taken place in the religion of India, are the passing from the worship of one true God to the adoration of a crowd of deities more numerous than those of any other known faith, equally with the adoration of deified mortals; the great increase of sects of religion; the employment of a new and more plastic set of Vedas; the great ascendancy of the monastic orders over all others; and the inculcation of the doctrine that faith in a particular god is far more efficacious than contemplation, ceremonial observance, and even good works.⁶

We find the fruits of innovation and change in the multiplicity of strange temples to new deities and saints; in the constantly recurring festivals; in the innumerable processions and shows, accompanied as they are with glaring, tinsel pomp; in the penances, the offerings, and oblations, and the multiplicity of devotees and monks revelling in idle, useless sanctity. Indeed, the Hindoo religion as at present existing, may be said to be the Roman Catholicism of the East.

The text-books of the new creed are the *Puranas*, of which there are eighteen, believed by their readers to have been composed by the inspired writer of the *Vedas*, though there is scarcely any doubt of their having been the production of many different pens, and of so late date as from the eighth to the sixteenth century of the Christian era.

Besides the host of gods whose existence is taught in the *Puranas*, there are countless hosts of angels ministering to the spirits of the just in the allotted heavens. There are also evil spirits, such as the *Rakshasas* and *Pisachas*, whilst the *Bhats* correspond with the nursery goblins of the western world.

There is besides an almost innumerable crowd of local gods, worshipped in villages and certain districts, and which in many respects bear a striking resemblance to the *Lares* of the Romans.

Hindooism, in contradistinction to Buddhism, believes in a future of good or evil. The transmigration of the soul is a leading feature of this doctrine; they still believe that between the different stages of existence they will, according to their merit or demerit, enjoy thousands of years of happiness in heaven, or suffer as long the racks of the infernal regions, of which they have a vast number.

The religious service of the Hindoos is far from being of an elevated or interesting character. For the Brahmin, if he be a strict observer of the ritual, it will prove a task of some hours daily; but the great mass of the people ordinarily content themselves with repeating the name of their patron deity whilst taking their morning bath.

⁶ Elphinstone, vo. i. p. 161.

The religious festivals of the Hindoos form no inconsiderable portion of their devotion. Amongst the chief of these may be instanced the festival of Juggernath, a deity before whose shrine more victims have been immolated than have fallen beside the standard of Alexander or the eagle of Napoleon. There are many shrines to this god, but the principal one is at Orissa, whence, at the due season, the colossal image, sixty feet high, is brought forth on its huge, unwieldy car, drawn by thousands of men, women, and children, who consider it a high and holy privilege to be thus employed.

As the ponderous wheels of the vast machine roll lazily onwards, devotees and pilgrims from distant places rush forward and fling themselves beneath the moving mass, and scatter the road with their blood. At the principal feast, the Rath-jattrā, as many as sixty thousand persons will be assembled from almost all parts of India. It is believed that several thousands annually lost their lives in this shocking manner, though of late years the practice has considerably fallen off.

Scarcely of less importance than the preceding is the *Durga Pûrja*, a festival which takes place early in October in honour of Parvati, the wife of Vishnu, under her second name of *Dûrga*, which this Eastern Bellona is said to have received in consequence of her victory over a redoubtable giant named *Dûrgu*. Feasting to excess is carried on during the ten days of this universal holiday ; all business is suspended, and none can think of any thing but merrymaking. Some of the wealthy Hindoo gentlemen expend as much as 10,000*l.* in entertaining both Europeans and natives during the *Pûrja*, and vast numbers of cattle are slaughtered for the poorer classes.

For few things are the Hindoos so remarkable as for their rigorous performance of self-inflicted punishments and austerities during religious festivals. These are either done to propitiate favour for the future, or to efface some misdeed or offence committed, or perhaps in fulfilment of a vow made during sickness. In the latter case, no consideration can induce the person to forego the penance ; and though sometimes years may elapse before it can be accomplished, it will still be carried out.

Amongst these severities, we find swinging in the air suspended by cords on hooks forced through the muscles of the back ; thrusting a spear through the foot, and walking with the weapon projecting deep into the ground ; standing on one foot for many days with the hands held clasped above the head, and the eyes intently fixed upon the burning sun ; and lastly, knives, swords, or arrows thrust through the tongue in a great variety of ways.

Fakeers are men who have achieved a degree of sanctity through penances of this sort, and by which they are generally maimed for life. They are looked upon as beings of a sacred character, and are kept liberally supplied with alms wherever they wander. These men are usually very repulsive objects, being filthy in the extreme, and crippled in many hideous ways.

The performance of suttee, or self-sacrifice, by the widows of Hindoos, has obtained from very early dates. The mode of death was by a funeral-pile, which the victim ascended, often with much firmness, sometimes with apparent satisfaction, but not unfrequently with terror and reluctance, though aided by plentiful potions of drugs and stimulants.

The East India Company have for many years past laboured to put down both this and the equally barbarous practice of infanticide; for a long period the task appeared a hopeless one, but success has at length crowned their praiseworthy efforts, and within their own territories, as well as those of their allies, these practices may now be said to be almost extinct.

Although the Bhuddhist religion is at the present moment an unknown faith in Hindostan proper, it must not be passed by without notice, seeing that it had its original stronghold in India, and thence spread over a large portion of the eastern world, including as its votaries not fewer than one-third of the human race.

Sakya, or Gotama Buddha, the last of the Buddhas, was born at Pataliputra,⁷ or Patna, B.C. 623, attained his Buddhahood, through a long course of meditation and penance, about B.C. 588; and after propagating his faith through the greater part of India and in the island of Ceylon, died at the age of eighty.

The two religions were too antagonistic in their nature to grow and thrive side by side. A long and bitter struggle between these faiths

⁷ Palibothra of the Greeks.



A FAKIR.

resulted in the ascendancy of Brahminism, and the final expulsion of Buddhism from Hindostan, between the seventh and twelfth centuries of the Christian era.⁸ Driven from this part of Asia, the new, or reformed faith made its way northwards to Thibet and Tartary; eastwards to Burmah, Siam, China, and Japan, and southwards to Ceylon and other eastern islands, until it became diffused over a wider range of country, and was acknowledged by a greater number of votaries, than has been the case with any other religion since the creation of mankind.⁹

The creed of the Buddhists is essentially one of atheism, although in some parts of northern Asia it assumes a theistical character; yet even amongst such the belief in a God is coupled with the rejection of Him as the creator or ruler of the universe.¹⁰ The true Buddhist believes in the eternal existence of nothing but matter, which bears within itself the power of reproduction of beings without the aid of any external agent.

Transmigration under a peculiar aspect forms a part of this belief, and the existence of a superior order of beings, called Buddhas, who have, by a long career of austerities and praiseworthy deeds in various worlds, attained to that rank. The Buddhas are believed to be many in number; and it is the last of them, Gotama, who revealed, or constructed the reformed religion.

This present Buddha, however, although the admitted head of the church, is not worshipped as a deity, or as a being presiding and watching over the destinies of this lower world. He is simply considered as a beacon of intelligence, goodness, and beauty, worthy the imitation of mankind. Having attained the sublime excellency of *Nirvana*, or cessation of existence, he is no longer capable of being worshipped. He is, in fact, but a deification of human intellect, a state of approximation to which every member of the race may attain without reference to position.

Nirvana is not the destruction or annihilation of an existent being, but the cessation of his existence. It is not an absorption into a superior being, as the Brahmins teach; it is not a retreat into a place of eternal repose, free from further transmigration; nor is it a violent destruction of being; but a complete and final cessation of existence.

The morality of Buddhism is of a high and pure character; and although the incentive to virtue, the final attainment of *Nirvana*, is so,

⁸ Asiatic Journal, vol. iv. p. 334.

⁹ Christianity in Ceylon, by Sir J. Emerson Tennent, p. 200.

¹⁰ Elphinstone's India, vol. i. p. 308.

widely different from that which influences the Christian, it may easily be seen that its standard is scarcely second to any other code. The Buddhist is forbidden to take the life of even the meanest creature; he is prohibited intemperance, incontinence, dishonesty, and falsehood, all vices that are but too common in the East; whilst the smaller failings of anger, pride, covetousness, hypocrisy, &c. are not forgotten. On the other hand, he is encouraged to the practice of all virtues, the forgiveness of injuries, charity, respect to age and character, contentment, gratitude, moderation in all things, patience, cheerfulness,—all these he is taught to follow as the sure guides to the ultimatum of his desires. “Those,” said Buddha, “who practise all these virtues, and are not overcome by evil, will enjoy the perfection of happiness, and attain to supreme renown.”

One striking peculiarity of the Buddhist religion is to be found in the garb and lives of the priesthood. They are dressed in robes of yellow cloth, have their heads shaven, go barefooted and bareheaded, live in monasteries, and perform regular daily services in their temples. They are also sworn to poverty and celibacy; and subsist, or are supposed to do so, upon alms. At one time nunneries for women appear to have existed; but none are to be met with at the present time.

A third sect of religionists, though not of very great extent, is that of the Jains, holding a place about midway between the Brahmins and Buddhists. They are, to a certain extent, atheistical, believing in the eternity of matter alone; and whilst they reverence the whole of the Hindoo deities, they add to their Pantheon a long list of saints, who pretty nearly assume with them the rank and attributes of Buddha.

The division of castes in India forms a prominent feature of the Brahminical religion. In early times these classes were four in number, though in the present day several of them are lost, whilst many other subdivisions have sprung up. The first class is that of the Brahmins, who, according to the code of Menu, were held as superior to all other created beings, and possessed considerable immunities. They took rank before kings; their property was considered most sacred; and although their offences were treated with admirable clemency, no leniency awaited the culprit who offended or injured one of their sacred body.

Endowed, however, as they were with so many immunities, their life could scarcely be pronounced an enviable one. Nearly three-fourths of their life were spent in the practice of severe mortifications and austerities, or immersed in the deepest contemplation; and even during the later period of their earthly career, when their penances had ceased, they were enjoined the practice of a devotional meditation

upon the delights of a future state, free from all sources of evil and suffering.

The Cshetryas, or military class, speaks for itself. Ranking next to the Brahmins, they were always treated with honour, and enjoyed many advantages over the lower classes. Their duties, as laid down in Menu, appear to have been to defend the people, to give alms, to sacrifice, to read the *Vedas*, and to shun the allurements of sensual pleasures.¹¹

Next in rank to the preceding is the Veisyas, or mercantile class, who are enjoined by Menu to practise the rites of religion; not forgetting, of course, donations to the Brahmins, trading, banking, cultivation, and cattle-rearing.



A SUDRA MENDICANT.

The Sudras were the lowest in the scale of society; and every enactment made in reference to them and their position possesses the same

¹¹ Chap. i. p. 89.

severity of tone. It is declared to be their especial duty to serve the other classes, but in no way to interfere in their callings. Even in the exercise of religious duties, they must perform them in a maimed and imperfect manner. The *Veda* is not allowed to be read even in their presence; nor must any one of them presume to offer their advice.

Should a Sudra be killed, the religious penance for the act is similar to that for killing a cat or a dog. A Sudra is to be fed by the leavings of his master, and to be clad in his rejected garments; and as to worldly possessions, he is not permitted to accumulate the most trifling amount.

Such was the status of the Sudras in the early days of Indian empire; but in modern times, not only have great radical changes and innovations crept into the upper classes, but the two latter may be said no longer to exist; whilst in their places we find scores of other castes, less of a religious nature than of a social character.

There is no longer a servile caste; they have merged quietly but surely in the hundreds of classes now met with on every side in India. Not at all unfrequently these castes coincide with the various trades; such, for instance, as the goldsmiths, the washermen, and the carpenters. These, if more numerous than of old, are certainly far more particular in regard to preserving the integrity of their respective castes which in olden times was seldom done.

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CHAPTER III.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

IN a region equal in extent to the whole of Europe, with the exception of Russia, which has been the theatre of so many revolutions, numbering within its limits a population of a hundred and twenty millions, and counting not less than a dozen distinct nations, and at least four separate religions, we might reasonably look for a considerable dissimilarity of customs, manners, and character; and undoubtedly such is to be found in very many instances, drawing a line through the country, almost as broad and as marked as that of their dialects.

Not only do the inhabitants of the Deccan and the entire peninsula of India differ from those of Hindostan Proper in most particulars, but the latter, again, have little in common with the dwellers in the north-west; and even within the boundaries of Hindostan we may perceive a marked dissimilarity between the Bengalees and the inhabitants of Gangetic Hindostan. In personal appearance the natives of the northern countries are fairer, better formed, and more robust and energetic than those to the south, who, with the exception of some of the Malabar tribes, are of small stature, darker, effeminate, cunning, and timid to a degree. The communities of most of the towns are composed of bankers, traders, government officials, bazaar-keepers, and domestics. In the rural districts there are few beyond the agriculturists and the village headmen and officers of the government.

The mode of life of the Indian ryot is one of extreme simplicity, amounting but too often to misery, the result of an outward continual pressure kept on him by the zemindar and others of that class. The members of a family dwell with each other from grandfather to grandchild with patriarchal contentedness—one leafy roof, one bamboo-wall, sheltering old and young, the toiler and the tarryer; happy if the simple meal of roots and grain comes at the appointed time,—happy now and then to snatch a mouthful of forbidden rice from the fields their hands cultivate for the tax-farmer,—happy if at harvest-time *all* that crop be not wrung from them in rent and usury.

Poor as is the exterior of the Hindoo hut, with its patch of garden-stuff, its broken wall and its bamboo hedge, its interior wears not a more cheering aspect. A handful of rushes for a carpet covers a part of the mud floor; a few earthen vessels for water or purposes of cookery; a bamboo stool, a rush mat rolled up in one corner, which at night performs the office of a bed,—these make up the household inventory, so poor, so mean, so small in value, that were the insatiate tax-farmer to distrain for his rent, no coin would be found sufficiently minute to purchase them. Glass and crockery are mystic articles to the Hindoo villager: he may have heard of such things at the next town on festival-days, but his own supply of dinner-ware is provided by more bountiful hands than those of Spode and Copeland,—the willow-pattern is supplanted by the Banana leaf. An earthen chattie and rice-dish are articles of luxury. In dress they have as little to boast of. One strip of cotton-cloth, bleached white with constant washings, or perhaps stained yellow or pink, is wound round the loins. On occasions of village or religious festivities a second strip will be flung loosely across the shoulders, to be afterwards carefully laid aside for the next occasion. The women wear a longer piece of white cloth wrapt round them in apparent negligence, and yet so gracefully as to set off the figure to the utmost advantage. Children are seldom clad until they attain the age of eight or nine.¹ The reader has here a picture of that class of Indian cultivators, who, spread over a vast and fertile tract of country, may truly be called the flesh and bone of our Indian empire: from such as these springs the large export-trade of the presidencies, amounting to seventeen millions sterling annually; from such as these is wrung the greater portion of the twenty-two millions sterling of taxation: it is these, whose only knowledge of their English rulers is derived through the medium of the revenue-farmer, whose education is cared for at the annual rate of three farthings per family.

There are, of course, classes superior to the above, scattered over the land: heads of villages, district functionaries, and dwellers in small towns, who pretend to somewhat of Hindoo gentility, whose wives and daughters dwell in distinct apartments, whose sleeping cotton-mat is a little more showy, whose waist-cloth is whiter and more copious, whose earthen drinking-vessels are transformed to utensils of brass, who dine off real plates of clay, and do not tremble at the names of "zemindar" and "Burrah Sahib."²

Uncared for, low in the scale of humanity, removed from all soften-

¹ Milbrecht's Protestant Missions in Bengal.

² Anglice, great (or English) master.

ing or ennobling influences, the height of their enjoyment, all that they value, is a carouse at the festival of some repulsive deity, or their mid-day gossip and hookah with the heads of their village under the cool shade of a banyan-tree. Home duties and domestic happiness are words without meaning in their ears; their wives and daughters have no social status, no education; they are simply necessary pieces of human furniture for the physical uses of man, and whose sole destiny is to raise families, to boil rice, and finally to die.

There is perhaps less difference in the food of the various classes than in any other respect. With all castes vegetables form the basis of their cookery, though some of the lower orders in large towns are not careful to abstain from eating flesh. Amongst the rural population there is little to be met with beyond a coarse unleavened bread made from various fine grains, with a few boiled vegetables, roots, a little oil or ghee made from buffaloes' milk, and perhaps a dash of some sort of



A HINDOO MEAL.

spice and a little salt. In the southern states of the peninsula rice forms a more prominent feature in their cookery; whilst to the north and north-west, flesh, whether of animals or birds, is more commonly employed in various ways.

In the towns a far greater variety of food is eaten, and generally with more regard to taste and indulgence. In the vicinity of the rivers fish abounds, and forms a staple article of daily food. The use of intoxicating drinks is chiefly confined to large communities, though amongst the Rajpoot tribes opium is used to a large extent. The most

common indulgence of nearly all classes is a mixture of betel and areca, aromatic pungent articles, combined with a sort of lime, and occasionally tobacco and spices.

In none of their daily observances does the prejudice of caste so strongly appear as in eating their meals. It is reckoned extreme defilement to eat from a plate or seated on the same mat as used by one of an inferior caste; and this leads to many strange customs, especially amongst the Brahmins, the highest in the social scale. It is not at all unusual for these people to eat from plates formed of the leaves of trees just gathered, in order to prevent pollution. In the same way, and for the same reason, members of the military or mercantile classes, when going a journey, are frequently compelled to dress their own victuals, wanting a cook of their own caste.

The dwellings of the Indian peasantry are generally miserable in the extreme, consisting of seldom more than two small rooms formed of stones and mud rudely thrown together, protected from the heat of the sun and the deluge of tropical showers by a simple roof of jungle-sticks and wild leaves; and usually without any garden-fence about them, they present a striking contrast to the tastily finished mansions of their wealthy countrymen.

The more substantial men of the villages can seldom boast of much more; the chief distinction being that the latter indulge in a fenced garden, and often a second story to their hovels.

On the other hand, the Hindoos of rank indulge in much lavish outlay upon their mansions and pleasure-gardens, many of which vie with the extent and costliness of the Mahometan edifices in the time of the empire.

In the southern part of the peninsula a far greater degree of taste and neatness is displayed in the village dwellings, where not only are they frequently more prettily situated, but a marked regard is paid to the cleanliness and appearance of the cottages.

Every village, no less than each of the towns throughout India, boasts of its bazaar for the sale of the simple necessities of Oriental life. In the hamlets of the rural districts, the bazaar will consist of a single small shop, whose whole stock consists of grain, some coarse cloths, a few sweetmeats, a collection of earthen vessels, and a bundle or two of tobacco, with occasionally some brass ornaments for the women. In the towns, a group of shops, of various kinds, containing far more miscellaneous stores, may be met with; and in the larger cities whole streets and squares are comprised within the bazaar.

There are besides these bazaars, markets held at short intervals,

and fairs generally once or twice in each year upon any particular festival or holiday. An Indian town or city presents a busy, animated scene on market-days. Villagers pour in with their burdens of grain or fruit upon their heads, or with loaded bullock-carts; the narrow



A WATER-CARRIER.

streets and lanes become thronged to suffocation. The cries of the carriage drivers, the shouts of the loaded water-carriers, the moaning, heavy song of the palanquin-bearers, the screaming of children, the lowing of cattle; these, with the dust, and heat, and glare of pent-up, badly paved carriage-ways, make up a scene any thing but pleasing to a European traveller.

The amusements, festivals, and religious ceremonies of the Hindoos are all alike distinguished by a great degree of pomp, ostentation, and form.

There is much that is pleasing in the

manners of the higher classes towards their inferiors, to whom they shew, on all occasions, the utmost affability and courtesy. Presents have from the earliest times formed a leading feature of all holidays, festivals, and family or public ceremonies. These vary according to the means of the donor; from some thousands of pounds sterling down to a bouquet of flowers, or a little rice and fruit.

In many districts this custom has become a most oppressive one, being distorted by the native headmen and officials into a means of wringing from those of the poorer and most helpless classes all such of their substance as may be left them by the zemindars. Each birthday or wedding-day of any of the chiefs or middlemen of a district or village is made the pretext for mulcting the ryot in donations known by the name of *abwabs*, generally in kind. Thus the milkman furnishes a supply of milk, the oil-maker supplies oil for the lamps, the cultivator contributes his quota of grain; and so on through the whole population. The *naibs*, *gomastas*, and *paiks*, all subordinates attached to the collectors of revenue, levy their own peculiar *abwabs* upon the prostrate ryots, who are without the power of refusal. So long as the poor cultivators possess the veriest trifle of produce, so long are they made especial objects of extortion by the human vultures that throng the revenue and judicial establishments of British India.



A NAUTCH OR NATIVE ENTERTAINMENT.

