assurance of the truth of what I have stated, and adding my full permission to you to make whatever use you please of the information I have sent you.

Adieu, my dear Sir.

I am, yours, faithfully,

&c. &c. &c.

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EXAMINATION

OF THE

PRINCIPLES AND POLICY

OF THE

GOVERNMENT

OF

BRITISH INDIA:

EMBRACING

A PARTICULAR INQUIRY

CONCERNING THE

TENURE OF LANDS;

STRICTURES ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE;

AND

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT

OF THE

CHARACTER AND CONDITION OF THE NATIVES IN GENERAL.

BY A GENTLEMAN

IN THE SERVICE OF THE HONOURABLE THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.

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MDCCCXXIX. (1829)

public bodies to the local Governments of India are honourable to the British character. But, after all, their care and good intentions have produced inadequate or unexpected results; and how to place the government of India on any thing approaching to an unexceptionable footing is still an unsolved and intricate problem.

Some clever men have assured us that, the more widely extended our power should become, the more would our Government be in danger of subversion; and these authors would of course insinuate, that a civil war would be the means resorted to for accomplishing this end. Authorities of talent and great local information have considered it incumbent on the conquerors of India, if they would retain their sway, to reduce the people to the lowest state of intelligence and poverty, consistent with the reasoning faculties and bodily support of man. I shall examine the views and fears of these legislators, and endeavour to determine how far they consist with sound policy, and the honour and duty of the British nation. At the time this theory was propounded and adopted, we were making long strides towards universal dominion. Another class of politicians, at an earlier period of our intercourse with India, upheld a very different course of reasoning, and endeavoured to create a gentry of landlords. Whatever was the

scheme of the day, the end in view invariably was the stability of our power, and the happiness of the conquered people. One might recommend a loyal aristocracy; another, the abolition or suppression of all temporal rank and baronial power, to enable the government, by entering the huts of the peasantry, to proclaim and practice justice, and thus to invite the attachment of the mass of the inhabitants; but, as both were carried away by particular views, adapted to support their own opinions and to oppose all others, the public functionaries at the head of Indian affairs necessarily selected that plan which seemed to present the best arguments for the stability of the British power, and which possessed, though not a real, at least a highly plausible claim to adoption, from its apparent humanity in respect to the people.

The effects of our governing India on those principles are now discernible; and—whether it is that a government of foreigners is inherently depressive to such a people, or that the schemes have failed from a want of attention and care in reducing them to practice; whether the data on which they were founded are fallacious, or have only produced the results anticipated—it is but too true that our East India Government may be justly compared to a noxious vapour, blighting every thing it lights upon.

It is but too certain that the minds of the people are running to waste, and daily approaching nearer to a state of vegetation. But I cannot better or more philosophically describe and account for the condition at which many have already arrived, and to which all others are hastening, than in the words of an eminent writer. "There can be no doubt," says Mr. Mill, "that, by increasing every year "the proportion of the population which you "employ in raising food, and diminishing every "year the proportion employed in every thing "else, you may go on increasing food as fast as "population increases, till the labour of a man "upon the land is just sufficient to add as much "to the produce as will maintain himself and "raise a family. But, if things were made to go "on in such an order till they arrived at that "pass, men would have food, but they would "have nothing else. There would be nothing "for elegance, nothing for ease, nothing for "pleasure. There would be no class exempt "from the necessity of perpetual labour, by "whom knowledge might be cultivated, and "discoveries useful to mankind might be made. "There would be no physicians, no legislators. "The human race would become a mere mul-"titude of animals of a very low description, "having only two functions, that of raising food

"and that of consuming it."* Many a reader may be startled to learn such truths. They are exposed to every Englishman in India, and will every day receive some new and strong corroboration.

Before I enter upon a consideration of the extent to which the people of India may be permitted by their masters to become prosperous and civilized, and of the means by which that object may be attained, I shall review the theories that have met with most attention; since they will act as the safest guides to us in devising new plans for our future progress. I shall commence with that scheme which is calculated to reduce the natives of India to mental ignorance, "to animals having just two functions, that of raising food, and that of consuming it;" and, as the doctrines it inculcates have been the most extensively adopted, and are still in fashion, I shall be excused for a little prolixity, and some repetitions that can with difficulty be avoided, when fully exposing the fallacy of a scheme, that is in itself loosely put together in many of its parts. The names of the lawgivers who broached and acted upon this plan are, Sir Thomas Munro, Lord William Bentinck, Mr. Thackeray, Mr. Ravenshaw, Mr. Shaw, Mr.

* Supplement to Ency. Brit., Article "Colony."

Gahagan, and Mr. Chaplin; all gentlemen of the Civil Service, or Government of Madras, at no distant period.