The fairs held throughout India are for the joint purposes of pleasure and trade. They are widely different from such scenes in England, partaking far more of theatrical pomp and show, with more noise, and a greater admixture of foreigners clad in many varied dresses. There is always a certain blending of religious ceremonial with these periodical assemblages, though generally forming but a small feature in the day's proceedings.

The upper classes of the natives of India are much given to entertainments of dancing and music, to which large numbers of their friends are invited. These take place upon any occasion which may offer a pretext for conviviality or sociability; they, indeed, answer to the European evening-parties. Natives of high birth and rank are proud to have their English acquaintances present on these occasions, and often make great preparations for their reception, especially if, as is sometimes the case, the European be an official of note.

It is at these parties that the "Nautch Girls" display the gracefulness, and something more, of their figures, with a studied affectation of ease and grace, which, to a European, carries little beyond repulsion. In some parts of India, especially in the southern states of the peninsula, every temple has a troop of these "Dancing Girls," whose questionable earnings help out the sacred finances of the shrine. Some of them dress with great magnificence, hiring their jewelled robes for the occasion, and which are said occasionally to be worth, with their ornaments, as much as 20,000*l*.

The position of Hindoo women is much changed since the time of Menu; and even from the period when the British rule was established, many important modifications in the position of the females have taken place. During the olden Hindoo time, the women were retired and secluded almost as strictly as amongst the Mahomedans; and there is little doubt but that during the Tartar dynasty this became still more the case.

The code of Menu lays down with considerable minuteness the actual position and duties of the wife as regards her husband; and these are such as can scarcely be termed unfair towards the weaker sex. The strictest obedience of the wife is enjoined; but at the same time the husband is told to leave her at her own disposal in innocent and lawful recreations.³ He is, moreover, to keep her "constantly supplied with ornaments, apparel, and food at festivals and jubilees."

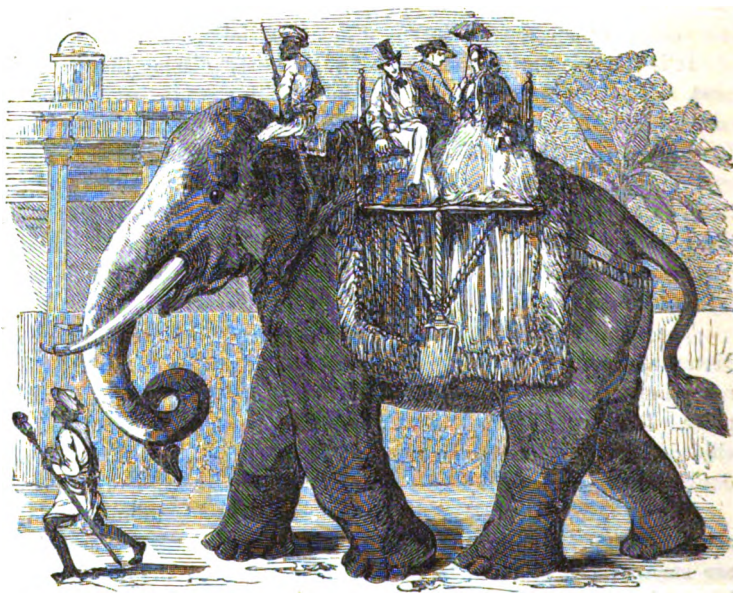
The code is equally precise in detailing the various duties of the woman, who is to give her undivided care and study to the preparation of daily food, and the superintendence of household utensils.

³ Menu, chap. ix. p. 2.

As a rule, Hindoo women are totally without education. Parents do not see the advantage that may arise from placing their daughters on an equal footing in this respect with their sons. The smallest expense attending the education of a girl would be, by the father, considered as a foolish waste of money, productive of good to no one.

There are, however, exceptions to even this very general rule amongst the families of the superior classes of Bengalees, where it not very unfrequently happens that the daughter has been taught, not only to read, but to write.

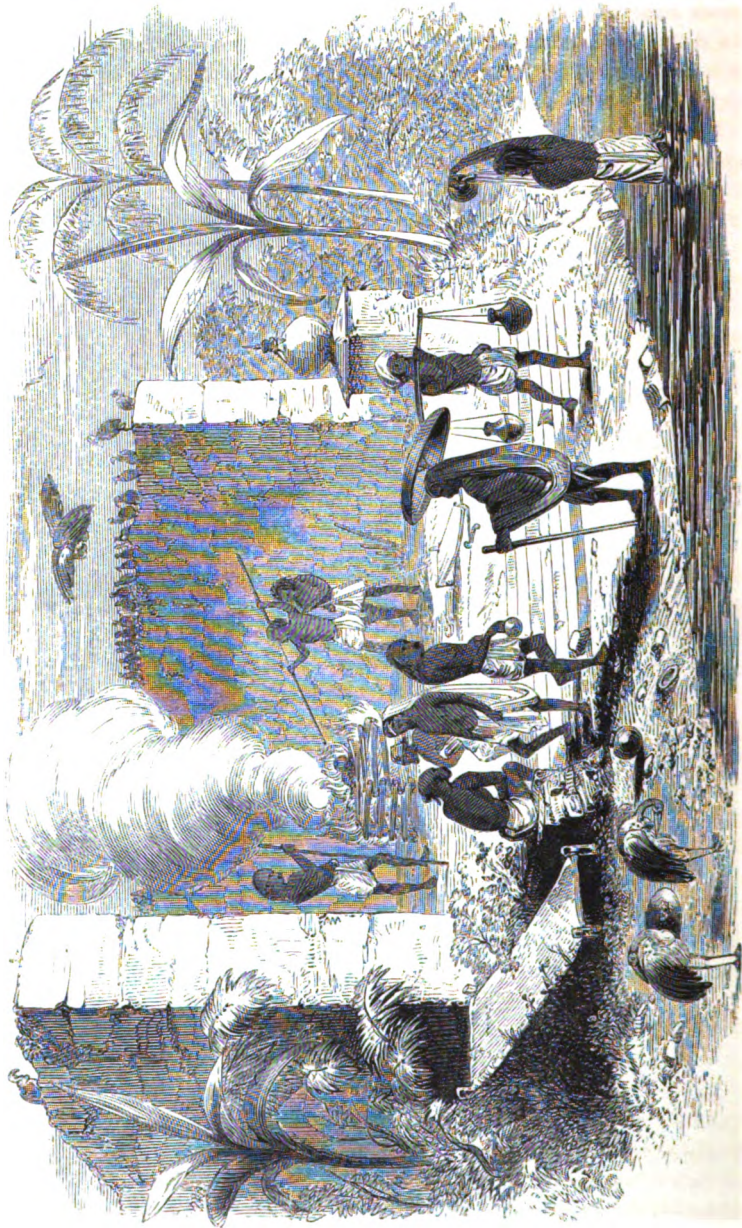
The form of marriage is simple in the extreme, the rite consisting in the bride taking seven steps, repeating a particular verse at each separate step. When the seventh is taken, the marriage is considered



A RIDING ELEPHANT.

indissoluble.⁴ Other forms were observed in earlier times; but they have gradually become obsolete. The bride and bridegroom are usually not more than ten years of age when marriage takes place, and seldom more than twelve. At these ceremonies a lavish outlay is often in-

⁴ Colebrook : *Asiatic Researches*, vol. vii. pp. 303-9.

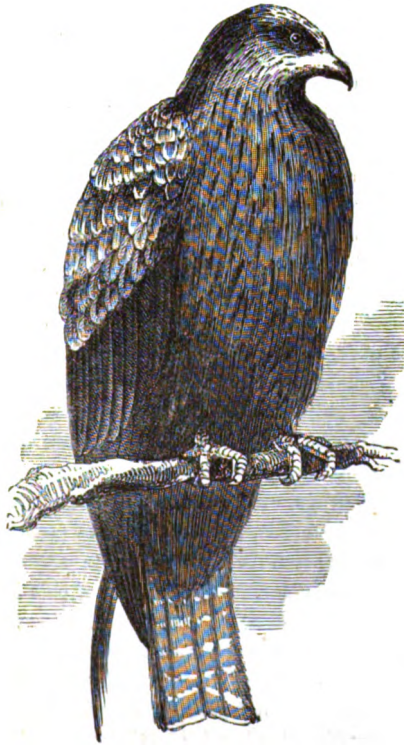


HINDOO FUNERAL PILE.

curred, sometimes beyond the means of the parties. In large cities it is said that from 10,000*l.* to 20,000*l.* sterling will be squandered upon the feasting, illuminations, dancing, processions of elephants, &c. inseparable from a Hindoo wedding in high life.

The custom of burning the dead has obtained in India from time immemorial.

Before burning the body, great care is taken to have it well washed, perfumed, and arrayed with flowers and clean cloths. In some parts



INDIAN KITE.

of India music accompanies the funeral procession to the pyre; but elsewhere the only sounds which disturb the stillness of the scene are the sorrowing exclamations of the soldiers and attendants, and the screams of the many kites and other birds of prey, hovering about.

Of the first institution of Suttee nothing certain is known ; though it is undoubtedly of high antiquity, being alluded to by Diodorus Siculus, who wrote before the Christian era, and it appears to have been in practice for a long period previously.

The belief that the widow is subject to any degradation should she survive her husband's death cannot be correct, seeing that it is by no means an uncommon occurrence for the relatives and friends of the family to endeavour, by all the means in their power, to dissuade the woman from the contemplated act : it is notorious that this is not only attempted, but often successfully ; and amongst other expedients employed, is so to occupy the time and attention of the widow, that the body of her deceased husband may be removed and burned before she is aware of the fact.⁵

The ceremony of Suttee varies with the local customs of different parts of India ; though not perhaps in any essential particulars. In Bengal the widow prepares for the act with many ceremonies, and invariably bathes before mounting the pyre, if possible in the sacred waters of the Ganges. Before firing the funeral altar, the dead and the living are bound together to the pile, so as to preclude the possibility of the latter effecting an escape. In the south of India the women would appear to need no such precautions. A widow will there coolly seat herself on the pyre, and placing the head of the departed husband in her lap, awaits with Roman firmness the moment when the flames of the burning mass shall envelope her in their embraces. In other parts of India the Suttee leaps into the burning mass from an eminence, or the funeral pyre may be below the surface of the ground.

Sometimes the courage of the woman will fail her at the critical time, and she will make a desperate attempt to escape from the cruel death which awaits her ; but in this case the attendants invariably thrust her back into the flames. An instance of this kind is on record wherein an English gentleman being present, succeeded in rescuing the widow from the flames, much against the wishes of those present. His conduct was, however, but ill requited by the woman whose life he had thus saved ; for on the following day he was not a little surprised at being upbraided by her for having thus shut her out from the companionship of her husband in Paradise.⁶

This practice is far more frequent within the limits of Hindostan Proper than in any other part of India. Indeed, in the western districts it is but seldom that it occurs ; whilst south of the Deccan it is almost unknown.

⁵ Elphinstone, vol. i. p. 359.

⁶ Ibid. vol. i. p. 361.

Amongst other customs prevalent in India, is one, which if it be not universal throughout that vast country, at any rate prevails to an extent which seems scarcely credible, and which was for a long period disbelieved, such is its revolting character.

There are certain Rajpoot tribes of the western and central provinces of British India, who have, almost from time immemorial, sacrificed the lives of a great portion of their female children as soon as born. In a part of the province of Benares, in Kach, and in the neighbouring district of Kalliawar, is to be found this degrading custom in its full vigour. In Kach and Kalliawar alone it is computed, on the lowest calculation, that 2000 female infants are thus annually put to death; whilst in the province of Benares as many more are yearly sacrificed.

The existence of this shocking custom is proved in other localities; though perhaps not to such a great extent as amongst the Rajpoots. The Sikhs of Bhopal, the Minas of Gahazpore and Toukra, the inhabitants of Rewar and Jholawar, and the Chouans of Marwar, are all known to practise this method of ridding themselves of their daughters.

Not the least revolting feature of the custom is, that most of these infants die by the hands of their *mothers* shortly after their birth; and that none are preserved but such as the father requests may be saved.

This child-murder appears to have had its origin in the difficulty which the heads of families meet with in disposing of their daughters in marriage. By them it is considered incestuous to intermarry with members of the same tribe; their daughters must seek husbands among the tribes at a distance; and as this is often not practicable, and moreover as the poverty of many of the Rajpoots prevents them from providing for the marriage expenses, which custom renders absolutely necessary, they dread the disgrace which inevitably follows the single life of females in India; and with the view of averting this, resort to the barbarous practice of sacrificing their offspring.

The servants of the East India Company were no sooner made aware of the great prevalence of this crime within their own districts and those of friendly states, than they used every effort in their power to put an end to the enormity. So long since as 1819 the attempt was made by attaching heavy penalties to the perpetrators of the crime within the British territory; and in the case of friendly states, their chiefs were bound by treaties to do their utmost to put a stop to the practice. More than thirty years have elapsed since these praise-

worthy attempts were first made; and although during that period no effort has been spared, no energy relaxed, it is to be feared that the revolting custom has become too deeply rooted in the habits and feelings of the people to be eradicated by edicts or treaties.

Not less revolting to a humane and civilised mind than the barbarities of Suttee and infanticide, is the long-prevalent and general custom amongst the Hindoos of exposing their sick on the banks of the Ganges to breathe their last within the influence of its holy waters. This they call giving them to Ganga.

No sooner is a patient believed to be beyond the reach of medicine, than, if within a possible distance, he is carried to the banks of the Ganges, and either left to die in one of the small mud huts with which its shores abound, or he will be placed in the stream itself in such a manner that, as its waters rise, death must ensue from drowning. Sometimes the relatives lay the patient on the sandy banks, and commence pouring a quantity of the thick muddy water of the river down his throat, until suffocation ensues, when they believe most firmly that the water has winged the soul to Paradise.

The scenes upon the river-banks are oftentimes most harrowing; the invalid beseeching his friends to save him; the half-drowning man strong enough in his delirious fever to struggle, but in vain, to escape his cruel fate; the mother beseeching her children to save her; the tender infant left upon the beach stretching its tiny hands to one who, in any other country, would be the last to desert it in its helpless agony, but who here, under the baleful influence of a withering superstition, stands coldly by and watches the little struggler sob out its infant life.

There is perhaps no country in which thieves are such adepts in their profession as in India. For how long a period this may have been the case, or whence their proficiency originally came, does not appear; but of the fact there is little doubt. The ordinary fastenings of houses, nay, the very walls themselves, are small protection against the depredations of these daring and practised marauders, who with the greatest facility possess themselves of the most valuable property, without the least chance of prevention or detection. So skilled are they in their art, that they have been known to remove the bed-clothes from under a sleeper, without having been detected.

One of the most formidable enemies of the public in India was the associated band of robbers and murderers called Thugs, who for a series of years committed the most daring enormities against life and property, without any effectual attempts being made to put them down. These



HINDOO LEAVING HER SICK CHILD ON THE BANKS OF THE GANGES.

Thugs were banded together, and generally worked in concert by bodies of three or more. In order to effect their purpose with the greater facility and security, they travelled the least frequented parts of the country in various disguises, and when they found a traveller who appeared to possess sufficient to render him an object worth their trouble, they waylaid him on his journey and dispatched him by strangulation, burying the body or sinking it in a well, so as to escape detection. In some cases they have been known to join company with their victim, and whilst seated together, resting beneath the shade of some wide-spreading tree and listening to a tale of adventure, one of their number approached from the rear, and slipping the fatal noose over the head of the unwary traveller, quickly dispatched him without the chance of escape.



A THUG.

It has been calculated that many thousands of persons have fallen victims to the Thugs, and it is impossible to say how many more they might have immolated, had not their ill-luck tempted them to sacrifice one or two Englishmen. This aggravated wickedness at once aroused the ire and activity of the authorities, who, regardless as they had so long been of the wholesale sacrifice of Hindoo life, could not tolerate the idea of one of their own order being included in the list of victims. The mandate went forth for their suppression; and although many of them contrived to elude the vigilance of the parties placed on their track, their final extinction as a body has at length become a fact, and *Thuggee* is now a matter of past history.

If India has produced its gangs of desperate thieves and murderers, it also furnishes society with sects of an opposite character. The Charans and Bhats are peculiar races regarded by all ranks in a sacred light. These people devote themselves to the protection of property and often of life through dangerous tracts of country where mere physical demonstration would avail but little.⁷

⁷ Malcolm's Central India, vol. ii. p. 130.

The many sections into which native Indian society is split by the institution of "caste," are sensibly felt by the European, who finds himself obliged, however moderate his wants may be, to maintain from a dozen to twenty domestics. The "kidmutgar" who waits at table, and has charge of the plate, glass, &c., does not meddle with the food or drinkables, which are in the custody of a higher domestic, a sort of butler.



A KIDMUTGAR.

Gentlemen are attended in their dressing-rooms by a "bearer," who enacts the part of a Hindoo valet; whilst lower still in the grade of domestics is the "mater," who sweeps out the rooms, cleans the dinner-service, &c.

The large cities in India have no water laid on in their houses, the supply of which is brought from neighbouring tanks or wells by a class of men known as "bheesties," who carry the liquid in hogs' skins slung across their backs.



A BEARER.

Another very necessary class of servants are the "dhobies" or washermen, who are constantly employed along the banks of rivers and tanks, beating on large stones the white garments of both sexes with a violence and disregard of stitches and buttons, which, to a new-comer, appears dangerous in the extreme. By this rude process, however, they manage to preserve the cotton and linen clothes of a delicately white colour, not attainable in European countries.

The Sindhi as a people bear a closer resemblance to their Arab ancestors than any other people of the East. In some few respects they resemble the Beloochis; but though muscular, full-proportioned men, they are much fairer than their neighbours, especially the women, some of whose countenances bear a close affinity with the Spanish features and tint. Their habits and moral bearing scarcely warrant

the opinion which one would form of these people from their well-developed organism.

Illiterate to a degree, especially the females, their amusements appear to be of a gross and debasing kind. Gambling, cockfighting, hunting, and wrestling make up the excitements of a Sindhi's life; whilst the women pass their time between the frivolities of dress, cards, and the less innocent occupation of intrigue, for which they are notorious.



A MATER.



A BHEWTEE.

The ceremonials of marriage do not differ very materially from those of Hindostan. Equally abounding in forms and observances, they are not one whit less costly; and it is by no means uncommon for the nuptials to be delayed many months through the inability of the parties to incur all the needed expense.

The birth of a child of either sex is welcomed by rejoicings and festivities, limited only by the means of the parents. At four years and four months the boy is sent to school, where he remains until the age of twelve and sometimes fifteen, during which time he goes through a regular course of the Koran, the Sindhi language, and Persian. The female sex are all most miserably uneducated, the men appearing to think they are mischievous and wicked enough without the aid of books and pens.

Betrothal usually takes place when the girl is about twelve and the boy verging on fifteen, though sometimes much earlier. Marriage follows at once, if the means of the parties will allow.



A PEGUAN.

In their manners and general habits the Peguans and Talains, of the Tenasserim and neighbouring provinces, are decidedly superior to the Hindoo, though perhaps less industriously disposed. In all that relates to education, in their freedom from the ban of caste and the slavery of baneful superstition, in the superiority of their social system, these people form a remarkable exception to the state of debasement in which most of the Asiatic nations are plunged.

Perhaps their most remarkable departure from Oriental customs is the social position in which they have placed their women. Although generally without even the education afforded by the Kioungs or village schools, the mothers and wives of these countries occupy a prominent position in society, and take a share in the daily business of life rarely to be met with eastward of the Cape.

A Burman or Peguan will never journey by land so long as he can go by water; and so addicted are they from their earliest infancy to boat travelling, that the canoe enters

into almost all their arrangements. Their cattle are fed out of canoes, their children sleep in them, their vessels of domestic use are canoe-shaped, they travel by land in canoe-shaped carriages, and it may be almost said that their earliest and their latest moments are passed in canoes.

Having thus sketched the leading manners and customs of the na-

tions comprised within the limits of British India, I will endeavour to complete the picture by adding a few lines relative to their character.



HINDOO WASHERMEN.

Were an opinion upon this subject formed from the majority of books published on Indian topics, or from the oral evidence of travellers and others, we should indeed arrive at a most unfavourable conclusion, and feel inclined to place our Indian fellow-subjects the very lowest in the scale of humanity. But, unwilling to do this, we consult some of those few who have passed a long life amongst those dwellers in the provinces, who have been beyond the contaminating influence of the larger towns and cities, free from the inoculation of Indo-European morality; and we there learn other and far better things of the bulk of the people.