One of the great and obvious objections to the plan followed by these gentlemen is, that it is erected "on expedients instead of principles."—Were I not, from the known character of Sir Thomas Munro, perfectly assured that his motives originated in the purest desire to benefit his Government, and improve the condition of its subjects; were I not satisfied that this distinguished public servant believed in the justice and humanity of his own theory; I should, as a mere reader of his rules, assert that he must have allowed a narrow policy to contract the scope of his fine understanding; in short that, wilfully neglecting principles, he had attended entirely to expediency. That Sir Thomas Munro firmly believed that India was only to be retained by the British Government through the mental incapacity of its inhabitants; that he believed "knowledge is power," and that such power if acquired by the natives of India, would be exercised to eradicate the British sovereignty, and that therefore they ought not to be allowed to acquire it; cannot, I imagine, be disputed by his warmest advocates. But, that he also imagined he was spreading, by the means pursued to attain these primary objects, Arcadian bliss and

content among the poorest classes of the community, is equally incontestible.

As the design of these pages is to expose and to inculcate truth, I shall be pardoned for quoting at length the approved sentiments of well informed and learned men, in their own words, instead of re-casting them in language of my own, in token of my concurrence or disapproval. Indeed, my object is chiefly to agitate an important question, and to set before the public strong lights from the works of more able politicians than myself.

In the 5th paragraph of Sir Thomas Munro's despatch to Mr. Petrie, dated the 26th of August, 1805, after mentioning that the great drawback on large estates is the subdivision of property according to Hindoo law, he adds; "Great "estates, though they may be created, cannot "be of long duration in any province in India:" and in the 7th paragraph he says, "There is not "the same necessity in this country as in Europe "for a body of great or rich landlords; and even "if such a body could be raised up, it would "probably in the end be productive of more "harm than good; because great landholders "would in time become impatient of the do-"minion of a foreign nation, and their wealth "and the smallness of their numbers would "enable them to form combinations, which the

"class of cultivators have neither the means nor "the wish of attempting." Although the letter which contains these observations was written to establish another in disparagement of Lord Cornwallis's Zemindary plan, they exhibit the views of policy entertained by their author, and are a key to the system which he himself proposed. The inconsistency of the two opinions that "*great estates* could not, from subdivision, "be of long duration;" and, "that their pos- "sessors would *in time*, from the *smallness* of "their numbers, and their wealth, become for- midable to the Government," is very striking; but what I wish to draw attention to is the proposition, that there exists not the *necessity* in this country, as in Europe, for a body of great landlords. The fallacy broached and palmed upon us, under the term "*necessity*," is obvious upon a moment's reflection. If the reader will clothe the argument in these words, its true colour and tendency will be seen: "In "Europe there exists a body of great landlords "who enjoy much happiness from possessing "the good things of this life; who contribute "extensively to the happiness of myriads of "others by employing them in the production "of articles of comfort and luxury, and by "calling forth among them science and talent of "every kind; who assist the King in aggran-

"dizing their nation by the exertion of their "wisdom and influence in the country; and "Europe and Europeans deserve the enjoyment "of this state of things; in fact, *it is necessary* "for Europe, and Europeans, that this state of "things should exist; but there is *no necessity* "that the natives of India should be similarly "circumstanced. There is *no necessity* for an en- "lightened European nation to civilize its tawny "subjects, or to allow them to acquire the things "most highly prized by that nation itself, and "by all other races of men." It will hardly be doubted that Sir Thomas Munro must have been under the influence of fear for the loss of India to Britain, when he proposed to legislate for it on such expedients. Had he forgotten that there was an imperative *necessity* that Government should perform its duty to all its subjects, whether white or black, whether near to London or ten thou- sand miles distant from it? How could he assert that, *if there was a duty*, a necessity *could* exist for swerving from its performance? I will main- tain that *if it was a duty* of Government to make great landholders, *a necessity did exist* for their creation. I will maintain that that reasoning is fallacious which leads to the conclusion, that there is *no necessity* for one race of men being rendered as prosperous as another race of men; or that a Government, the very instrument

which should discover, introduce, and uphold, whatever is most conducive to the prosperity and happiness of those for whose sake it is called into existence, can maintain such an argument consistently with any known principles of governing, or with its own vitality. "Great landed "property in possession," says Sir Thomas Munro, "occasions turbulence and insubordi- "nation in the holder." This necessary effect of simply holding land must be deemed a chimera of Sir Thomas's, who no doubt added, in his imagination, to the possession of land the possession of baronial power over vassals, and the knowledge of the true ground of the existence of any government at all. "The ten- "dency of the Indian system of Castes and "laws of inheritance," says again Sir Thomas in the letter to which I have above adverted, "al- "ways has been, and must be to keep land "divided into small portions among the Ryots, "and to make the same person labourer, farmer, "and landlord. Why then attempt to subvert an "ancient system, which places the great body of "the Ryots above want, renders them industrious, "frugal, and comfortable, and preserves the sim- "plicity of their manners, and their respect for "public authority?" "There is no people on "earth among whom there is greater subordina- "tion than among the Hindoos, who never saw