That falsehood, deception, perjury, timidity, if not actual cowardice, form the leading characteristics of most Hindoos, in all their intercourse with Europeans, there can be but little doubt. Equally true is it that the same race of people can be attached, faithful, honest, and,

on emergencies, brave even to the death. If we turn to the oldest records of this people left us by Greek writers, we find such accounts of them as might well induce us to believe that they were detailing the characteristics of a totally different portion of the human family. The pictures drawn by Arrian and Strabo of the character of the Hindoo nations bear no nearer resemblance to their portraiture in modern works, than do the habits and customs of the English of the nineteenth century to those of the ancient Britons.

In the *Indica* of Arrian, as well as in other works of that date, the inhabitants of India are described as sober, moderate, and upright in all their dealings; so honest, as to require no fastenings for their dwellings, nor locks for their treasures. Litigation was unknown amongst them, and truthfulness was ever a most marked characteristic of their nature. Allowing for the impediments which in those remote times must have been in the way of arriving at a complete knowledge of the character of the Hindoos, we cannot but admit that this highly-drawn picture must have had some ground of justification.

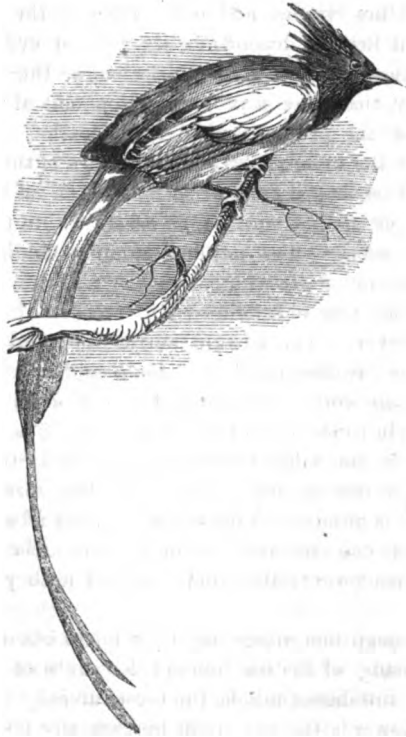
In seeking for an explanation of the wide discrepancies between the ancient and the most favourable modern accounts of these people, we must not lose sight of the continued enervating influence of climate upon character, added to the indolence engendered by a wonderfully prolific soil, which, out of its marvellous abundance, produces all that living beings stand in most need of.

These are, however, not all the causes which have been at work upon the character of the Hindoos. Long ages of cruel despotism; generation upon generation ground to the dust by oppression and injustice; each foreign race of masters more exacting than the last. The Tartar vying with the Arab, the Mahomedan with the Afghan, and lastly, the British conquerors of the East, the boasted pioneers of Christianity and civilisation, refining upon Tartar barbarity and cupidity, snatch from the prostrate, helpless nations the last sorry remnants of their once proud nationality; and while they wring from the wretched people their uttermost farthing by a high-pressure taxation, deny them the cheap and ready justice, the abundant irrigation, and the admirable roads, which the bigoted followers of the Prophet, in their darkest ages of despotism, had never withheld.

Before we pass a sweeping condemnation upon so large a body of our fellow-creatures, we should ask, if the policy we have pursued towards them during the last half-century has been such as to bring forth any dormant good qualities. Have we, by our laws, our precepts, and, above all, by our own example, sought to elevate the

standard of their morality, to chide and check their vices and their failings? Have our officials been to them bright patterns of integrity and zeal? Have our merchant-princes been worthy examples of honour and upright dealings? Has the enlightened son of Britain held up the mirror of truth to the benighted Indian; or has the dark-skinned, dark-souled gentile shamed the pale-faced Christian with virtues, not of Bible-growth, which, living on in that rank, baneful soil, have still outstripped the blighted offshoots of the gospel-land?

These questions it will be my duty to examine and answer in another place.



PARADISE FLYCATCHER (*Muscipita Paradisi*. See Appendix F.).

CHAPTER IV.

EDUCATION AND CHRISTIANITY.

THE destiny of the Hindoo and other races of the East, under the rule of Great Britain, depends for its good or evil, less upon the form of government, the quality of legislation, or the physical welfare of the community, than upon a proper development of the intelligence, and the morals of the people,—upon the elevation of their national character. As in the more progressive countries of the western world, their future must be shaped by their schools. The safety and integrity of the state hinges upon education, as surely within the tropics as in more temperate zones. The national mind of India will advance, whatever the efforts of government. The Canutes of conservatism will in vain bid the tide of intelligence to recede—thus far shalt thou come, but no farther. The onward current of mind cannot be thus swept back. The printing-press, the steam-engine, and the railroad, are all busy at their work; the sound of their labours reaches already from Cape Comorin to the foot of the Himalayas. The spirit is abroad, and none, not even the mighty men of Leadenhall Street, can quench it. They may, however, do much more—they may *direct* it; and as the winged lightning is guided and made the minister of good, so may the subtle thought of man, the intellect of millions upon millions of the human race, be bent, controlled, and moulded unto good for us and them.

Important though this subject be, it yet forms but an unsatisfactory chapter in the history of British Indian rule. It shews that whilst the most active and intelligent minds, the most carefully weighed schemes have been bent towards the one great bureaucratic object of wringing as much as possible from the great mass of the people, the most ordinary capacities, the smallest monetary grants have, with but a few exceptions, been deemed sufficient for ministering to the mental and social well-being of the community.

It shews, moreover, that if the official work has been scanty as compared with the field, the quality has been equally indifferent. The task appears to have been one of destruction rather than of reformation; to pull down rather than to build up. Heathenism has been replaced by infidelity. Brahma has been dethroned to make way for Tom Paine; the *Vedas* cast aside for the *Age of Reason*. Dagon has indeed been hewn asunder, but the Ark has found no resting-place there. And this too by a Christian government!

Before I proceed to notice the present state of education in India, it will be well to take a survey, however rapid, of the work that has already been performed by governmental and missionary means, thus placing before my readers an epitome of the rise and progress of educational establishments within the three presidencies; and if in doing so I dwell more particularly upon the scholastic institutions of Bengal, it is that data regarding the other presidencies are most meagre and incomplete.

The nature and extent of the work yet to be done may be imagined from the substance of an official report on the state of native education, which tells us that in the most highly cultured districts only sixteen per cent of the teachable population receive any kind of instruction; in the least-cultured district, the proportion receiving teaching of any sort is about two and a quarter per cent; whilst the average of all the districts visited gave but seven and three-fourths per cent of children receiving any tuition whatever. In the same way it has been shewn, that of the adult population not more than five and a half per cent of the aggregate of the visited districts, had received any sort of instruction.¹

The first attempts made by Europeans to impart education in India were the results of private benevolence and enterprise, and that not to natives, but to Christian children. Rather more than a century has elapsed since a fund was formed by a few philanthropic persons of the Indian metropolis to provide board and education for indigent Christian children, the origin of the existing free school of Calcutta. It was some years later when the local government took the first step in the same direction, and strangely though it may read, that first step was made, not in behalf of the great mass of the people—the Hindoo race, but of their Mahomedan conquerors.

It was in the year 1781 that Mr. Hastings founded the Madrissa, or Mahomedan College, of Calcutta, and fourteen years later a Sanscrit College was established at Benares, for the encouragement of native

¹ Calcutta Review, art. Government Education in Bengal, vol. iii. p. 212.

learning. By the act, the 53d Geo. III., a lac of rupees (10,000*l.*) was ordered to be appropriated "for the revival and improvement of literature, and the encouragement of the learned natives of India, and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences amongst the inhabitants of the British territories in India."

In 1816 the Hindoo college was projected, and five years later established in Calcutta, where as yet, the chief efforts in the cause of education appear to have been made. This was, and still is, by far the most important educational institution in Bengal. The celebrated Rammohun Roy was one of its most active promoters, and threw into the undertaking his entire energy. For the erection of the building 12,000*l.* were voted by the government, and an annual donation of 2,500*l.*, subsequently increased to 3,000*l.*, was granted for the maintenance of the professors, servants, &c. attached to it. Eventually larger sums were voted towards the support of this college, yet, for a long period, without having enlisted on its behalf any proportionate sympathy for the classes intended to be benefited by it, and who continued to regard it and its progress with true Asiatic indifference, so that the good resulting from its establishment has been very far from bearing a proportion to the amount of funds expended on it.

In 1830 Dr. Duff opened the General Assembly's School in Calcutta on Christian principles; and with so much ability and earnest zeal was this establishment conducted, that it very shortly rivalled the Hindoo College in the number and qualifications of its students.

It was not long after the above date, that, in order to direct and systematise the labours of the professors, and superintend the disbursements of the college and other educational grants for the presidency of Bengal, a General Committee of Public Instruction was organised, from the principal departments of the local government. In 1842 this committee was superseded by the present Council of Education, consisting of civil servants of Calcutta of high grade, two natives of little influence, a Judge of the Supreme Court, all unpaid, and a salaried secretary, who is *de facto* the council itself. This secretary is a striking illustration of the manner and the extent to which offices are heaped upon favourites by an Indian government. Besides being a member and the secretary of the Council of Education, and having in consequence to conduct the correspondence of all the colleges and schools under the government Bengal, he is a professor in the Medical College, the secretary of that college, Government Book Agent, Inspector of Schools, and First Physician to the new Fever Hospital.

In this way should any professor of one of the colleges feel aggrieved at the conduct of the school-inspector, or hampered by any of his regulations, he must forward his complaints to the man who, being both secretary and inspector, has to decide upon all complaints thus brought against himself. In the same manner the sale of books by the secretary becomes a source of great evil, for this functionary not only reaps a large personal profit by the unrestricted price he places upon all books supplied to the various educational establishments, but keeps them furnished with such books as pay him best, and which are precisely those least desired by the professors. Yet to complain is out of the question, for any such matter must be submitted to the book-agent in his capacity of secretary, who would not only decide in his own favour, but in his third capacity of inspector of schools, manage to shew any such rebellious professor the exceeding impolicy, not less than the utter inutility, of raising any such complaints.

The administration of Lord William Bentinck ushered in a revolution in the tactics of government, which, although modified by Lord Auckland, paved the way for important results. Lord Bentinck's minute of March 1835 expressly declared, that inasmuch as it was the great object of the government to promote European literature and science amongst the natives of India, all the funds appropriated for educational purposes would be best employed on English education alone. The minute was acted upon, and the final result has been, that in place of the exclusive orientalism of government education, a combined instruction in the native tongue and in English has found favour in the greater part of central and eastern India; whilst in the north-west provinces, in Assam and Arracan, English has made but few friends, and the popular feeling is exclusively in favour of the vernacular.² English is, however, but little valued within the Sanscrit colleges of Calcutta and Benares, and the Madrasa colleges of Hugli and Calcutta, where the teaching continues of a purely oriental character.

The Hindoo College of Calcutta is conducted by six professors, of whom one is principal, and another head-master of the school department. A very inferior education is given in its upper classes to about a hundred and fifty youths, comprising English literature, history, mental and moral philosophy, mathematics, and natural philosophy, surveying, and music. In its school department nearly a thousand pupils are taught by a host of native and a few European professors.

In the lower portion of the building are carried on the Sanscrit

² Kerr's Review of Public Instruction in Bengal, part i. p. 90.

College (an institution intended to promote, amongst the natives, the study and use of their sacred language), and the upper and lower school departments of the Hindoo College itself. Connected with the Sanscrit College, there is no European officer who holds any appointment involving supervision and arrangement. On field-days, when some notability is expected—a *burra-sahib*, or influential personage—an imposing appearance is presented by this strange institution. The “Professors” of “Vyakarana,” of “Sahitya,” of “Alankar,” of “Jyotish,” and sundry other things equally euphonious and intelligible, muster in great numbers; and, what with robes, turbans, and ornaments, make a great display, looking solid, learned, and profound, as Sanscrit professors ought to look. The students repeat amazing quantities of unintelligible lines and sentences, answer unintelligible questions with equally unintelligible answers; and the *burra-sahib*, profoundly ignorant of the language used, is quite satisfied with their proficiency, bows to the “professors,” who bow in return, and then departs, delighted to be able to speak and listen once more to his familiar English.

On any ordinary day the visitor will see, on a table in the midst of a small room, one of the “professors” sitting in oriental fashion, after the manner of tailors; his head is bare, his shoulders are bare; the day is hot, and the roll of muslin which envelopes his body out of doors has been removed; the ample rotundity of the stomach heaves regularly above the muslin folds which encircle the loins and thighs. The shaven crown of the worthy “professor,” and his broad quivering back, glow with the heat; whilst a disciple, standing behind him, plies the fan vigorously to and fro, and produces a current of wind that keeps the huge mass partially cool. Around the table are squatted numbers of dirty-looking youths, carefully enveloped in their muslin dresses, as prescribed by the rules, and droning, one by one, over a manuscript page, which is handed from one to another in succession. The majority are dozing, and well they may, for it is sleepy work—the same verses nasally intoned by one after another with unvarying monotony, and doubtless with similar errors. The “professor” seldom speaks, for he too is dozing heavily on the table, anxiously awaiting the bell that is to release him to liberty and dinner. The same scene is being repeated in other similar rooms, where other “professors” are similarly dozing and teaching, and other youths similarly shut up from the light of God’s sun, which shines without; and of his soul, which should shine within them.

In the upper and lower school departments of the Hindoo Col-

lege, which stretch upon either side of the central building, an immense number of classes of native youths, varying in age from ten to twenty, are better taught by European and Hindoo instructors; but in a very different way from that in which they should be taught—a total want of order and system pervading the arrangements, and calling loudly for a thorough reform. It is amazing, that whilst education has progressed at home with such wonderful rapidity during the past few years, every thing in India should still bear the impress of systems long since antiquated and exploded in Europe. A want of simultaneous teaching, and the improved *methodic*, by which large masses are individualised in the modern systems, pervades the class-teaching of the Hindoo College, and renders it comparatively fruitless. The same may be said of education generally in Bengal; nor is the fact to be wondered at, when we remember that there is no one to superintend the various institutions practically acquainted with the subject. What the schools of England would be, were all inspection removed, and were all attention to the subject suddenly to cease amongst the clergy and superintending bodies of the community generally, those of India are. Just enough is taught the youths in these school departments to make them perceive that Brahminism, the religion of their forefathers, is false; just enough to enable them to read English with tolerable fluency, to write it more imperfectly, and to speak it most imperfectly of all. Unless they enter the college department, they learn nothing well; nothing save the conviction that the religion of their fathers is a gross superstition. Very few of them *do* make their way into the college department, not perhaps one in twelve—the eleven leave the walls of their *alma mater* convinced that they have received an excellent education, that virtue and truth, and honour and piety, are all high-sounding words without meaning; that the truest virtue is but the clever concealment of vice; the sublimest truth a decent cloak for ingenious falsehood; honour, the boast of fools and the mockery of wise men; and piety, the failing of enthusiasts or bigots, but the scorn and derision of the talented.

Ascending to the upper story of the building, we arrive at the college department, properly so called.

A large hall at the bend of a wide staircase contains the library and a few portraits; a library containing books enough, were they well-selected, but over-stocked, unfortunately, with inferior works, which the government book-agent found it advisable or profitable to get off his hands. A corridor leads from this hall to the various class-rooms, where men of eminence in their various walks of study give a sound

and complete knowledge to the students, of history, mental philosophy, English literature, and mathematics. Here, however, as in the school department, and indeed generally in all the educational institutions of the country, Brahminism is uprooted, and selfishness enthroned in its place in the hearts of the students. They leave the Hindoo, as they do the other colleges, with a profound contempt for religion generally, and a high veneration and esteem for rupees. Brahma and Siva and Vishnu no longer reign in their souls as the gods of their idolatry ; for rupees, anas, and pice have taken their place ; and before them they are disposed to bow down with infinitely more reverence and faith than their fathers ever did to the former. Enjoyment is, for the future, the rule of their lives—present enjoyment of every kind—much sensual, and a little intellectual.

The Medical College of Calcutta is another most important institution, which, from small beginnings, has gradually grown to the largest dimensions. Its museum, its hospital, its lecture-rooms, and its motley array of students, comprising Hindoos of Bengal, Mahomedans, and Buddhists of Burmah and Ceylon, all render it one of the most interesting of the educational establishments of the City of Palaces ; whilst the unbounded liberality of the Council of Education has enabled it far to outstrip all its older competitors, the other colleges, in every material advantage.

Thirty miles from the capital, pleasantly situated on the banks of the Ganges, stands the College of Hadji Mohammed Mohsin, founded and endowed by him for the advancement of Mahomedan learning ; but the government of which has, in consequence of litigation and accidents, come into the hands of the Council of Education, and its classes been assimilated to those of the Hindoo College. It is now in its seventeenth year, and numbers, in its school and college department, 400 pupils, taught by six European officers, professors, and masters, and a considerable number of native assistants.

Far away to the east, in the centre of a low wooded district, long noted for its manufacture of muslins, is situated the Dacca College, an institution similar in organisation and government to Mohammed Mohsin's and the Hindoo Colleges. It has now reached its seventeenth year, but is by no means equal to the other two in the numbers of its students. Other similar colleges have been established at Kishnagur, Agra, and Delhi, on the same uniform plan, and with considerable success.

Besides these, the most prominent of the educational institutions of Bengal, schools have been established, some by government, others by native enterprise, assisted by the Council of Education, in the various

zillahs, or districts, of the country, but to an extent miserably inadequate to the wants of the population, and with too exclusive an aim at affording instruction in English, to render them what the country requires.

The total of the governmental educational establishments in the Bengal presidency, including those of the north-west provinces, is, for English and mixed instruction, forty-four, and for the native schools one hundred and twelve, maintained at an annual charge of 51,000*l.*, and giving instruction to 11,700 pupils.

The Madras presidency boasts of but few institutions of this description; indeed the only establishment in which teaching in the English tongue takes place is at the University High School in Madras, where thirteen teachers instruct one hundred and eighty pupils. The vernacular schools are at Tanjore, Ramnad, and one or two other places; the total disbursements on account of all which amounts to the yearly sum of 4,350*l.*

The Bombay division fares better than do the benighted of the Coromandel coast; for we find not less than 233 village and district vernacular schools within this presidency, with upwards of 11,000 pupils; in addition to which there are the Elphinstone institutions, consisting of a college containing 42 pupils, instructed by professors of European celebrity, with high and low schools attached, numbering between them upwards of 900 scholars; the Grant Medical College, and the Poonah Sanscrit College; besides schools at Broach, Darwar, Poonah, Ahmednugger, and other places, for instruction in the English and oriental languages. The whole cost of the educational establishments of the Bombay government amounts to something under 15,000*l.* a year.

It may thus be seen that, as far as the government is concerned, the natives of British India, numbering within the limits of the three Presidencies 100,000,000, and paying 22,000,000*l.* sterling in taxes, receive in return something under 70,000*l.* a year in education; which, at the ordinary calculation of five members to every family, gives rather more than three farthings per annum to each household. Carrying our examination and comparison of these melancholy educational statistics still further, we find that the amount of educational grants for the Bengal presidency for one year, viz. 51,000*l.*, is just 2000*l.* less than the cost of a late Governor-general's visit to the Upper Provinces for a few months. We may observe also that the amount of the Bombay educational disbursements is a trifle above the yearly cost of the governor's office and establishment, and his tour to the Deccan; whilst the sum doled out for education in the Madras presidency, with its

17,000,000 of inhabitants, amounts precisely to the allowance for the governor's house-rent; just equals the various emoluments of the pluralist-secretary of the India House; and is neither more nor less than the yearly cost of the dinners and refreshments at the large stone-house in Leadenhall Street.³

Finally, we see in the annual financial sheets of the Indian government not less than 2,000,000*l.* sterling set down for the administration of justice, *i. e.* for police to catch, for judges to sentence, and for jailers to imprison offenders against the laws; whilst for that which is the best preventive of crime—education—not more than 70,000*l.* is granted! Well may the reader echo Prince Harry's exclamation to Falstaff, and give vent to his feelings upon the disproportion between the "halfpenny worth" of educational "bread," and the "intolerable deal" of judicial "sack." Indian political economists have yet to learn that, with crime, as in other matters, prevention is better than cure, —schoolmasters cheaper than judges; and that with a more liberal, wholesome allowance of the moral "bread," there need be far less of the costly, ermined "sack."

Turning from this notice of governmental education, I will pass under review the operations of the various missionary bodies in the three presidencies of India. The societies whose servants labour within the territories of the Company number 22, both English and foreign. These bodies number amongst them not less than 1,100 day-schools, with 94,000 pupils, who are instructed in their native language and literature, as well as in a knowledge of the Scriptures, through the vernacular medium. They have also 67 boarding-schools and 91 English establishments, with 14,800 pupils. The above are all for boys; the vernacular institutions are scattered throughout all parts of India, and seldom afford more than an elementary education in addition to instruction in Christian belief. The boarding-schools are chiefly intended for the education of orphans, or the children of native Christians, and are mostly at mission stations. The English schools are confined almost exclusively to large towns, or other populous districts, where a desire to acquire the language is found more strongly implanted. Madras takes the lead by far in the number of establishments, which amounts to 920, with 66,300 pupils; Bengal can shew but 71 schools, with 13,000 scholars; and Bombay numbers but 78 establishments and 5000 scholars.