"proprietary Zemindars until they were created "by the Company's Government." The whole tenor, in short, of Sir Thomas's writings is to show that he believed it to be the best policy—maintaining, as he did, the proposition that Government was the owner of the soil, and could do with it what it pleased—to keep the people down, if I may so express myself; and that he hailed those circumstances in their laws and condition which might enable us to do so without appearing to innovate. The true philanthropist would have said: "Why not attempt to supersede a "system by which the great body of the people "have been consigned to indigence for many "ages, especially as Government is the owner of "the land, and may dispose of it to whom, and "on what terms it pleases?"

That Sir Thomas Munro might have overcome the obstacle of Hindoo law and Caste custom, in respect to the subdivision of landed property is not even problematical. The circumstances of the people and of the land leave this fact unquestionable. They were merely tenants at will, shifting from field to field, (I adopt Sir Thomas's assertions, and am not writing from my own knowledge,) and the land belonged to Government. He had an opportunity, which I fear will hardly be found in any other part of India, of easily bettering the con-

" habits of our native subjects; and their long
" continuance must, I think, infallibly end in
" reducing the whole population to one ignorant,
" grovelling, litigious, and profligate herd.——
" Then, after the lapse of a few years, a native
" of education and character will be a pheno-
" menon; and if afterwards this consequence
" should be regretted, that which might easily
" have been prevented will never be retrieved."

From these unvarnished descriptions it may be inferred how far the just maxim advocated by Sir Thomas Munro, in his letter to Mr. Petrie, dated the 25th of August, 1805, has been observed, either in the Madras or Bengal Presidencies. " When a country," says Sir Thomas, " falls under the dominion of a foreign power, " it is usually found to be the wisest plan to " leave it in possession of its own laws and " customs, and to endeavour rather to ameli- " orate than to abolish them and substitute " others in their room; and, the more antient " and civilized the subjected nation is, the more " requisite is it to pursue this course; for the " institutions of such a people are not only in " themselves perhaps better adapted than any " that they could receive from strangers to their " own circumstances and habits, but they have " also over their minds the strong influence " which is derived from respect to antiquity."

Mr. H. Colebrook, in his Minute, dated in June, 1808, says, " It is of the utmost import- " ance, it is essential for the safety of the State, " to conciliate the great body of the landed pro- " prietors; to attach to the British Government " that class of persons, whose influence is most " permanent and most extensive: to render it " their palpable interest to uphold the perma- " nence of the British domination, to give them " a valuable stake in the present administration " of the country."

I have now laid before the public, in my own language, and in that of other men, a view of the effects, on the state of society in India, resulting from the revenue and judicial arrangements adopted by his Majesty's servants, and from the substitution of a foreign for a native Government. It will be perceived that on one side are ranged Sir Thomas Munro and the advocates of his system, and Mr. Mill, the historian, in favour of reducing the inhabitants to poor agriculturists; the former, because they considered that the safest condition they could be in for the permanence of our Government; the latter, because the greatest portion of happiness would, he believed, be enjoyed by the greatest number. On the other side are also many men of eminent talents, with equal discrimination and nearly as much prac-

tical knowledge as Sir Thomas Munro. They possess over him and his supporters, however, one obvious advantage, when balanced against each other as authorities—they had no scheme of their own to advance—they merely described and reasoned on what they witnessed, and recommended to the State to devise its own plans to meet their general views. In such discussions as I have brought under review, the authority of one man will be as good as that of another, having equal advantages of information and equal discrimination and judgment. The scale will instantly turn, however, in favour of the views and information of those, who have no particular object, and from whom their sentiments were not only, as it were, drawn out, but who submitted them to their governments with doubts as to the temper with which they might be received. That the gentlemen, from whose papers I have quoted extracts, had not an equal advantage, from length of service, with Sir Thomas Munro, is true; and it may, therefore, by some, be deemed proper that both the Directors and the Board of Control should give to his opinions more credit than to theirs; but it was on this account the more necessary that, for the information of the public, I should examine them with greater strictness. Although Sir Thomas Munro may have possessed more intelli-