Whilst all this has been done for the male portion of the heathen population, the females have not been forgotten by the missionaries;

³ Report of Select Committee on India, 1852, pp. 329-481.

and if, in looking at immediate results, we find that less appears to have been accomplished amongst these, it arises from the far greater amount of prejudice to be overcome in permitting Hindoo women to partake of the blessings of education. The chief success of the missionaries, as yet, has been in the education of the daughters of native converts, or of female orphans saved from some desolating famine or from human sacrifice. In the establishment of female day-schools but little real progress has been made. Here again we find the Madras presidency far outstepping Bombay and the larger presidency of Bengal, having upwards of 200 day-schools, and 41 boarding-schools for females, against 62 day-schools and 45 boarding-schools in the whole remainder of the Company's territories.

One of the most important elements that must enter into our plans for ameliorating the condition of the people of India will be the education of the mothers, from whom the children imbibe their first principles. It has been argued, and with some shew of truth, that whilst it is the custom of the middling and upper classes of the natives of India to exclude their women from public society, the effect of education upon them would be but to give them a desire to enjoy that which is forbidden them, to render them discontented with their lot, and to embitter their lives and the domestic happiness of the father and husband. Though this may be true to a certain extent, there can be no doubt but that education, whatever its trials, whatever its early drawbacks, would strongly enlist the influence of the women, and through them the sympathies of their husbands in the emancipation of the sex from the degraded seclusion in which they now pass their lives, and from which no practical advantage can possibly arise.

That it would require some degree of enlightenment, some amount of public spirit, to induce a Hindoo of good station in life to break through their old-world prejudices, and overturn the barrier of custom, in this matter, there can be no doubt; equally certain is it that were some substantial countenance held out by those high in authority to such amongst the natives as shewed themselves superior to time-worn habits, a resolution would soon be commenced, noble in its aim and mighty in its results. Let education amongst the women of India be preached and taught by the women of England,—let the English lady in India mix freely with her dark sisters,—let the latter feel that there is something to care for beyond the walls of the zenana; and little by little the dark fabric of prejudice will crumble to the ground, and that which would now be an innovation, will, ten years hence, become the fashion.

The people of the Tenasserim provinces have for ages past been highly favoured in regard to education ; scarcely a village but contains a kioung, or school-house, in which one or more poonjies, or native priests, reside, and devote several hours of each day to the instruction of the young in the useful acquirement of reading, writing, and arithmetic. In this way there are few indeed of the rural population who are unable to read the native books, or communicate their ideas by writing. In return for this instruction the scholars are expected to



BURMAN POONJIE AND KIOUNG.

render such domestic and personal services to their poonjies as may be needed ; and in this way the dry details of caligraphy and chronology are pleasantly relieved by an hour's moist amusement in the priestly rice-field, or an attendance upon the pumpkin-beds and the palm-trees which skirt the domain of the kioung.

In addition to the elementary education thus imparted, the authorities and missions have established a number of schools of a superior description for instruction in English and the vernacular. Two government schools were opened in 1804 at Moulmein and Mergui; and since that period the American Baptist Mission have opened eight native and English boarding and day-schools at Moulmein, with an average attendance of between four and five hundred scholars; in the other provinces the mission have established eighteen normal, boarding, and day-schools, besides a number of district schools under native assistants.

The labours of these missionaries appear to have been already productive of no small amount of good amongst the Talains of Pegu and Tenasserim, who shew an anxiety and aptitude for the acquirement of European accomplishments scarcely to be expected. The study of the Scriptures is also making rapid strides amongst this interesting people, and the mission have already a number of native converts actively engaged in propagating the truths of Christianity throughout the rural districts, to by no means indifferent hearers.

The history of Christianity in India forms perhaps one of the most extraordinary and sorrowful chapters in the records of European aggression upon the East. The supineness and atheistical indifference of our own government in all that relates to the introduction of Christianity within its dominions, whilst standing in strong contrast to the active and bloody propagandism of their Catholic predecessors, by a strange fatality, is working out a like result—the uprooting of all vestiges of the indigenous faith of the land, but implanting nothing better in its place.

The early Portuguese missionaries went amongst the heathen armed with the sword and the firebrand, in place of the Bible and the cross, and accomplished with those weapons what the East India Company of the present day are doing with their “Godless colleges.”

Still labouring in the same path of violence and destruction, but adding to it fraud and hypocrisy, came the Jesuits of Spain and France. To pave the way for their progress, these impostors pretended to be Brahmins of the highest caste, denied that they were Europeans, dressed, ate, and preached as the apostles of a Christian Brahma; and to aid their unblushing frauds, forged a *Veda*, which they exhibited to their numerous converts.⁴ Wherever fraud failed, violence was resorted to; and with what impunity and what barbarity, the records of the Inquisition of Goa amply and sadly testify. To read the bloody tales of that horrible institution, to peruse the accounts of Mesquita's enormi-

⁴ Calcutta Review, vol. xvi. p. 236.

ties, one might well imagine that another miracle had been permitted in that unhappy, heathen land, and that the unclean spirits driven out of man had betaken themselves to a herd of swine in priestly garb. The Moslem saluted his fellow-man with words of gentleness—"In the name of the Prophet, Peace!" The benediction of the holy men of God was, practically, "In the name of Jesus, Murder!"

Following after these pious propagandists were the Dutch, who, whilst they shunned all acts of open violence, not less energetically employed coercion in attaining their object. They bribed heathens to Christianity, or rather to its profession, by the offer of places, and forbade any but such as had been baptised to hold even the meanest appointment under them. In this way thousands enrolled themselves nominally as converts, but who at the same time openly maintained their connection with heathenism, and were universally known amongst their more sincere brethren, who refused to join in the show, as "Government Christians." The descendants of the Jesuits and Presbyterian converts have long since disappeared from the land, and are only remembered in musty ecclesiastical records.

The Dutch, however, were not the only Protestant missionaries in those early days. Others were at work before them, and on much better principles.

To the king of Denmark belongs the honour of having dispatched the first Protestant mission to India in the year 1705. At Tranquebar, then a Danish settlement, this pioneer in the good cause established himself, working against many difficulties and discouragements, until he had fairly established himself and his school, and won from the natives their respect, if not their imitation.

Forty-five years later, we find Kiernander, a zealous servant of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, established at Cuddalore, in the Madras presidency, where he commenced a school; and during eight years strove to make known amongst the natives the truths of Christianity. In 1758 Kiernander moved up to Calcutta, leaving his first charge in the hands of assistants; and in the following year had so far succeeded in his first efforts as to have had nearly two hundred Hindoo and Mahomedan children in his school. In 1770 a church was erected, in which this zealous missionary preached the gospel to the heathens around him. If little progress were achieved by him, or by the other few missionaries who at this early period made any effort at Christianising the Hindoo, it can scarcely be matter of surprise, for the government were at the same moment, not only founding and endowing with a lavish hand colleges for the "preservation and cultiva-

tion of the laws, literature, and *religion* of the Hindoos," but actually throwing every possible discouragement in the way of preaching the gospel, which was looked upon by them as perilling the rule of the Company in India!

In the year 1793, when the renewal of the East India charter came before the Houses of Parliament, strenuous attempts were made at home by a philanthropist whose name is imperishably connected with more than one noble crusade against wrong. Wilberforce spared no effort or argument to induce the government of the day to introduce into the new charter clauses directing that Christian education be provided for the natives of British India by schoolmasters and missionaries; and he so far succeeded as to place a series of resolutions to that effect on the journals of the House of Commons, with the sanction of the then president of the India board. Subsequently, however, other and adverse interests were brought to bear upon the executive, and the agitation fell to the ground without at that time producing any good results. In adopting this course the parliament of 1793 were evincing less enlightenment, less regard for religion, than did the legislature of 1698, who, in the reign of William III., provided that a minister be appointed by the Company to every garrison, settlement, &c. within their territories, who should make it their duty to learn within one year of their arrival the Portuguese and native languages, "the better to enable them to instruct the Gentoos, &c., that shall be the servants or slaves of the Company, or of their agents, in the Protestant religion."

The charter having been thus renewed, unconditionally as regards religion, no pains were spared by the local authorities to act up to the spirit of the home legislation, and to hinder any agitation upon points of Christian doctrine which might unsettle and alarm the native mind! With this feeling amongst them, some religious tracts printed and circulated in the native tongue, by the Protestant Danes of Serampore, were called in and destroyed, and the missionaries at that settlement given to understand that no such steps could be permitted; they were, moreover, requested to state where, and to what extent, their Christian publications had been circulated, in order that the Governor-general and his council "might be enabled to counteract their dangerous effects." Not content with this step, the Governor-general prohibited the printing of books of any kind at Serampore; and subsequently becoming alarmed at the labours of the few British missionaries in Calcutta, issued instructions that public preaching to natives should at once cease, as well as all works having any tendency to promote conversion to the Christian religion. It is but justice that the name of

the Governor-general who thus distinguished himself in antagonism to the gospel should be placed on record with the deed. To the Earl of Minto belongs all the credit, all the honour, of crushing the mission-work of India in the commencement of the nineteenth century, and the equal honour and glory of encouraging and promoting, by all means in his power, the study of Hindoo literature, laws, and *religion*.

A better time was, however, at hand. Hope for the gospel dawned once more in the further renewal of the Company's charter in 1815, when the question was again mooted with the most perfect success. The ban was removed from the missionaries; the lock was struck off the church doors; the Scriptures were permitted to be circulated through the length and breadth of the land, with any comments or arguments that were deemed necessary, and for the first time our Christian government ceased to oppose the diffusion of Christianity in the East.

In strange yet pleasing contrast with the heathenish spirit which ruled the councils of British India in those days, appears the list of ecclesiastics of 1850-1 supported by the government, most of whom are actively engaged in disseminating the light of the gospel amongst the Hindoo and Mussulman population of the country, ably seconded by large numbers of missionaries not less zealous or earnest in the work. What may be the number of workers of the latter class does not appear in any obtainable record; the official documents shew, that at the present time there are three bishops and archdeacons, six senior chaplains, thirty-three chaplains, and eighty-four assistants of the Established Church within the three presidencies, receiving stipends and allowances to the yearly amount of 101,114*l.*; besides six chaplains of the Scotch kirk, receiving with their establishment 6,168*l.* per annum; and some Roman Catholic priests, who are paid 5,150*l.* a year.

One of the earliest fruits of the new spirit, which was now abroad in Hindostan, was the establishment of Bishop's College in the metropolis of India. The first Bishop of the See of Calcutta, Dr. Middleton, laid the foundation-stone of this building in 1820; and though he did not live to see it completed and tenanted, he had at least the satisfaction of knowing that the work was begun. It was the original intention of Bishop Middleton that this institution should be a vast missionary school for the training of preachers to work amongst the heathen; and had he lived to put the mechanism in motion, beyond a doubt he would have fully carried out his plan. Good men and true have followed him in the work; but, imbued with other ideas, they have permitted the mission-school to be absorbed in the University; and

thus, although large sums have been annually granted towards this institution, although it possesses an abundant and able staff of professors, and is on the whole well attended, it is difficult to trace the good results of its teachings amongst those for whose especial benefit it was originally planned.

That the missionaries of the many religious societies who have made India their field have not been less active in preaching the Gospel than in imparting education amongst the heathen, there is abundant proof.

At the present moment, fifty-three years from the first commencement of missionary labour in the East, there are distributed over various parts of the Company's territories 360 missionaries actively engaged in preaching the Gospel to the heathen, assisted by upwards of 500 native preachers. They are attached to twenty-two missionary societies, and have founded 270 churches, which are attended by upwards of 15,000 members. Of these members, by far the largest proportion is found in the Madras presidency; whilst within the limits of the Bombay government there are the fewest.

Although it is stated that these labours are being carried on in various districts in almost every part of India, it must be borne in mind that the missionary-stations are for the most part collected in the vicinity of populous towns and cities; whence it is hoped that the spirit of truth, once having taken hold of the people, will be disseminated throughout the surrounding districts. In this manner Calcutta possesses twenty-nine missionaries, established at twelve stations in different parts of the city. Madras is as liberally supplied; Bombay has thirteen missionaries; Agra eight; and Benares eleven.*

Comparing this extensive machinery with the actual visible results of its labours, a casual examiner might reasonably feel disappointed. But looking below the upper surface of things, viewing all circumstances together, the number of converts, small though they are, and doubtful in sincerity, as many must be, should rather be a matter of congratulation and pleasant surprise than otherwise.

In no heathen country in the world has superstition become so firmly rooted in the national mind as in India. Aided by caste, by the impress of antiquity, by the powerful arm of a numerous and influential priesthood, and, above all, by the sanction, the openly-avowed countenance and encouragement of the British authorities, it may well be matter for astonishment that even the smallest success has been accomplished. As regards all the educational establishments connected

* Calcutta Review, vol. xvi. p. 245.

with the government of India, it is positively forbidden to introduce the subject of Christianity in any way. Not a volume that makes any allusion to the Gospel is permitted within those "godless" walls; not even the name of the Saviour, not the merest idea of the Creator, is allowed to pass the lips, or enter the thoughts, of any within those institutions of a Christian government! Professors who dare to infringe these stringent laws are dismissed; native pupils, who openly become converts to Christianity through missionary efforts, are not permitted to remain as students; and even for an officer of a government college to pen an article advocating Christian views for a local periodical, is visited with the heavy displeasure of the higher powers.⁶

It is not difficult to picture the sad results of this state of things. Year by year the evil grows. Thousands upon thousands of young men are turned loose upon the world infidels in heart and practice. Profligate and unprincipled in their lives, and becoming the heads of families, they propagate the vice and atheism engendered by the British College, to future generations. It has been stated on authority too good to be doubted, that of between fifty and sixty pupils of the Government Hindoo College at Calcutta, who were privately questioned by their principal as to their belief in any creed, *four* only expressed their belief in the religion of the Vedas; a few were undecided; and the remainder openly avowed their utter disbelief in Brahminism, and in all other creeds.⁷ This fact is too well known in India to need confirmation; though it may cause some astonishment in England to learn that the only results of the much-vaunted educational grants of the East India Company is the raising up of a race of licentious infidels.

How great the unchristian antagonism of the government is to the labours of the missionary may be partly estimated by the preceding facts; but it is only those who have lived in the East, and who, knowing well the peculiarities of the native character, understand to the full the deep hold which all governmental measures take on the Hindoo mind. They are so accustomed to look up to the government as the parent of all authority, the dispenser of all patronage, the only motive power in a vast society, which owns literally no other public than that of the services, that any thing emanating from it receives at once the impress of popular currency; whilst all opposed to it is regarded with, to say the least, suspicion. It is thus that whilst the missionaries, full of devoted zeal and untiring energy, have with difficulty converted their

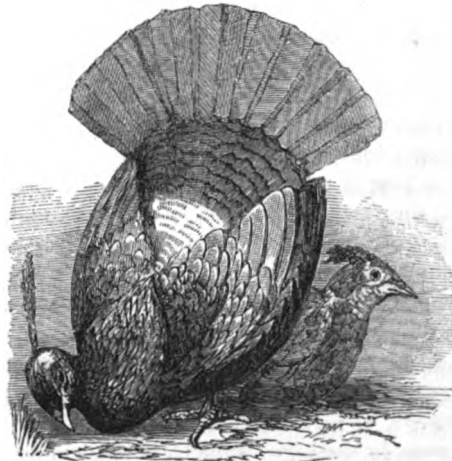
⁶ Government Education in India, by W. Knighton, M.A. &c. p. 19.

⁷ Ibid. p. 18.

hundreds, the government, by the aid of their "Godless colleges," have converted their hundreds of thousands.

The missionaries, however, do not despair; they know that their work progresses, that the good seed is deep in the soil; and that if some of their converts are not so sincere and steadfast as they could desire, there are hundreds who have listened to the Word, and drunk deep of its truths, but who have not yet the courage to avow themselves openly. During the ten years ending 1812, but 161 Hindoos had been converted to Christianity. Within the next ten years the number of converts amounted to 403. The following decade witnessed the conversion of 647; and the period ending 1842, as many as 1055. The ten years just past it is estimated have seen not less than 2000 heathens embracing Christianity.

Not less encouraging than the above, is the fact of more than one native rajah having become converted to the Christian faith. The rajah of Coorj has recently brought his daughter to this country, to be educated in the English tongue, and brought up in the Protestant religion. And still more recently the young Maharajah of the Punjab, Dulup Sing, has been formally admitted into the Christian Church by public baptism, in the presence of a large number of the officials of that government which forbids the mention of the Christian name within its schools.



LOPHOPHORUS IMPEYANUS. See Appendix G.

CHAPTER V.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

IN the early periods of Hindoo history the administration of justice was conducted in the most primitive mode, and with the happiest results. The law, like most other institutions, was derived from the celebrated code of Menu, which, if in some particulars savouring of superstition, and occasionally of puerilities, was nevertheless based on a just appreciation of the social rights and duties of man.

The sovereign was declared to be the prime administrator of justice, aided by learned and upright Brahmins. In criminal cases the king was enjoined to see to the proper carrying out of the law; but in civil cases, especially such as were instituted in remote districts, his representatives in the various provinces were expected to act conjointly with such Brahmins as were deputed for the purpose. Their remuneration appears to have been derived from a levy of five per cent on all debts admitted by the defendants, and of ten per cent upon all such as, having been denied, were afterwards proved against them.

It was enjoined upon the administrators of justice that they should carefully observe the countenances, the gestures, and mode of speech of the principal parties concerned in a suit, as well as of their witnesses. They were also to bear in mind the local usages of the district in which a case was tried, the peculiar laws and rules of classes, as well as the customs of traders and others; bearing in mind, under certain reservations, the principles established by former judges. The king, or his representative, was strictly forbidden from deciding causes upon his own opinion, without obtaining the advice and assistance of persons learned in the laws of the country. He was cautioned against encouraging litigation; and counselled to bear with patience and equanimity the irritability of suitors, or the infirmities of old and sick persons, who may have to appear before him. Finally, it was laid down with much solemnity, that the sovereign who received the taxes levied upon the people, without affording them in return a strict measure of justice, was

not only guilty of a crime, but one of the worst of criminals; an injunction which it would be well if the present rulers of India would take to themselves and ponder over.

Punishments were sometimes so indistinctly declared as to leave the fate of an offender quite uncertain, and although not always in themselves severe, were frequently very disproportioned to the offence. Thus the slaying a priest, drinking spirits, or stealing gold from a priest, were all crimes classed under one head, and punished alike. Still more inconsistent were the punishments for adultery.

There does not appear to be any express punishment for murder, though, from the general text, it may be gathered that that crime, with arson and robbery attended with violence, was visited capitally. Theft was punished, if small, with a fine; if of greater amount, with cutting off of the hand; but if the thief were taken with the stolen goods upon him, the offence was capital. Receivers of stolen goods, and those who harboured thieves, were punished with the same severity as the thieves themselves. It is remarkable that, in cases of small theft, the fine of a Brahmin offender was at least eight times as great as that of a Sudra; and the scale varies in a similar manner and proportion with regard to all the classes: a king committing an offence was to pay a thousand times as great a fine as would be exacted from an ordinary person. Robbery incurred the amputation of the limb employed in perpetrating the offence; and if the robbery was accompanied by violence, the crime was made capital: all who sheltered robbers, or supplied them with food or implements, were to be punished with death.

The civil code of the Hindoos was far more perfect and reconcilable with our own ideas of strict justice than was their criminal statutes. Indeed, there is a spirit of enlightened impartiality about it, which not only speaks highly for the social condition of the Hindoos of those days, but throws the practice of the Anglo-Indian judicature far into the shade. For this reason, it is proposed to go somewhat more into detail than would otherwise have been the case; and it would be well if our own civil and sessional judges throughout India perused the clauses of this code, and endeavoured to act somewhat in accordance with them. By doing so, they would consult their own reputation, and the happiness and welfare of those over whose rights and liberties they sit in judgment.

That the native system under their former governments worked well, there does not appear to be any reasonable ground for doubting; indeed we have the testimony of men who have studied the subject

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thoroughly, in evidence of the happy results of the old Hindoo mode of administering the laws. Amongst others, Mr. Elphinstone records his opinion, that in some instances the prosperity of native states, possessing any thing but good government, can only be accounted for by the admirable working of the judicial portion of their institutions.

Various as are the modifications which have crept into the body of the laws, as well as into the rules of practice, the old code of Menu is in native states still looked up to as the source of all judicial administration ; indeed very many of the changes effected are only such as have been rendered necessary by the altered circumstances of the times, and the change in native society.

From the consideration of the state of ancient Hindoo law, it becomes a natural transition to pass to a notice of the changes introduced by the English, commencing with their first territorial possessions in India under the imperial grant, by which they were entitled to collect the revenues of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa. With this assumption of the responsibility of government began their connection with the administration of justice, which naturally followed the receipt of revenue.

Between the years 1769 and 1793, various attempts were made to supervise and regulate the administration of justice as it then existed in the hands of the zemindars of the rural districts, whose sole accountability was to the Nizam. With this view separate courts of civil and criminal judicature were appointed in each district, under the superior control of the higher courts of Moorsshedabad, which was under the immediate direction of the committee of finance. At a subsequent period these higher courts were removed to Calcutta, much to the inconvenience of suitors. The great evil which pervaded the system at this time was the blending of the judicial and financial offices, the same individual being both collector and judge.

In 1793 Lord Cornwallis introduced some extensive changes into the system, many of them very excellent, and based upon a sound appreciation of the necessity for the reform. As these changes, with slight exceptions, form the groundwork of the present judicial system, it will be as well to describe them.

A civil court was established in each district, presided over by a judge attached to the Company's covenanted service, in no way connected with the collectorate, and aided by an European registrar, whose duty it was to attend to suits of small amount. Besides these, there were native judges, called moonsiffs, appointed to hear cases involving property below fifty rupees in value. Appeals from the deci-

sions of these subordinate officials lay to the civil judge, who was assisted in such cases by the advice of a native law-officer, whose duty it was to expound the Hindoo or Mahomedan law.

Provincial Courts of Appeal were established in Calcutta, Dacca, Patna, and Moorshedabad, presided over by three judges, with a registrar and assistants, all of the covenanted service. To these lay appeals in cases involving property below 1000 rupees in value; whilst such as extended to sums above that amount were referrible to the Supreme Court of Appeal at Calcutta.

For the administration of criminal justice, the judges and officials of the provincial Courts of Appeal were formed into Courts of Circuit, for holding assize. These assizes were held monthly in places where provincial courts were established, four times a year in the Calcutta district, and twice a year in all other districts. These courts took cognisance of all matters above the jurisdiction of the magistrate of the district. Their decision was final in all cases of acquittal, or of punishment less than death or imprisonment for life, if agreeing with the native law-officer appointed to act with them; otherwise the proceedings might be carried before a superior court appointed to hear all such appeals, and stationed at Calcutta.

Modification of these duties, of the rights of appeal, and in some instances of the constitution of the courts, have since the time of Lord Cornwallis taken place; but in all essentials the above represents the constitution of the present judicial system of India. In one particular, however, the spirit of these reforms has been widely departed from by the continued blending of the duties of magistrate and collector in one individual, an error pointed out at that time and wisely guarded against; but which has since been allowed to pervade the whole system, much to the detriment of the bench and the injury of suitors. Of the evils arising from this course every one seems to be aware: not a voice is raised in its favour, and yet from year to year the system continues the same. We find the opinion of this impropriety expressed in every Blue Book, and yet each succeeding publication notes its continuance. In the very last volume may be found the opinion of the lieutenant-governor of the north-western provinces, who does not hesitate to record his idea of the gross incompatibility of the revenue and magisterial functions blended in one individual; and yet this high functionary is averse to effecting any reform, because of "*the inexpediency of disturbing the present system in any material degree:*" whether it be not still more *inexpedient* to leave the large body of native suitors at the mercy of men whose chief attention must ever be devoted to the revenue

department of their duties in preference to the judicial, his honour the lieutenant-governor does not state.

This, however, would be comparatively a matter of trifling importance, were the persons acting in this double capacity to make themselves tolerably acquainted with their duties, and to evince a respectable knowledge of judicial matters, but which unfortunately is rarely the case.

In all other parts of the world but India the judicial office is looked upon as the reward of a long service at the bar or in subordinate magisterial capacities; but in that favoured country it is far otherwise. Not only are judges too often inexperienced young men recently from their mother's side, but they are a compound of impracticable collectors and thickheaded magistrates.¹ The feeling there appears to be that any body will do well enough for a judge; and so strongly is this impressed on the minds of English residents, that the bench in India is playfully termed "*the refuge for the destitute*."

That the case is not being overstated, I will venture to quote from the recently published work² of one who must be competent to give a good opinion on these matters, and not likely to paint the system in too dark colours, being a member of the Civil Service upon which he comments. This writer, speaking of promotion as a matter of course, without reference to qualification, and not in any one presidency, but throughout all of them, says: "It seems to be considered that if at this time of life a man is fit for any thing at all, he is fit for a judge; and *if he is fit for nothing, better make him a judge and get rid of him*; for once in that office, he has no claim to further promotion by mere seniority alone."

Here then we see men appointed to fulfil duties of the highest importance, who have not only had no real training in that branch of the service, but who are unfit for any other post. They are sent to the judicial "refuge for the destitute!" And when a few years of training as magistrate have been passed, is it to be supposed that a slight knowledge of criminal procedure can qualify a man for sitting as judge in the civil courts; and that, too, to receive cases in appeal from inferior

¹ "I start with these two simple propositions: first, that throughout the length and breadth of the whole of this presidency those who occupy the judicial bench are totally incompetent to the decent fulfilment of their duties; and secondly, that so long as the present system continues, there is not only no hope of any amelioration, but, on the contrary, things must go on ever from bad to worse, until in the lowest depth there is at last no lower bottom still."—*The Administration of Justice in Southern India*, by J. B. Norton, Esq. 1853.

² Campbell's *Modern India*.

courts presided over by uncovenanted servants and natives of considerable experience? Ignorant of the law of evidence, the rules of practice and of jurisprudence, these judges are expected to arrive at sound conclusions by the aid of the government regulations and the exercise of a little *common sense*—a quality doubtless exceedingly useful in the ordinary avocations of life, but not promising to aid in the solution of legal difficulties, any more than it would enable a man to navigate a ship through dangerous waters, or to conduct a chemical analysis.

It has been argued by some men of the highest standing in the service, that the magisterial experience which every civilian in the revenue department must of necessity acquire, is sufficient, in a great degree, to qualify him for the discharge of judicial functions. Perhaps the best testimony against this reasoning is to be found in the opinion of the Court of Directors, who, in an official communication addressed to the Madras Board of Revenue, "lament the unfitness so frequently displayed by revenue officers in dealing with evidence, or conducting any inquiry in the nature of a judicial proceeding." Fortunately this accidental testimony is not the only evidence we possess of the incapacity of collectors for the exercise of judicial duties; similar opinions, and far stronger in their expression, are to be found amongst the published reports of the local government.³

The necessary consequences of this absence of all training are a most lamentable ignorance of the law of evidence or of the value of testimony, a wandering from the point actually at issue to other and immaterial matter, a misapplication of the law whenever attempted to be applied, the admission of the most improper documents or evidence, the oversight of what should be most important evidence, strange and irregular proceedings, incoherent or puerile lines of argument, and decrees often utterly opposed to the testimony on record.⁴

With the above results, can it be wondered at that the labours of the higher appellate judges are greatly enhanced, or that the duties of the really experienced uncovenanted functionaries are greatly multiplied by the extraordinary appeal-decisions given by these incompetent men? The length to which matter, which is really not evidence, is admitted by such judges, is extraordinary; whilst the most important facts, and

³ "Defective as the system unquestionably was, under which young men, almost immediately on their quitting college, were intrusted with the decision of civil suits, though small in amount, the present system, under which the judge will take his seat on the bench, utterly ignorant of the forms of pleading, of the rules of appeal, and of the constitution and powers of the courts below, which he is expected to control, is a hundred times worse."—*Report of the Honourable Mr. Shakespeare.*

⁴ *The Administration of Justice in Southern India*, by J. B. Norton, Esq. 1853.

perhaps the only facts, bearing upon the case in suit, will be entirely overlooked; and most frequently it happens that a case is tried, appealed, remanded, retried some four or five times, and at last disposed of on a point which, in the hands of a competent man, would have settled it at the very outset.

In the year 1843 an act was passed by the Governor-General in Council, requiring judges to place their decisions on record, with the reasons on which they were founded; thus affording some sort of guarantee, however feeble, for the judge evincing some interest in, and acquaintance with, the decisions to which his name is affixed. The only value of these documents, which have been published from time to time, is in the testimony they bear to the utter inefficiency of the functionaries.⁵

The above was followed up in 1849 by the determination of the High Court of Civil and Criminal Appeal at Madras, to publish monthly reports of their decisions. This has been acted upon; and the contents of these monthly legal miscellanies are indeed of a startling nature. They read far more like fiction than reality; so utterly at variance with all ordinary appreciation of right and wrong, that the reader naturally asks himself if it be possible that these are the fruits of the labours of gentlemen composing the boasted civil service of India, of the relatives of directors, East India proprietors and parliamentary partisans.

Deeply indeed is it to be regretted that these published proofs of the incompetency of Indian judges were not in existence, as no doubt there was ample occasion for them, when "the greatest man of the age" passed a glowing eulogium upon the East India Company's servants, and their mode of administering the affairs of those vast territories, by stating his belief that "the government of India was one of the best and most purely administered governments that ever existed, and one which provided most effectually for the happiness of the people over which it was placed."⁶ Had that great commander been in possession of the facts detailed below, there can be no doubt he would have considerably modified his speech, however much to the disappointment of the Court of Directors.

Amongst other extraordinary judgments disclosed by the reports alluded to, is one in a case which involved the large amount of 16*l*., and which had been tried eight times by almost as many functionaries; the last of these Solons declared that he found the evidence so nicely balanced on both sides, and that it was so very likely that none of the

⁵ Calcutta Review.

⁶ Speech of the Duke of Wellington on the East India Charter Debate, 1833.

witnesses knew any thing about the matter in dispute, that he decided the fairest way would be to divide the property amongst the several claimants. The only case on record which at all approaches this is one related by Knickerbocker in his facetious History of New York, wherein we are told how an upright but whimsical Dutch governor, after carefully weighing the ledgers of the plaintiff and defendant, and finding them equal in weight, decided that they should exchange mutual acquittances for the amount in dispute, and ordered the constable to pay the costs. At any rate, whatever difference there may be in the reality of the two cases, they approach nearly enough in their whimsicality.

Perhaps one of the raciest of these very amusing and luminous decisions, is that of a gentleman holding the office of civil judge of Rajahmundry, who was called upon to adjudicate in a case in which a plaintiff sued for a sum of fifty-five thousand and odd rupees due upon a bond. The judge nonsuited the plaintiff; and not being content with that, actually fined him for bringing the suit, in precisely the amount of his claim, that is to say, fifty-five thousand and odd rupees ! Whether this gentleman carried out the joke by ordering the constable to pay the costs, does not appear on record.

Another of these Anglo-Indian Solomons decided upon a case, the merits of which, as he expressly states in his decree, rested entirely upon the authenticity or otherwise of a certain deed. He assumed the deed produced to be genuine, refused to call witnesses to attest to the signatures, or to hear evidence as to its being forged, which was alleged, and gave judgment accordingly ; when, on the case being heard in appeal, it appeared that the document was not only not the original it was stated to be, nor even the copy of the original, but the copy of a copy !

The cases in which decisions were given in direct opposition to the facts admitted on both sides appear to be of almost daily occurrence; whilst many suits have been tried, remanded, and retried five or six times before making the discovery that they were barred by the statute of limitations. Again, it is no uncommon event for this singular race of judges to decide upon bonds and instruments in writing, when neither one nor the other had been produced in evidence.

If the specimens of adjudication in civil suits already given are prolific sources for grave reprehension, not less so are the records of the criminal courts recently made public. Were it not that these documents are of a character far too serious to cause any but the most painful feelings, the absurd reasoning, the odd mixture of childish pue-

rility with legal affectation, the groping in the dark, the contradictions, the ignorance displayed, might well raise a smile at the expense of the judicial gentlemen who are placed in a position to exercise control over the lives of their fellow-creatures.

From the published reports of the Suddar criminal appeal-courts, we gather the most extraordinary disclosures relative to the decisions of the lower judges ; and, in perusing them, the feeling but too naturally arises, that if these be a fair specimen of the few cases appealed against, how is it with those wherein no appeal is made? Amongst these criminal curiosities may be instanced a case of murder, which a judge recently arrived at his station, found had been heard by his predecessor ; the principal witnesses having left previous to his arrival, he proceeded to finish off the trial by re-examining a few witnesses *who happened to be present* on a most trivial point, and took the defence of one of the prisoners. Upon this proceeding, and the evidence previously taken by another party, he convicted the prisoner of murder, and the man was hung!

Further on occurs a case of murder in which the prisoner is convicted, although the body of the alleged murdered man was not found ; whilst a third is condemned by a judge who forgot to put the prisoner on his defence. Another functionary trying a prisoner for homicide, declared that he ought to have been indicted for murder ; and notwithstanding that the man was on the list for homicide only, convicted him of the graver crime, and sentenced him to death accordingly. The propriety of this proceeding appears to have been doubted by the judge subsequently ; for he represents the case to a higher tribunal, with a view of ascertaining if a lighter punishment than death might not be inflicted ; because, as he gravely states, "the parties were near relatives, and had been previously on good terms !"

Perhaps one of the most extraordinary of these cases is one in which two prisoners were indicted for the murder of a man at Tellicherry, whilst sleeping quietly in his cot with his son. The wounded man, with his intestines protruding, had been taken to the surgeon of the station, who, seeing that he was only a native, passed him on without examination to the dresser of the hospital, who was not skilful enough to afford him any relief. The surgeon visited the man on the following morning, saw that nothing could be done to save his life, but nevertheless forwarded him to the hospital at Cannonore, many miles distant ; where, after all this delay, the apothecary replaced his intestines, but too late, for the man died shortly afterwards. Of this murder one of the pri-

soners was found guilty, but recommended to mercy by the judge, because of "the darkness of the night, which rendered his identity very doubtful;" and because "the deceased might possibly have survived had his wound been dressed in time."⁷

In another instance two men were sentenced to death for murder, when it appears no evidence had been taken to identify the corpse. The superior judge, in confirming the sentence, notices this neglect, but contents himself with remarking, that the omission "should not have been permitted to occur;" and so the men were hung!

In some of the cases to be met with in these reports the judicial freaks incline to the side of mercy, and are therefore less serious. A woman is sentenced to be hung for the admitted murder of her two children in a fit of passion. The sessions judge changes this award to transportation for life, on the ground that "the females of the lower orders have no control whatever over their tempers."

A second sessions judge convicted a man of a murder committed nineteen years previously, and suggested transportation in place of hanging, because he had behaved well ever since. The supreme judge agrees in the plea for mercy, but on a different ground, viz. on account of the great lapse of time since the murder was committed!

Such are a few, a very few, of the judicial freaks played off in one of the three presidencies of India. They are but a portion of some four thousand and odd cases which came up in appeal to the supreme court, during a period in which more than one hundred and seven thousand cases had been decided and never appealed against. What amount of injustice, blundering, procrastination, and absurdity, was perpetrated in those one hundred and seven thousand unheard-of cases, the reader may perhaps form a tolerably shrewd guess.

Turning to the Bengal presidency, it will not be found that the judges of the north are composed of better stuff than those of the south. In 1849 ninety-six special appeals were admitted to a hearing: in seventy-seven the decision of the judge was reversed, or the case was remanded for some error; in nineteen the appeal was dismissed as groundless: it thus appears that in four out of every five appealed, the judge was wrong.

In the same year there were fifty-eight appeals from the principal Sudder Ameen, or native judges: in thirty-two the inferior court was held to be wrong; in twenty-six the appeal was dismissed as groundless. It appears, therefore, that a fair degree of competence exists in

⁷ Criminal Reports of Madras Presidency, quoted by J. B. Norton, in *The Administration of Justice in Southern India*.

this unjustly depressed class ; while the other result exhibits the civil-service judges in one dead level of incompetence.⁸

One or two instances will suffice to prove that the Bengal branch of the service is every way worthy to be ranked with their Madras brethren. The judge of Tirhoot reversed the decision of the native judge below him ; but had his own reversed on appeal with the following caustic observation : "The decision of the judge is positively and absolutely unintelligible ;" the case is remanded, and he is directed to try it again, and "to write an intelligible judgment upon it." Another case is sent back to the judge on several grounds of error, and besides other remarks, with the following facetious direction : "The judge will likewise be pleased to cite his authority for the opinion, that houses and dwellings appertaining to Europeans in this country are considered personal property."

One of these covenanted luminaries is found deciding a case under a regulation which had been repealed since 1824 ; whilst another treated as documents of the plaintiff, documents filed by the defendants, and decided against the plaintiff accordingly, stating their case as resting upon those documents ; and this too was in reversal of the decision of the native judge below him.⁹

Some few years back there was an attempt made in Calcutta to introduce what were termed the "Black Acts," by rendering all Europeans amenable to the "Company's Courts," instead of, as at present, to the jurisdiction of her Majesty's judges only. Great was the outcry raised against this attempted innovation. For the first time India beheld something approaching to a public demonstration on the part of Europeans. Merchants left their ledgers and their bill-books, civilians forgot their duties, lawyers deserted their clients, shopkeepers their customers, planters neglected their indigo,—all were absorbed in the discussion of that enormous iniquity which contemplated the placing of them on a level with their Hindoo fellow-subjects. It appeared too monstrous to be for a moment tolerated, that English gentlemen should be subjected to the control of a bench notorious for its imbecility and worthlessness ; that they should have no better safeguards for their lives and their property than were accorded to the natives of the country. The few Europeans who favoured the innovation declared that they hailed it as the most certain, and indeed the only means of ensuring a thorough reform of the Company's courts. "Once," said they, "bring the English community within their jurisdiction, and the iniquities of the system will be felt too keenly to be tolerated for a week ;

⁸ Calcutta Englishman, 1853.

⁹ Ibid.

their fate will be sealed from that day." But it was easier to keep away from those courts than to reform them; and the Black Acts were accordingly thrown out. It was decided that a system of administering justice which would not be tolerated for Englishmen was quite good enough for natives; that what was very passable sauce for the black goose, could not by any possibility be considered fitting sauce for the white gander.

In looking at the mechanism of the administration of Indian justice, it is not the bench alone that presents such humiliating pictures; from the judge and the magistrate downwards we find but one system prevailing. The whole fabric, from high to low, seems a mass of incompetency and villany; the former pertaining to the European officials, the latter to the native subordinates. Ability may occasionally form a solitary exception amongst the former; but in no instance can it be said that any degree of integrity or honesty is to be met with amidst the low grades of creatures attached to the judge's or the magistrate's offices, whose name is legion; and whose sole occupation consists in distorting the view of justice, and preying upon the native communities about them.

To such enormous magnitude, to such universality has this corruption grown, that the only wonder is that it has not eaten itself out; that it has not died from its own offensiveness. There is no secret about the thing in India. The abomination is in every body's mouth; but then Englishmen do not suffer from it; and hence the reason for all non-interference, hence its bare-faced immunity.

Chapters have been written, if not here, in India, holding up to execration the doings of native officials attached to the country courts; and nowhere more completely than in the pages of the *Calcutta Review*.¹⁰ The various grades of subordinates, from sheristader, or interpreter, down to the peon, or constable, seem to have but one object in view, and that the repletion of their pockets at the expense of the suitors.

¹⁰ Vide vol. vi. for 1845; also Mr. Norton's pamphlet.



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That it must be so is evident from the great anxiety shewn to obtain even the most humble of these posts, in which perhaps the daily exactions are wrung from the people in single coins. It may be, and no doubt is, that the character of the people who can submit to be so fleeced, must be degraded to a degree; but how can it well be otherwise? What has brought them to that debased level, but long years of hopeless endurance; a century of subjection to rulers, with whom they have nothing in common; who are aliens to them in feeling and in language; with whom they can hold no communion save through the vitiated channel of an interpreter, who sells every word he utters at its market value in silver, or copper, as the case may be.

To what extent the helpless natives are placed at the mercy of these many subordinates may be gathered from a brief statement of the mode in which magisterial business is conducted. A criminal case is reported by the darogah or police superintendent, who sends in lists of the witnesses, and of the parties supposed to be implicated, with a statement of the facts. And here bribery first commences; the darogah draws up the case to suit any party concerned who will submit to his exactions; and if the guilty bribe sufficiently high, they are omitted from the charge altogether, and other innocent parties placed upon the roll instead. Instances—though very rare ones—have occurred in which the officer has inadvertently forwarded two reports on the same case, one representing a certain part as guilty of the charge, the second making it appear that another was guilty. These were, of course, intended for sale; one to either of the parties, according as they would have paid.

These reports are not often read critically, and are merely the basis of further proceedings. The magistrate being also collector, and as such compelled to attend to revenue matters, which to him are of far greater moment than criminals, cannot find time to take down depositions. This duty is accordingly handed over to the mohurrir, or clerk of the court, whose salary amounts perhaps to ten or twelve rupees a month. The examinations are not even made in the presence of the collector-magistrate, who may be miles away at his revenue-office, or in the fields, looking to some collection of land-tax; they will be carried on in the most rapid and loose manner imaginable. Squatting cross-legged in one corner of the court, the mohurrir busily occupies himself in taking down the evidence of the prosecutor or the witnesses, each in their turn; and this is performed strictly in accordance with the wonted practice, guided entirely by the amount of bribery from either side. It is but fair to say that these writers shew no favouritism in

the matter; the highest bidder, whoever he may happen to be, obtains their powerful aid. If the prosecutor has secured him, he draws up the plaint in the most eloquent and masterly style, throwing in a variety of points, which, from long experience, he knows will tell with the magistrate; and finally arranges the evidence and the defence in the same telling way. Should the defendant have purchased his co-operation, he makes the plaint in a confused style, throwing in all sorts of contradictions; and writes down "no" when the witnesses say "yes," and *vice versa*.

At length all is ready for the magistrate to attest these depositions, and forward them to the court above. The plaint is read over by the sheristadar in a loud, hurried voice, and then the evidence, before each witness, who, confused and terrified by the awful presence they find themselves in, pay but small attention to the matter; and on being asked if that is all they have to say, mechanically answer "yes," and are marched out of court. Sometimes the scene is varied by a little rebellion on the part of some witness who has brains enough to detect the forgery introduced into his written evidence. But it is seldom that he is successful. The magistrate is pressed for time, his revenue-books await him, and he usually silences the witness by accusing him of lying, and threatening him with imprisonment. The depositions are attested and sent up to the higher court; and if the witnesses there deny any of the statements contained in them, they are at once set down as perjurers, and run a chance of being punished as such; besides, more weight is always given to evidence *taken by the magistrate on the spot*, and at the time, than to any offered subsequently.

How strongly and how unfavourably does this system contrast with the mode of investigation enjoined by the old Hindoo code, and actually practised at a period when the name of England was unknown, when the Christian religion had no existence! That may have been in some respects a barbarous age, and the old Hindoos may possibly have been, in modern estimation, mere barbarians; yet we are told that it was the then practice for all witnesses to be heard by the judge *in person*, and in presence of both plaintiff and defendant; and that so little was it the custom for magistrates to use unbecoming language to suitors, that even the king was enjoined to bear patiently with the irritability of litigants of all classes.

The extortions, aided frequently by violence or imprisonment, which the petty police of India practise upon the native community, are matters of notoriety in the East; though, it would appear, not so to those whose duty it should be to check such malpractices. One of their or-

dinary modes of extorting money is, when meeting a party of respectable Hindoos travelling in any remote part of the country, to seize them and lock them up in the nearest chokey, or watch-house, or, failing that, in any cottage at hand. It is vain for the captives to expostulate or threaten. Nothing but a bribe releases them ; and the police scoundrels feel pretty safe, for the magistrate is away a hundred miles looking after the land-tax, and the travellers have neither time nor means of reaching him, even if a complaint would avail, which it would not. Should, once in a hundred times, such an occurrence reach the ears of the magistrate, the bribe is of course denied, and as to the imprisonment, the police had warrants for the apprehension of certain parties, for whom they mistook the complainants ; it was therefore clearly not *their* fault. Thus the parties aggrieved get no redress, but leave their oppressors triumphant ; a result too well expected to be often hazarded.

There are other ways, however, in which the darogah, or police-officer, reaps a harvest. A crime having been committed in some part of his district, he is dispatched to collect facts and evidence, and secure the guilty. The party implicated, if able, of course bribes the willing darogah, who has therefore to search for some victim wherewith to propitiate justice ; for he would lose credit if he failed in his task. Some innocent person from an adjoining village is seized, taken into a solitary hut, and there, by the ready peons, beaten with cudgels, until, smarting with the blows, he consents to confess to the crime of which he is not guilty ; and at the same time implicates others as being concerned, all of whom are arrested and treated to a similar cudgelling. Their depositions are taken down whilst the smart of the beating is still fresh in their memory ; and should they, on reflection, alter their mind, and deny their admissions when before the superior court, they are utterly disbelieved. How far these atrocities are carried out may be judged, when it is known that seventy per cent of the convictions in India are upon confessions by the prisoners !

It is not in the criminal courts alone that all this shocking depravity is exhibited. Civil suitors are equally exposed to the rapacity of darogahs and mohurrirs. These men are notoriously the instruments of great oppression amongst the ryots, who in the event of their becoming involved with their zemindars, have no chance in the courts, where money carries all before it, and where, as a consequence, the wealthy landlord has the native officials completely at his command. Chapters might be written on this subject, did space allow ; but it must be ap-

parent from what has been stated in reference to the corrupt practices in the criminal courts, that in the civil administration of justice as great impunity is enjoyed by those who are clothed in "a little brief authority," and who, armed with a despot's power, fail not to use it as such.

Not the least obnoxious part of the legal system of India is that of the tax levied upon all suits in the shape of stamps. Political economists are agreed as to the inexpediency of legal taxation under any shape and to any extent ; but the amount levied in India is so enormous, and falls so unfairly on the just and unjust litigant, that no sort of apology can be imagined that shall justify its exaction. The old Hindoo code levied 5 per cent upon all undefended suits, and double that amount on such as, being defended, were cast ; amounts moderate enough, and in no case falling on the plaintiff. But under our system, a suitor, however just his claim, cannot prefer it unless it be drawn up on paper stamped according to the amount of the suit. The lowest of these stamps, for claims under 16 rupees in value, cost one rupee, or two shillings, being the amount of an Indian ryot's earnings for one month ; and so on up to the value of 64 rupees. The proportion then diminishes in favour of the suitor, but is nevertheless heavy as a mere stamp ; and few will dispute that a tax of 35*l.*, levied as a privilege for commencing a suit to recover a debt of 1000*l.*, savours strongly of exaction. In addition, however, to this preliminary tax, each summons for a witness, each answer, reply, rejoinder, &c., in a suit, must be on stamped paper, varying from sixpence to eight shillings ; and all petitions for appeal in cases already taxed as above, must in like manner be written on stamped paper. Indian law is therefore labouring under the double disadvantage of being both costly in price, and poor in quality.

The above is an impartial outline of the administration of justice in India, as existing at the present moment, gathered from most trustworthy sources, and garnished with no ornaments of the imagination. What may be the opinions of the natives upon the matter, if, indeed, they have sufficient heart left to think at all, it may not be very difficult to guess. It is to be doubted if they do not feel that, in shaking off the Afghan and Tartar yoke for that of England, they have but exchanged King Stork for King Log ; and that twenty-seven millions a year taken from them in taxation might deserve some better, some more efficient protection for their lives and liberty, than is to be found in the present legion of judicial and magisterial locusts, who, under the names of judges, magistrates, amlahs, mohurrirs, darogahs, &c., absorb amongst them an annual sum of two millions sterling.

What the English reader will think of it, there can be still less doubt. He may possibly hesitate ere giving full credence to the possibility of such a state of things existing at the present time, and under the sway of a nation whose proudest boast it is, that where its flag is unfurled, there open-handed justice is meted to high and low. He may for a time imagine that he has been reading of transactions carried on in some back-wood settlements, or in some Siberian provinces, rather than in what is popularly termed the noblest portion of the British empire. He may wonder how it is possible to reconcile such events with the glowing pictures drawn by political orators, or the pretty, touching, farewell exhortations about justice, and honour, and glory, and the natives of India, which fall from the turtle-fed mouths of deputy-chairmen at Haileybury examinations. He may also think, that if all written in this chapter be true, to look for happiness for its people, prosperity for the state, or security and permanency for its government, would be indeed seeking a phantom,—that he might as soon “seek roses in December, snow in June.”



CHAPTER VI.

THE PUBLIC OF INDIA, ITS CONSTITUTION AND ITS MORALITY.

IN the good old days when George III. was king at home, and when the governor-general was something more than king throughout a territory a hundred times as vast as that of his royal master,—when Indian monarchs were dethroned by a stroke of the pen, or a nod of the vice-regal head,—when rajahs were made and unmade as unceremoniously as children at home dress and undress their dolls,—when British subjects were publicly deported beyond the Company's territories for the most trivial offence to men in high places,—in those good old days it cannot be said that there existed an "Indian Public," in any sense of the word.

Nineteen-twentieths of the British residents of the three presidencies were at that period in government employ, whilst the small fraction remaining did not find it suit their interest to meddle with any thing immediately beyond the circle of their own calling, much less to raise a voice upon any political topic of the day. Indeed it was an almost universal practice for the few trading members of society to purchase the aid and influence of government servants by secretly making them partners in commercial undertakings; and in this way we find that all the earliest mercantile firms in India were more or less connected with the services.

Another fraction of society, that of the Indo-Britains, or, as they are usually termed, the "country born," or Eurasians, were equally regardless of matters political: their entire energies were then, as until very recently, absorbed in the one great struggle of obtaining official employment. Beyond this they appear to have had no ambition. Their aspirations were of red-tape, their dreams of Company's rupees; and provided they could be admitted but to the threshold of the government sanctuary, they were content to stand at the gate and receive of the official crumbs which from time to time fell from the "covenanted" table.

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In the same category may be placed a still smaller and far more obscure portion of the social body, the Portuguese descendants, or, as they are termed in some parts of the East, burghers. As for the great mass of the community, the people of India, they, and their fathers before them, had been too long accustomed to the iron despotism of former foreign masters, to contemplate the act of criticising the government of their Christian successors.

Before noticing the *morale* of Indian society at the particular period under review, it may be well to offer a few remarks upon the character and composition of the earlier European community of India, the men who laid the foundation of our empire in the East. The tone and temper of British morality in those early days, that is during the first aggrandisement of the Company's power in India, in the middle of the seventeenth century, may be gathered from a tolerably impartial witness, one of the suite of Sir Thomas Roe, the English ambassador to the Great Mogul. From him we learn how low was the character of the Company's first servants; how their grasping, over-reaching, tyrannical, and immoral conduct made them "a bye-word amongst the heathen;" how the characters of the natives stood out in bright and glowing relief from this sad picture; and how all that was base and degrading was significantly termed "Christian" by the Hindoos. To quote the words of the natives themselves, when speaking of the English and their doings, will perhaps be most to the point. These simple people, according to the writer just alluded to, were wont to exclaim—"Christian religion, devil religion; Christian much drink; Christian much do wrong; much beat, much abuse others."

That this should have been so, will yet scarcely be matter for astonishment, when it is remembered that by far the greater portion of the early adventurers to the East were chiefly the younger sons of the higher and middle classes, young men too troublesome and dangerous from their vices to be retained at home, and whose relatives procured them employment under the Company, in the hope that if spared by the sea and the climate, they might return, though not reformed, at any rate in affluence. Removed from all wholesome restraint, from all healthy influences, invested with vast powers, raised suddenly to great importance, it would have been perhaps too much to expect that such men should have been other than we find them to have been,—that they should have done aught but bring our name and our faith into utter contempt, and so to justify the emphatic charge of the heathen native—"Christian much do wrong!"

Nor was it only in the subordinate officials of those days that these

vices existed to such a degree. The picture will stand good for the highest in authority. Governors of presidencies did not hesitate to sacrifice the interest of the Company to their own private ends, with the most unblushing effrontery. It was in vain that one governor was superseded by another; it was but a change in the name, and not unfrequently the disgraced man was outdone in his offences by his successor. We read of one instance of this passing from bad to worse in the case of Sir Nicholas Waite, the Governor of Bombay, whose crimes, immoralities, and cruelties so far shocked and outraged the not over-sensitive feelings of the civil and military functionaries of the presidency, that they took the law into their own hands, rose against their tyrant, hurried him on board ship, and packed him off to England, to render an account of his misdeeds to the Directors.

Evils of such gravity and magnitude as these would of course work a partial cure in the course of time; accordingly we find, from the few records extant of the social condition of the English in India at that period, that as the Company's power and authority became more fixed and matured, and as the communication with those distant possessions became more rapid and certain, a better tone was assumed amongst all grades of European officials, so that at least some few of the outward decencies of morality were observed.

During the eighteenth century the worst features which had so long utterly disgraced the British name in India began to be less prominent in society. Open fraud, mid-day violence, heartless tyranny gave way in due course to bribery, speculation, gambling, horse-racing, drinking, and duelling. Later in the day, the exciting period of Warren Hastings' government, when victory and aggrandisement were the watchwords of the time, did not accomplish much for the better tone of Anglo-Indian morals. On the contrary, the characters of most of the leading officials, from the governor-general and his council downwards, were such as would have proved a hurtful example to a far more elevated society. Whatever *éclat* attaches to the name of Hastings in his military capacity, there can be little doubt that it was purchased at the cost of his individual character. Of the infamous morals of the greater number of those who formed the leading members of Indian society at that day, there are but too many proofs on record. To be licentious, extravagant, neglectful of duty, was to deserve the name of fashionable; to practise any sort of virtue, to be moderately decent in daily life, was the mark of a low, grovelling mind.

There was not in those days any public print, whose warning voice might be raised against the evil practices of the time. Not a single

newspaper had then an existence throughout the length and breadth of British India; and although we find that in the year 1780 a publication, called *Hickey's Gazette*, made its appearance in Calcutta, purporting to lay before the community of that city the occurrences of the day, so far from proving a censor of public morals, it but poured oil on the flames; and by its reckless scandal, its coarse ribaldry, and its vituperation of all who possessed a share of respectability, fed the very passions it should have rooted out.

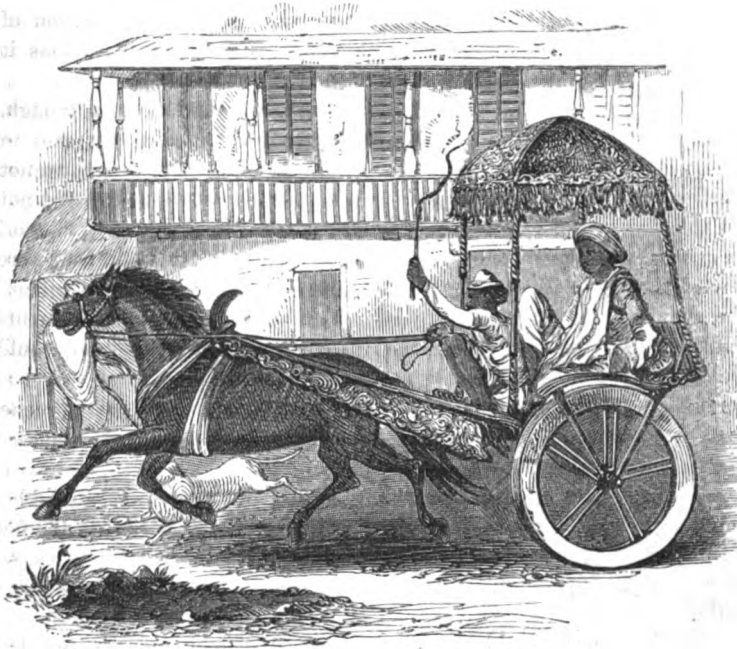
Luxurious living was at this period the rule with all; and although, in much later times, the English in India were far too indulgent in their habits for their health's sake, the license of the two periods cannot be compared. The pay of the junior members of the service did not then amount to a tithe of their present salaries; yet by the kindly aid of the banian, or native money-lender, the youngest of them were enabled to indulge in the most expensive habits, and enthrall themselves in debt to an extent which only the most lucrative appointments in after-life, aided by the wholesale peculations of those days, could have enabled them to escape from.

Towards the close of the last century other men came on the scene. Warren Hastings and the unprincipled men of that time were replaced by Lord Cornwallis and his staff, a very different race, in whose breasts honour, and integrity, and gentlemanly feeling were not altogether strange emotions. In the newspapers of these after-times, in the few books then published on India, in all that is handed down to us, we cannot fail to perceive that the grossness, the sensuality, the drunken ruffianism of the previous fifty years had given way to a tone of society, which, if not as moral as we are taught to look for at the present day, was at least an improvement on the previous state of things.

At this period too we find a change of another kind coming over the European dwellers in the East; they were becoming civilised in their daily life; they were altogether better housed and better cared for. The small, slightly built dwellings of 1750 were giving way to those spacious, commodious edifices which have since been considered so necessary at all the presidencies for the comfort and health of the European, and which have justly earned for Calcutta the title of the "City of Palaces."

The native palanquin and bearers were no longer the ordinary mode of conveyance. Hitherto European carriages had been considered the exclusive privilege of a few of the highest functionaries; but at the period of which I am treating, every member of the service enjoyed his evening ride in the carriage which best pleased him. On the

esplanade might be seen, at the accustomed hour, every conceivable variety of vehicle, from the civilian's stately carriage and pair down to the indigenous and rapid Ekka.



AN EKKKA.

The uncovenanted branch of the Company's service is, at the present time, filled by Englishmen of undoubted energy and ability, in place of the country-born, who formerly monopolised the greater part of its posts; and we thus gain another not unimportant element in Indian society. The planting community is mostly composed of Europeans; and in numbers these form a considerable body. They are, generally speaking, men of intelligence and activity; but the very fact of their isolated position tells against their figuring prominently in any public questions. Scattered thinly over a wide extent of country, they have few opportunities of discussing any topics together, of ascertaining each other's opinions, or of attempting to act in concert upon any given question. Indeed it is most rare that they have an opportunity of

taking any part in public matters; and if we except the late agitation respecting what were termed the "Black Acts," we do not find them making any such attempt.

No class of European society has received so large an addition to its ranks, since the opening of the trade, and the establishment of the overland communication, as that of the merchants. Would that I could say as much for the moral tone of this body, as for its extent! Glad indeed should I be if I could point to the traders of the East as bright and worthy offshoots of the parent stock,—as honoured types of that commercial fraternity in the old country whose word is their bond,—whose good name is their noblest capital. It is not that there are no worthy commercial names to be found in Calcutta, Madras, or Bombay. On the contrary, those places boast of merchants whose character stands, in every respect, second to none in our own country; but these are the few bright lights which shine amidst a midnight gloom. A perusal of the chapter which glances at the history of commercial speculation in India during the last twenty years, and contains a passing notice of Calcutta insolvencies from 1830 onwards, will, I think, bear out the sorrowful truth, that in the British Indian possessions the calling of a merchant has been, but too often, the hollow pretext for vast, unmitigated, and heartless swindling.

The practised professional men of fraud, who in the cities of Europe beguile unwary tradesmen, and obtain supplies of goods under false pretences, are comparatively harmless and inoffensive, when placed in juxtaposition with the notorious "great houses" of Calcutta.

In Europe these things are little discussed, and still less understood. A crisis at one of the presidencies is spoken of as a mere matter of course; and that which unpityingly scatters to the winds the substance of the widow and the orphan is calmly alluded to in the self-same tone and spirit in which farmers would speak of their smutty wheat or their blighted gooseberries.

Such wide-spread ruin as I have attempted to describe, it might be thought, could not occur again through similar agency. The suffering community would be on their guard, and the same great scheme of gambling could not at any rate be carried on at the expense of a public already such severe sufferers. The contrary, however, has unfortunately been the case; for we have beheld, in 1848, disasters even more calamitous, defalcations more extensive, conduct more reckless and unprincipled, than existed in the hitherto unparalleled years of 1830 and 1832. It is true that in the later period the banks, not the mer-

cantile firms, were the ostensible culprits ; but a little inquiry into facts shew, that in the mismanagement and misdeeds of the banking establishments the merchants took a leading part ; that they were not only accessories before the fact to the reckless accommodation accorded to the customers of their banks, but that they themselves were the recipients of the loans made but too often without a shadow of justification, and seldom with any further security than bills on insolvent firms, or liens on estates, the cultivation of which was something worse than unprofitable.

When it is remembered, that during the crisis of 1830, and the following years, half a dozen of the "great houses" of Calcutta failed for an aggregate sum of *fifteen millions sterling*, and that their assets yielded but from six to thirty per cent of dividend, or on an average about twenty-five per cent, shewing a loss to their creditors of upwards of eleven millions sterling ; and that these merchant-princes were, up to the day of their bankruptcy, living in a style of ducal splendour, I cannot surely be charged with too emphatically denouncing the system which permitted such results as these. Soft and gentle language applied to these cases would be indeed to share in the infamy of the men and the time.

And did society reject these unprincipled leviathans of insolvency from amongst them ? Did they close their doors against them ? Did they teach their wives and their children to hold in its proper estimation the conduct of men who had heartlessly carried ruin and havoc amongst thousands of dependent families ? By no means. They were considered at the worst as having been rather *imprudent*, and were more generally termed unfortunate. There was still no public opinion to the bar of which such men could be brought for judgment. The press of that time faintly recorded their deeds, but deemed it no portion of their duty to pass censure on these mighty sons of Mammon.

Although the social morality of India cannot boast of any healthier tone at the present moment than prevailed thirty years since, I am free to admit that an element of good, hitherto unfelt in the East, is at work—a fraction of the Indian editors are awaking to a right sense of their duty ; and some few amongst them have already begun to speak out boldly and truthfully.

If the press of India cannot be said to rank either in talent or tone with that of the parent country, it must be confessed by impartial witnesses, that it is as good as it can afford to be ; and looking at all the circumstances of the case, as good and as moral as could be expected. If it is not quite so intellectual, nor nearly so high-minded,

nor yet so independent as journalism in England, let the Anglo-Indian public ask who they have to thank but themselves. The Indian press is as worthy a reflex of the state of society in that part of the world, as is the condition of English society mirrored in the journals of this country.¹

The *Times*, or *Daily News*, published in the presidencies, would be as much out of place as would the *Quarterly* among the Esquimaux. Papers are not usually established for any higher motive than profit; and in such a question of pounds, shillings, and pence, no man having any knowledge of India, would attempt to print such a paper as the London *Examiner* or *Spectator*, even had he the ability at his command to enable him to do so. Editors in India know their readers pretty well, they generally understand the sort of writing which is acceptable to them, and minister accordingly.

One of the most successful journals throughout India is the *Mofussilite*, a bi-weekly journal published at Meerut in Bengal. It was established some dozen years since, and by a judicious catering to the reading wants of the community, it has reached the highest position amongst Indian papers, both as regards circulation and income. Few topics escape its notice; yet these are all handled in such a light and pleasant manner, that even the most uninteresting matters rivet the attention of the Anglo-Indian, whilst in England its columns would possibly be voted "frivolous."

There are other papers of high standing² equal in ability to most journals in English provincial towns, and doing well for their proprietors; yet I doubt if, with one or two exceptions, any of these would be read out of India.

The revelations of Indian banking during 1848 and the two following years were monstrous indeed, outstripping in iniquity any thing which had gone before it. The madness of speculation, to call it by its mildest terms, drew within its vortex the merchant, the soldier, and

¹ The following testimony to the tone of the bulk of the Indian press comes from one of their own body, and is therefore not without value:—"We must have a very different class of men conducting our newspapers before the belief in their regard for the public good will, or ought, in the slightest degree to protect them when they meddle with individuals; and their regard for the public very rarely exhibits itself in any other form than virulent attacks on persons. . . . It is their privilege for the public good to use what language they please of others; but breathe a syllable against one of them, and the lot is up in arms; they snarl at and bite each other like curs, but hunt their common game like a pack of wild dogs."—*Indian Charter*, Calcutta, 1852.

² It is with pleasure that I place on this list of honourable exceptions *The Bombay Times*, *Madras Spectator*, *Calcutta Englishman*, *Friend of India*, and *Indian Charter*.

the official ; all alike ran riot with the wildness of the day ; all were tainted ; and though all did not suffer, although a large portion of the gamblers with other men's means escaped the general wreck, which followed the bursting of the storm of 1847-8, all felt that the ruin might have been theirs, and that what was death to some, was simply a fortune to them.

The moral taint was not, however, confined to the above classes. It spread like a gangrene on all around. The bar of Calcutta, the attorneys of the courts, the very officials of the Supreme Court were infected ; and so strong has the feeling with regard to the legal practitioners become amongst the natives and independent Europeans, that few place any degree of confidence in them.

What must be the state of society in India, when we find the majority of the officers of the highest judicial tribunal in the country lending themselves to the most glaring improprieties, and in not a few cases to the most scandalous and heartless transactions ? First, in the list of these official defalcators is the late Registrar and Official Administrator and Trustee of the Court, who, after becoming involved in a variety of joint-stock gambling, wound up by resigning his office, leaving his accounts many months in arrears, and his cash-balance deficient to the extent of 70,000*l*. Next comes the Official Assignee and Receiver of the Court, who closely followed in the financial steps of his brother officer : he too resigned, leaving a deficiency of 50,000*l*., and a corresponding arrears of accounts : this man is still retained in active employment by the court. The Taxing Officer of this tribunal took the benefit of the Insolvent Court in 1847 ; whilst the Master in Equity, and the Prothonotary of the Court, were both constantly occupied in bank matters and speculations to a great extent, and with ruinous results, in bank shares.

The string of disclosures made before the Chief Justice relative to some of these transactions were so glaringly iniquitous, that, shocked beyond the endurance of even a Calcutta judge, he indignantly expressed a wish that a retrospective law could be passed to insure the punishment of these guilty men. This was, however, but a single opinion ; "the voice of one crying in the wilderness" fell not more dead and unheeded on the stones and sands of the desert places, than did this solitary, indignant protest of an upright, conscientious judge, go forth amongst the cold, stony hearts of the European community of Calcutta.

The misdoers stood unabashed before their brethren, for their name was "legion ;" they went about, and were greeted with smiles and open

houses. They continued to give good dinners, and to receive invitations in return ; the *élites* of the Indian world threw wide their portals to do honour to them ; and we even find these men seated high up at the table of the governor-general. Far and wide this crying evil has spread ; the poison-tree has taken deep root in the social soil, and years must elapse before even the most vigorous and courageous government can hope to eradicate the noxious weed.

All this is not lost upon the native community ; they have sense and perception of right and wrong, sufficient to enable them to pass judgment on such things. It has been said recently in high places, that to give the Hindoos a more liberal education would jeopardise the British rule in the East. Alas ! can any acts of ours bring greater peril, work deeper mischief in the Hindoo mind, than fraud, embezzlement, and bold mid-day dishonesty, sheltered and patronised by those whose first great duty it should be to punish crime and vice of every grade, and yet have not the heart, the moral strength, to cry out “ fie ” upon it !

It is but a too common practice to dwell upon the short-comings of the natives of India, to enlarge upon their fraud, falsehood, and extortions. Unfortunately, they cannot be defended. But should we wonder that they are so, when we find them surrounded by men of education and refinement,—gentlemen *par excellence*,—who, if they differ in any way from them, do so only because they stoop not to petty knaveries, but glory in great and daring misdeeds ? With the Indian army demoralised to a painful degree, overwhelmed with debt, and shameless of insolvency ; civilians charged with the most flagrant delinquencies, yet instead of being punished, removed to other provinces, which, in nine cases out of ten, amounts to promotion ; with a bar boasting of a greater amount of delinquency than can be found in any previous time ; with attorneys steeped to the eyes in fraud, yet permitted by the judge, who is aware of these facts, to practise in his court ;—with all this passing before them, what can we hope for the social improvement of the natives of India ? Will they not judge us by our deeds ; our faith by its fruits ? What can our missionaries say to them that will not bring down upon them the pithy and emphatic retort, which was quoted in the early part of this chapter, “ *Christian religion, devil religion ; Christian much do wrong ?* ”

There are two other sections of the European community of India, smaller, and not amenable to the same charges as lie against their more potent brethren, grades which are altogether of recent origin. The English shopkeeping class has sprung into existence in Calcutta, Bombay, and other cities, within the last twenty-five years ; they keep

magnificent establishments, and are generally well-educated men, and not unfrequently superior in bearing and information to many of their customers. They are mostly sent out on the strength of Birmingham or London houses ; and generally contrive to amass fortunes in a very short time. The other section is composed of young men, clerks in government or mercantile employ, equally of modern origin. A quarter of a century since there were very few of either Europeans or natives employed as clerks ; the occupation was entirely in the hands of the Eurasians. Of late years, however, numbers of young men have flocked to India from this country, seeking their fortunes, with not much more trading capital than had Richard Whittington of nursery celebrity. Possessed of far more intelligence and energy than the Eurasians, and willing to accept of similar salaries, they soon supplanted the latter, and became a distinct and growing class. Neither of the two above-named sections of society take any part in matters politic, for reasons which will be at once obvious.

At one time the most important class, next to the Europeans, were the Eurasians, or country-born, the offspring of mixed marriages between the Europeans and natives. During the period when a voyage to India occupied six or eight months, and cost far towards 200%, and when none but Company's ships were in the trade, the influx of English females was scanty in the extreme. Not one civilian or officer in ten could provide himself with a wife other than from the ranks of the natives ; whilst many were not particular as to the performance of the marriage-ceremony. In this way the supply of Eurasians became large ; the sons, especially of those high in the service, were educated for the uncovenanted branch of government employ, whilst their daughters, after receiving an English education, were introduced to society through the position and influence of their fathers, and generally found husbands amongst the covenanted civilians.

With a more rapid and economical communication between England and her eastern dominions, this state of things underwent a marked change. Young English women, from being as rare as black swans, became as plentiful as blackberries in summer. The original source of the Eurasian supply was wanting, and already a diminution of their ranks may be observed.

Absorbed in the all-engrossing topics of daily routine life, eaten up with official importance, the Eurasian uncovenanted servant is too much the creature of red-tapism to form any opinion adverse to those of his immediate superior in office ; and accordingly with him, "all that is, is right." It would be, however, most unfair to this class not to

admit that they generally perform their duties with diligence and exactness, and usually acquire a far more intimate knowledge of business matters than their British-born superiors.

There is a small section of the Eurasians, of Portuguese descent, possessing no social status, and scarcely known as a class, out of the immediate sphere of their action. They are mostly underlings in offices, some few of them following trades, but seldom in any case doing more than earning a bare livelihood. If there cannot be accorded to these, and their brethren of British descent, any shining qualities, it is fair to confess that, both in their domestic life and general morality, they are free from the disgraceful failings of the bulk of the European community. Rare indeed is it that one of this class makes his appearance as defendant in a court of justice; still more rare is it that any of their race are accused of heavy offences or crimes.

Lastly, I will briefly glance at the constitution of the native society to be met with at the various seats of government. In this list can scarcely be included the Hindoos of high rank who are found in all the large cities of India, as they maintain a position aloof from all ordinary intercourse, mixing only with Europeans on particular occasions. The largest and most influential class of natives of the better ranks are the banians, or capitalists, whose business it is to place out their money at good interest. Their calling necessarily brings them into close and frequent contact with Europeans; and from the earliest days of English commercial enterprise in the East, these men were essential to the conduct of all mercantile and banking affairs.

It is only of late years, however, that British merchants have had recourse to these men for financial purposes. Many houses are upheld by the aid accorded them in this manner; and in some cases, the native capitalist is not only the friend and equal, but the partner of the Englishman; the relative positions of the two classes are thus greatly changed. The merchant is no longer the haughty man of business—the banian is no longer the retiring obsequious broker he was wont to be.

Many of the wealthiest of these banians have risen from very inferior positions, by dint of practising those arts which they have seen adopted by their English compeers; though, in their case, with more success, because more warily, more perseveringly worked out. One name amongst the crowd of these millionaires will exemplify the process of accumulation. Mutty Lal Seal, now notorious for his vast wealth, was originally a sircar or inferior servant in the Calcutta Custom House, on a salary of ten rupees a month. How the earliest foundation of his riches was laid need scarcely be inquired.

The favourite clients of these money-lenders are collectors of revenue, judges, and magistrates, who, once within their toils, once figuring on the debtor side of their ledger, become their certain, if not easy, tools to work out any schemes that may serve their financial projects. Should the client prove obstinate, or should the official not be on their books, which is seldom the case, these wary and finished masters of diplomacy will work out their ends through the great man's wife. Presents of rich shawls, of valuable jewelry, or costly furniture, are the sure baits by which the advocacy of the "Sahib's lady" is but too often secured, and with it the final bending of the tardy official to the wishes of the monied schemer.

A common method by which these unscrupulous men realise large and certain incomes, is to obtain all the petty appointments in the gift of their debtors, be they judges, collectors, or magistrates, for their own creatures, who, as a consideration for the appointments, gladly make over to them a certain portion of their salaries, in addition to a considerable entrance-fee. One case will suffice to illustrate the manoeuvres which are resorted to by this class of persons. A banian in the *confidence* of the chief magistrate of Calcutta, that is, the lender to the latter of considerable sums of money, having learnt the intended establishment of a number of suburban police-stations, immediately bought up houses, at a very low rate, in all the districts indicated; and when orders were issued for inquiry as to the tenements favourable for the purposes of the police, the obliging creditor hinted to his client that *he* possessed property in the very localities named; and at the same time expressed a hope that his "friend" would not seek elsewhere for what was wanted. Of course the banian's houses were bought, and for sums four or five times their real value.

With such methods of realising "interest" for monies advanced to officials by banians, it need not be matter for wonder that by far the majority of the service find ready ministers to their wants in this way; and that the creditors are usually most indulgent in their terms.

The altered demeanour of the upper classes of natives to Englishmen has not been without its effect upon their countrymen in the lower ranks of life. By them the European is no longer held in the veneration he was of old; his word is no longer of value; and it is not too much to say that, with a few honourable exceptions, the British merchant cannot now obtain the smallest credit for purchases, unless through the guarantee of his banian.

The familiarity which has of late sprung up between the eastern and western races, though it may too often be blended with contempt

on the part of the Hindoos, has led to a gradual loosening of time-honoured prejudices ; which, combined with the spread of education, must, before long, as it has already commenced, work a great social revolution in the feelings, the tastes, the wants, and the very constitution of native society. "Young Bengal" is even now "a fact," and though, as is sometimes the case, the earliest aspirations of the new-born are not of the loftiest or worthiest nature ; though the budding genius of these disciples of the modern school are somewhat beclouded by tobacco-smoke ; though their predilections are too much in the direction of brandy-pawnee,—hope bids us have faith in their future, whispering us that when these frivolities have lost their novelty, they will be cast aside in sober earnestness of purpose—exchanged for better, nobler things—that the young Hindoo generation will arise, and, shaking from them the errors and apathy of ages, make for themselves a reputation and a name, as wide, as beautiful, as glorious as their own magnificent and fruitful land.

But what of the rural population of British India?—of fully three-fourths of the hundred millions within the limits of the Company's territories ? The leaves of the forest-trees, the stones of the desert, the sands of the sea-shore, have as much to do in forming an Indian public, as have the ryots of that vast country. Ground down to the lowest possible condition, physically and morally debased, the too apt imitators of masters, who have for two thousand years held iron sway over them ; they no longer represent the contented, happy race, of whom we read in ancient Indian histories.

With no hope for the future, what does the ryot care for the present ? Can the poor wretch, who lives on the breath of his mahajun or zemindar, have a thought or a feeling for public matters ? If perchance he ever has the courage to *think*, he may remember that, of his miserable harvest of eighty shillings in the year, forty or fifty go to the government and the tax-renters ; and that whilst he is left, after all his toil, to subsist on thirty shillings a year, or one penny a day, an English foreigner rules his district in all the luxury of Eastern splendour. It is not too much to say, that the yearly income of one of these tillers of the soil will be smoked in cheroots by a junior civilian in a week. Broken in spirit, abject in mind, the sole aspiration of the poor ryot is that he may not die of starvation before his next harvest be ripe !

It has been the fashion with a certain set of writers to belaud the present administration of Indian government ; to talk of the security, the long peace accorded the population of the presidencies ; and to compare their present life as infinitely more tranquil and free from the

calamities of war, than during the rule of Mahomedan dynasties! As well might they boast of the safety and security of the poor captive pining away his existence in the dungeons of the Inquisition, because the ordinary risks of life could not reach him! Anarchy and despotism may be scourges in their way, but political and social annihilation are far worse. Man may struggle against the former, but sinks before the latter: oppression calls forth resistance, and in the strife for freedom there is a nobility of feeling engendered, that elevates and sustains even the poor Hindoo. Take away that power of resistance, paralyse his energies, sweep beyond his reach every thing that can make life worthy of a man, prostrate him to the dust,—and though he be told he need fear no external enemy, that the Afghan and the Tartar are no longer to be dreaded, and that he enjoys the immeasurable privilege of being the subject of the most honoured and powerful sovereign in the world, I fear he cannot be made to appreciate the wondrous change: he will feel, if he feels at all, that he is a degraded, abject being,—an Indian ryot! The snow-capped mountains of the East, the mighty rivers, the noble forests, the green hills and valleys, the fertile plains—all these we still behold, the tyranny of man is powerless with *them*—but with his fellow-kind he has done his worst.



A ZEMINDAR.

APPENDIX AND INDEX.

APPENDIX A.

THE FUTURE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

ON June 3d, 1853, Sir C. Wood introduced in the House of Commons a Bill for the government of India, which, with some slight modifications, has since become law. The principal features of this measure may be thus epitomised :

The relations of the Board of Control and the Court of Directors are to remain as hitherto.

The thirty members of the Court are to be reduced to eighteen : twelve elected in the usual way, and six nominated by the Crown from persons who have resided in India for ten years, either as servants of the Company, or as merchants or barristers. One-third of the whole number to go out every second year, but to be again eligible. The Directors to receive salaries of 500*l.* a year, and the chairman and deputy chairman 1000*l.* a year.

No change is made in the general control which the governor-general exercises over the Indian government ; but a lieutenant-governor of Bengal will be appointed ; the lieutenant-governor of Agra will be continued ; and a new presidency on the Indus will be created.

A commission will be appointed in England to digest and put into shape the draughts and reports of the Indian Law-Commission appointed in 1833. It is also proposed to enlarge the legislative council ; giving the governor-general power to select two, the heads of the presidencies one each, and making the chief-justice of the Queen's Court and one other judge members, in all twelve : the governor-general to have a veto on their legislation.

The privilege hitherto exercised by the Court of Directors of nominating all students to Haileybury and Addiscombe is to cease, except in respect to the appointments to the military service, which still remain in their hands.

The admission to the colleges, and consequently to the service, to be thrown open to public competition ; properly qualified examiners being appointed by the Board of Control.

The present legislation to continue in force until Parliament shall otherwise determine.

APPENDIX B.

TABLE of the Revenue-Charges and Debt of British India from 1804-5 to 1849-50.

YEARS.	Revenues.	India and Home charges.	Surplus.	Deficit.	Indian debt.
	£	£	£	£	£
1804-05	15,403,409	17,672,017	..	2,268,608	25,626,631
1809-10	15,525,055	15,551,097	..	26,042	28,897,742
1822-23	19,645,000	19,792,000	..	147,000	29,382,600
1835-36	16,391,000	14,924,152	1,466,848	..	29,832,299
1837-38	16,070,000	15,289,682	780,318	..	30,249,893
1838-39	16,320,000	16,701,000	..	381,000	30,231,162
1839-40	15,512,000	17,650,000	..	2,138,000	30,703,778
1841-42	16,834,000	18,605,000	..	1,771,000	34,378,288
1843-44	18,284,000	19,724,000	..	1,440,000	37,639,829
1845-46	18,998,000	20,493,376	..	1,495,376	38,992,734
1847-48	18,748,000	20,659,791	..	1,911,791	43,085,263
1848-49	19,442,000	20,915,115	..	1,473,115	44,204,080
1849-50	21,686,172	21,621,326	64,846	..	46,908,054

APPENDIX B (*continued*).

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT of the Revenues and Charges of each Presidency for 1835-6 and 1849-50. (Campbell's *Modern India*.)

PRESIDENCIES.	1835-36.			Per centage charges, 1835-36.
	Gross revenue.	Net revenue.	Charges.	
	£	£	£	
Bengal	8,100,000	6,584,300	5,173,000	79
Agra	5,100,000	4,060,000	674,000	16½
Madras	4,898,213	3,823,400	2,948,400	77
Bombay	252,033	1,923,300	2,046,300	106½
	20,680,024	16,391,000	10,741,700	66

	1849-50.			Per centage charges, 1849-50.
	Gross revenue.	Net revenue.	Charges.	
	£	£	£	
Bengal	10,907,802	8,724,726	8,333,504	95½
Agra	5,452,700	4,535,400	1,076,500	19½
Madras	5,005,900	3,779,229	3,294,323	87
Bombay	3,851,176	2,337,942	2,635,012	106½
New territory, Punjab and Scinde . . . }	2,540,275	2,308,875	1,118,242	48
	27,757,853	21,686,172	16,457,581	76

APPENDIX C.

STATEMENT of the Land-Revenue of British India for 1849-50.

DIVISIONS.	Area in square miles.	Population.	Gross land- revenue.	Charges.	Net land- revenue.	Gross revenue per square mile.	Per centage of charges on revenue.
			£	£	£		
Bengal	118,702	36,848,981	3,506,070	325,790	3,180,340	31·	9½
N.-W. Provinces	89,972	26,199,688	4,422,500	382,000	4,140,500	49·3	8½
Punjab	75,000	7,500,000	1,479,700	130,000	1,349,700	19·14	9
Madras	144,829	16,339,426	3,479,437	478,000	3,001,437	24·	13½
Bombay	67,945	9,210,273	2,290,969	1,262,684	1,028,285	33·14	55
Total	491,448	96,098,368	15,178,674	2,578,414	12,600,262		

APPENDIX D.

TABLE of the Imports of Cotton into Great Britain from the United States and India respectively, with the Prices of the two kinds.

YEARS.	Imports from United States.	Imports from India.	Price of other than East Indian cotton at Liverpool.		Price of Surat cotton at Liverpool.	
	lbs.	lbs.	per lb.		per lb.	
1800	16,000,000	6,629,822	d.	d.	d.	d.
			16	to 36	10	to 18
1802	23,500,000	2,679,483	12	" 38	10	" 18
1804	25,750,000	1,166,355	10	" 18	8	" 15
1806	24,250,000	2,725,450	15	" 21½	12	" 17
1808	8,000,000	4,729,200	15½	" 36	14	" 25½
1810	36,000,000	27,783,700	14½	" 22½	12½	" 19
1812	26,000,000	915,950	13	" 23½	12	" 16
1814	War with U. S.	4,725,000	23	" 37	18	" 25
1816	57,750,000	10,850,000	15	" 21.	14	" 18½
1818	58,333,000	86,555,000	16½	" 22	7	" 20½
1820	89,999,174	20,294,400	8	" 13½	6½	" 12
1822	101,031,766	6,742,050	5½	" 11	5½	" 8½
1824	92,187,662	17,796,100	7	" 10½	5½	" 8
1826	130,858,203	22,644,300	5½	" 8½	4½	" 7
1828	151,752,289	29,670,200	5	" 7½	3½	" 5½
1830	210,885,358	12,324,200	5½	" 7½	3	" 6
1832	219,756,753	38,249,750	5	" 8	3½	" 5½
1834	269,203,075	32,920,865	8½	" 10½	5½	" 7½
1836	289,615,692	75,746,926	7½	" 11	5½	" 8½
1838	431,437,888	40,229,495	6½	" 9	5½	" 6½
1840	487,856,504	77,010,917	5½	" 7	4	" 5
1842	405,325,600	96,555,186	4	" 6	3½	" 4½
1844	517,218,622	88,639,608	3½	" 4½	4	" 4½
1846	382,526,000	33,711,420	4½	" 7	3½	" 5
1848	600,247,488	84,101,961	3½	" 5½	2½	" 3½

APPENDIX E.

STATEMENT of the Annual Value of Merchandise imported into, and exported from, the three Presidencies of India, from and to all countries, for the ten years ending 1849-50, at 2s. the rupee.

YEARS.	IMPORTS.				
	Bengal.	Madras.	Bombay.	Total.	Of which from England.
	£	£	£	£	£
1840-41	4,590,755	768,932	3,056,252	8,415,940	6,014,339
1841-42	4,262,910	678,326	2,847,328	7,788,565	5,439,564
1842-43	3,915,185	581,180	3,107,236	7,603,602	5,354,901
1843-44	4,474,472	652,263	3,691,061	8,817,797	6,347,349
1844-45	5,933,990	1,046,894	3,773,181	10,754,065	7,952,179
1845-46	5,232,617	849,913	3,004,948	9,087,479	6,477,143
1846-47	5,313,442	881,804	2,701,417	8,896,664	6,420,404
1847-48	4,671,361	976,664	2,949,591	8,597,617	5,790,228
1848-49	4,356,014	948,072	3,040,717	8,344,804	5,512,110
1849-50	5,283,170	906,004	4,110,713	10,299,888	7,578,980
	EXPORTS.				
	Bengal.	Madras.	Bombay.	Total.	Of which to England.
	£	£	£	£	£
1840-41	8,060,565	1,044,165	4,350,853	13,455,584	7,054,388
1841-42	8,066,384	1,242,582	4,516,251	13,825,217	7,120,748
1842-43	7,363,435	1,301,991	4,886,397	13,551,824	5,820,965
1843-44	9,891,109	1,208,655	6,153,712	17,253,477	7,760,128
1844-45	9,822,197	1,641,462	5,126,552	16,590,212	7,240,619
1845-46	9,815,675	1,411,217	5,801,780	17,028,673	6,658,943
1846-47	9,234,393	1,516,146	4,604,897	15,355,437	6,511,686
1847-48	7,961,857	1,277,296	4,073,243	13,312,397	5,683,826
1848-49	9,038,863	1,212,462	5,837,175	16,088,501	6,191,959
1849-50	10,148,038	1,272,884	5,891,376	17,312,299	7,026,470

APPENDIX F.

THE Paradise Flycatcher, or Sultana Bulbul of the Hindoos (*Muscipita Paridisi*), is met with in jungles, gardens, and shrubberies, from the warmer parts of the Himalayas to the most southern extremity of Ceylon. It is a peculiarly graceful bird, the body and long sweeping tail of the male being white, with the primaries black, edged with white. The body and tail of the female are of a reddish brown, with the breast-feathers clouded grey.

APPENDIX G.

THE Monaul, Golden Fowl, or Impeyan Pheasant (*Lophophorus Impeyanus*, Gould), is met with in great numbers throughout the Himalayan districts. The male bird has a remarkably beautiful plumage, its crest, head, and throat being of a rich bronzy green; the middle of the neck is purple, glossed with a coppery hue; back and wing coverts rich purple, each feather tipped with bronzy-green; the legs and feet are of a greenish ash, whilst across the lower part of the back is a band of pure white. The female is buffy-brown mixed with black and white. A more beautiful object can scarcely be imagined than this gorgeously plumaged bird taking his lofty and sweeping flight through the air, full in the light of the noon-day sun, the rays of which are reflected in surpassing brilliancy from his brightly-tipped feathers.

The above, extracted from Mr. Gould's great work on the Birds of Asia, in course of publication, was too late to find a place in the introductory chapter on Indian Natural History. The acknowledgments of the author are due to Mr. Gould for the permission to copy the birds which illustrate this volume from his splendid collection.

INDEX.

- ABWABS, villagers' presents, 283.
Adam's-bridge, sandstones of, 12.
Afghan race, end of the, 66.
Agriculture of the Hindoos, 317.
Ahmed Shah, his wars, 94.
Akbar, submission of Delhi, Agra, and the Punjab to the rule of, 69.
— death and character of, 72.
— reform of taxation and policy by, 276.
Albuquerque, bold conduct of, 102.
Ali Moorad, deposition of, 247.
Aliwal, battle of, 231.
Ameera, annihilated power of the, 221.
Amherst, Earl, governor-general, 189.
— proclamation of war by, 192.
— leaves India, 206.
Animals and reptiles, 30.
Appah Sahib, seizure and escape of, 183.
Arab rule, declension of, 50.
Arabs, invasion of the, 47.
Architecture, antiquity of Indian, 291.
— neglect of the study of eastern, 292.
Arcot, negotiations with nabob of, 156.
Army, Mahratta, how composed, 256.
Assam, invasion and conquest of, 81.
Assaye, defeat of Mahrattas at, 159.
Astronomy, Hindoo system of, 301.
Auckland, appointment of Lord, 209.
Aurangzebe, embarrassment of, 85.
— death and character of, 86.
BABER, reign and death of, 67.
Bajee Rao's treaty with the English, 178.
— seizure of landholders' estates, 175.
Bandoola, death of, 202.
Banjaras, the tribe of, 257.
Bench, the criminal, 457.
Bentinck, administration of Lord William, 207.
Birds of Asia and their localities, 31.
Black Hole, death of English prisoners in the, 114.
— Acts, violent opposition to, 458.
Brahma, the priesthood of, 252.
British India, ancient extent of, 1.
— natural divisions and mountain ranges of, 2.
British India, population and rulers of, 6.
— climate of, 15.
Brougham, Lord, on "Cornwallis's permanent settlement," 281.
Buddhistical temples, 295.
Burmese defeated, 195.
— harassing attacks of the, 194.
— assembling of, at Bassein, 241.
— night-attack of the, 191.
— rout of the, 201.
Burnes, massacre of Sir A., 214.
CALCUTTA, concession to English in, 90.
Candahar, invasion of, by the emperor of Delhi, 75.
Casim, government and disgrace of, 49.
Cave-temples of India, 293.
Centralisation, its perniciousness, 260.
Central India, position and geographical features of, 4.
Chand-u-lal raises an army headed by British officers, 166.
Christianity, early progress of, 441.
— labours of Danes to promote, 442.
— opposition of government to the spread of, 443.
Church, present strength of the Established, 444.
Clive, re-appointment of Lord, 124.
— wholesome reforms effected by, 125.
— conquests of, in Bengal, 115.
— complete establishment of British supremacy by, 119.
Coal-deposits of Bengal, 20.
Coffee, cultivation of, 330.
Collectors, the efficiency of, 267.
Commerce, monopoly of, by the Venetians, 99.
Commercial community of India, 470.
— its morality, 470.
Company's dominions, 269.
Conquest, laws of, 255.
Coote, victories of Sir Eyre, 116.
Cotton, India, varieties of soil adapted to, and cultivation of, 26.
— manufacture, improvements in, and effects, 307.

- Covenanted and uncovenanted servants compared, 262.
 Crisis, the commercial of 1848, 473.
 DAHER, defeat of, 48.
 Dalhousie, Earl of, appointed governor-general, 233.
 Dara and Shuja, revolt of, 80.
 Dead, ceremonies at burning of, 419.
 Deccan, extent and population of the, 3.
 — aborigines and dialects of the, 42.
 — kingdoms and states of the, 43.
 — conquests of Akbar in the, 71.
 — competition for the throne of the, 88.
 — interference of Europeans in the wars in the, 112.
 — prolonged hostilities in the, 117.
 — fresh troubles in the, 126.
 Delhi, the rajah of, attacks the Mahomedans, 57.
 — the slave kings of, 61.
 — revolution and war in, 120.
 Diamond-cutting, 316.
 Diseases of India, native and foreign, 19.
 Domestic, classes of, in India, 424.
 Dost Mohammed made prisoner, 213.
 — war with, 210.
 Durgoon, Sal, capture of, 205.
 Dutch possessions in the East taken by the English, 148.
 — annihilation of fleet of the, 118.
 Dyes, many varieties of, 27.
 East India Company, early career of, 87.
 — first established, 108.
 — early progress of, 110.
 Education, missionary labours in, 438.
 — absence of, in Hindoo females, 429.
 — in the Tenasserim provinces, 440.
 — Lord W. Bentinck's minute on, 433.
 — governmental system of, 435.
 — collegiate establishments for, 436.
 — government disbursements on, 437.
 — great importance of, in India, 430.
 — early steps for the diffusion of, 431.
 — Bengal Council of, 432.
 Ellenborough, appointment of, 216.
 — regretted departure of, 223.
 English, first appearance in India of, 107.
 — retreat and defeat of the, 215.
 Eurasians, or country-born, the, 475.
 FAROKHSAD and his successors, 58.
 Farokhsir, reign and deposition of, 89.
 Ferozepore, battle of, 228.
 — British retire upon, 219.
 — encampment at, 227.
 Fibrous materials, value of, exported in 1849-50, 312.
 Firuz, state of the kingdom during the reign of, 64.
 Flax fibre, relative strength of, 24.
 Flora, the Indian, 29.
 Fossil remains and Kunker, 13.
 French fleet defeated on the Madras coast, 137.
 — settlements attacked by the English, 111.
 GAMA, extension of Portuguese trade by Vasco de, 101.
 — second expedition to India of Vasco de, 103.
 Gandaboo, treaty signed at, 204.
 Ganges, delta of the, 5.
 — navigated by steamers, 208.
 Gems of India, 20.
 Geography, slight knowledge of, by Hindoos, 303.
 Ghaznie, the Ghorian sultan of, 59.
 Ghoorkas, defeat of, 173.
 Ghuznee, capture of, 212.
 Gold-working, 315.
 Goojerat, battle of, 236.
 Government, existing, 259.
 Grains, pulse, and fruits, 28.
 Granitic formation and alluvium, 14.
 Grasses and fibrous plants, 23.
 Gwalior, condition of, 222.
 HAILEYBURY, nature of education at, 263.
 Hardinge, Sir H., governor-general, 224.
 Harvest-time and its anxieties, 319.
 Hastings, Warren, governor-general, 128.
 — charges of corruption against, 129.
 — quarrel between Francis and, 130.
 — judicial changes effected by, 142.
 — large sums of money raised by, 143.
 — retirement from the government, 144.
 — Marquis of, governor-general, 169.
 Hindoo Rajah defeated at Canouj, 60.
 Hindoos, the early dynasties of the, 37.
 — ancient account of the, 427.
 — various influences on the character of the, 428.
 — example afforded by the British to the, 429.
 Hindostan, early government of, 251.
 Holkar and Lake, action between, 162.
 — peace concluded between, 163.
 — insanity of, and consequent division of the regency, 165.
 — defeat of, 185.
 Humayun, deposition and restoration of, 68.
 Hyder Ali, first war of English with, 127.
 — league of the French with, 132.
 — invasion of English territories by, 133.
 — massacre of English troops by, 134.

- Hyder Ali, defeat of, at Vellore, 135.
 — death of, 138.
- IMPORTS, average from India between 1771 and 1793, 308.
- India, early kingdoms of, 41.
 — geological features of, 9, 10.
 — Greek accounts of, 45.
 — rivers, bays, and fishes of, 33.
 — manufactures of, 305.
- Indigo, its prohibition in the Austrian dominions, 321.
 — planters, and their treatment, 323.
 — source of, and how produced, 322.
- Infanticide, custom of female, 421.
- Inquisition established at Goa, 106.
- Insects, great abundance of, 32.
- Insurrections in reign of Akbar, 70.
- Invulnerables, the Burmese, 198.
- Irrigation, Hindoo mode of, 318.
- JEHAN Ghir, accession of, 72.
 — death of, in Cashmere, 74.
- Jeipal and Sibektegin, war between, 51.
- Jesuits, first establishment of the, in India, 105.
- Judges, incapacity of, in India, 453.
 — published judgments of, 454.
 — model decisions of, 455.
- Judicial establishments, modern, 451.
 — promotion in India, 452.
 — subordinates, native, 459.
- Justice, Hindoo administration of, 448.
- Jute, the growth of, and trade in, 311.
- KEMMENDINE, hostilities at, 200.
- Khoord Cabool pass, victory at, 217.
- LAHORE reduced by Mahomedans, 54.
 — treaty of, 232.
- Lake, Gen., marches against Agra, 161.
- Landholders' rights, 274.
- Land-tax in the three presidencies, 261.
- Laterite rocks, 11.
- Lattial system, or club-law, 324.
- Laws, Hindoo code of, 449.
 — modification of, 450.
- MAGADA, kings of, 40.
- Magistrate's court, scenes in a, 461.
- Maha Bandoola, march of, 199.
 — Barat, the, 39.
- Mahmoud, his conquests eastward, 53.
 — death and character of, 55.
- Mahomedan rule, 258.
- Mahratta war, end of the, 188.
- Mahrattas, rise of the, 76.
 — wars with the, 83.
 — commencement of hostilities with, 131.
 — war begun with, 157.
 — peace concluded with, 187.
- Marriage, form and cost of, 418.
- Martaban, attack of, 242.
- Massaud, military operations of, 56.
- Medical treatment and peculiarities, 300.
- Medicinal plants, gums, and starches, 27.
- Medicine, the practice of, 299.
- Menu, the code of, 254.
- Metaflurgy of India, 313.
- Missionaries, extent of labours of, 445.
 — progress of conversion by, 447.
- Mohammed Toghlaq, despotism of, 63.
- Momunds, incursions of the, 246.
- Monsoons, winds and rains of the, 16.
- Moodkee, the battle of, 229.
- Morad and Aurungzebe, rising of, 77.
- Morality of the early Indo-British, 467.
- Mubarik, murder of the last of the Khilji race, 62.
- Munro, Sir T., system of assessment, 284.
- Music, Hindoo, 298.
- Mutiny among the British troops, 123.
- NADIR Shah, conquests of, 91.
- Napier, Sir Charles and the Ameers, encounter between, 220.
- Native officials, 266.
 — states, annexation of, 270.
 — community affected by English example, 474.
 — millionaires, proceedings of, 479.
- Natives, justice to them, 268.
- Navigation scarcely known, 304.
- Nepaul, war in, 171.
 — disastrous operations in, 172.
- Nepalese outrage upon officers and police, 170.
- OPIUM, culture and monopoly, 331.
 — its sale legalised in China, 332.
- Oude, honourable employment of British officers in, 271.
 — unsettled state of affairs in, 154.
- PAGHAM, Mew, encounter at, 203.
- Palaces of native princes, 296.
- Patna, disturbances at, 122.
- Pegu, second engagement at, 245.
- Peguans, habits, manners, &c. of the, 426.
- Peishwa, misunderstanding with the, 176.
 — plans of, against the English, 180.
 — engagement with the English, 181.
 — defeated near Poonah, 184.
 — deposition of the, 184.
- Permanent settlement by Lord Cornwallis, 280.
- Persia, British embassy to court of, 168.
- Persians, massacre at Delhi by the, 92.
- Pindarries, attack upon the, 179.
 — predatory incursions of the, 167.
 — dispersion of, 186.
- Police, roguery of the Indian, 462.

- Population, the Indian rural, 478.
 Portuguese, hostilities with the, 84.
 — early progress of the, 100.
 — Emperor of Delhi wages war against the, 104.
 — decline of the rule of, 109.
 Press, the Indian, 472.
 Professor, sketch of an Indian, 434.
 Prome, march towards, 243.
 — and Pegu taken by the English, 244.
 Punjab and Scinde, extent of, 7.
 — the five rivers of the, 46.
 RAILWAYS and electric telegraphs, 239.
 Rajpootana, early rajahs of, 44.
 Rama, exploits of, 38.
 Rangoon, evacuation of, 193.
 Revenue, 278.
 — early mode of collecting the, 272.
 Rice, cultivation of, 320.
 Rock and cave temples, 294.
 Ryots, their average incomes, 279.
 — their condition and prospects, 479.
 Ryotwari system, its evils, 285.
 SALE, General, arrival of, 218.
 Salt-tax, 286; evils of, 287.
 Sanitaria, elevations, &c. of, 18.
 Saracenic conquests in the East, 98.
 Scindia, renewal of intrigues by, 174.
 Seringapatam, English march on, 150.
 — capture of, and death of Tippoo, 151.
 Sevaji assumes the title of rajah, but is compelled to resign, 82.
 Shah Jehan, captivity, death, and character of, 78, 79.
 Sibektegin, the victory of, 52.
 Sick, exposure of, by the Ganges, 422.
 Sikh leaders, surrender of the, 237.
 Sikhs, recrossing of the Sutlej by the, 230.
 — second war with the, 234.
 Silk, manufacture of, in India, 309.
 — antiquity of, 333.
 — endeavours of the Company to improve its mode of production, 334.
 — worms, different species of, 336.
 Sindhi, appearance, character, and customs of the, 425.
 Slave-trade agitation favourable to East-India sugars, 326.
 Smelting, difference between Indian and Welsh, 314.
 Society of India, the early English, 466.
 — changes in, 468, 469.
 Sovereign, the duties of, 253.
 Stamps, cost of Indian law, 463.
 Sugar-cane, the, 325.
 Suttee, prevalence of, 420.
 TAMERLANE, Hindostan devastated by, 65.
 Tartar empire, decline of the, 95.
 — and English, rule of, compared, 277.
 Tea, cultivation of, in Assam, 328.
 — crops, produce of the Company's, 329.
 — plant, report by Dr. Royle on, 327.
 Temperature of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, 17.
 Temples of Cashmere, 297.
 Tenant-holdings, 275.
 Tenasserim and Peguan provinces, natural history of, 34.
 — inhabitants of, 8.
 — cession of the province of, 197.
 Textile products, 306.
 Thugs, the great power and final extinction of the, 423.
 Tippoo Sahib, defeats English army, 136.
 — renewal of hostilities by, 139.
 — negotiates with the English, 140.
 — treaty of peace concluded with, 141.
 — Cornwallis declares war against, 145.
 — defeat of, near Seringapatam, 146.
 — peace concluded with, 147.
 Tobacco, locality and quality of, 28.
 Townships, their municipality and independence, 273.
 Trade, early routes of the Indian, 97.
 Trichinopoly besieged by French, 113.
 Trimbukjee, flight of, 177.
 VANSITTART, short and disastrous administration of Mr., 121.
 WAR, the science of, amongst the Hindoos, 255.
 — improvements in the art of, 256.
 Wellesley, Colonel, appointed governor of Seringapatam, 152.
 — expedition against the Mauritius, prepared by, 153.
 Women, social position of, 417.
 Woods, ornamental and useful, 22.
 Woollen products, 310.
 "Writer," the, in India, 264.
 ZEMINDARI system, and its fruit, 282.
 Zodiacal and planetary systems, 302.

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