gence than some; more application and intensity of attention than others; and more means and opportunities of acquiring local information than certain others; he did not, nevertheless, possess *all* those qualities and circumstances adapted for gaining correct views of things, in a superior, or even in an equal degree, to all others his contemporaries. Some had more acute discrimination and greater intelligence, though less experience, or application; others more experience, though they were less capable of taking general and just views; and so on. To admit therefore that what Sir Thomas Munro says must be true and worthy of adoption, and that what other persons individually or collectively say is erroneous, if it differs from Sir Thomas Munro's dicta, is to fetter our judgments in the discovery of new views, and of the truth respecting India. If his Majesty's Government is pleased to assume that it is not incumbent on the British nation to rule India, in such a manner as to advance the people to the greatest degree of knowledge and prosperity which it lies in our power to confer on them, then, the continuance of Sir Thomas Munro's plan is suited to the proof of their political proposition or axiom. But if we set out from a maxim the very reverse of what I have supposed, then, as it would be impossible to prove two opposite

propositions by the same reasoning, Sir Thomas Munro's plan, if continued, is not suited for effecting the prosperity and increase in knowledge and civilization of the people. The pretensions of Sir Thomas Munro, to maintaining by his plans "*the institutions*" of Indian society, ought to be judged of by what others have written respecting the amelioration of the condition of Polygaurs, Zemindaurs, and others, the local gentry, as well as from what he himself has urged, not only in favour of their abolition, but against their creation or continuance.

After what I have stated, it must be needless to enlarge on the other proofs that are on record, of the people of India having, in general, retrograded in prosperity in consequence of our acquisition of their country. It is possible that I may be in error as to the causes; but the effects cannot be mistaken. The people are indisputably reduced to a very low condition of human nature; their natural chiefs have disappeared, and no object of ambition is left for their attainment. "Rewards, the great spring "of human action, are excluded from the "scheme of our internal policy. When we kill, "it is by stifling."

I might here drop the subject, satisfied that, having described the condition of the people, and obtruded my opinions of the past and pre-

sent management of India, his Majesty and his ministers might devise a plan for securing the prosperity of the millions it contains, without much assistance from other persons; and it is indeed, generally speaking, true of politics as of medicine, that, when the cause of a distemper is discovered, it is not difficult to apply a suitable remedy. But, in regard to a foreign nation, to which we are desirous of preserving its own peculiar customs and laws, at the same time that we may "gradually and cautiously insinuate" wholesome innovations and reforms, it will be found that a consultation of physicians is required to examine the evidence of those who have seen and studied the patient in his paroxysms; and to determine, at least, the most palatable vehicle for the administration of whatever remedy is at length provided. I am no schemer: and my opinions on this important question are offered with becoming diffidence. Let Government consult eminent men of all classes who have been employed in Indian affairs; let it weigh and balance their opinions and recommendations; giving implicit confidence to none in particular, beyond what is challenged by their merits, *tried by the test of sound and humane principles.* The Court of Directors deserve the highest eulogium for the labour with which they have at times collected the opinions of their

officers in India; but it is singular how very few of these gentlemen have taken general views of the questions put to them. Perhaps, indeed, most of them did best to furnish merely the information, and to leave it to their superiors to digest and apply it. Solicitous to see Britain perform her duty to an immense portion of the human race, grovelling in chains at her feet, and hoping that my representations may reach that high quarter which can alone give a new and accurate impulse to the exertions of the public servants; I shall proceed to submit my humble mite of advice, trusting that, though limited to general recommendations, it may have some use: and if hereafter I find that it has done any good, I may be induced to fill up the outlines of some of the more complicated considerations which the subject involves.

And here let me remark on Sir Thomas Munro, whose name I have so often mentioned in connection with his own plan, that there is no man who has so ably handled many of the important questions respecting the government of India, as he himself has done in the twenty-second and following paragraphs of that admirable and statesman-like Minute, dated the 31st of December, 1824; a paper more glorious and honourable to his character than if he had never countenanced other less worthy and valid opi-

nions;—a paper in which he has, to a great extent, abandoned the legislating Mr. Thackeray and his sentiment, that in India are wanted only industrious husbandmen. This valuable document deserves the most deliberate attention of the Sovereign and his ministers. Were I to quote from it at all, I should extract a very great portion of it. Coming from Sir Thomas Munro's school, and from the lion himself, it carries with it a tenfold power of conviction of the propriety of pursuing that policy which I have been endeavouring to explain and recommend. This distinguished public officer has, I believe, been the first Indian Governor (Mr. Elphinstone, and he, at least, divide the honour between them) to lead the way in a liberal and just course of policy towards the natives of India, after he calculated and foresaw that our political existence is in little or no less danger from the people of that country reduced to bondsmen, than it would be were we to confer on them many of the benefits we have it in our power to bestow. His abundant humanity and benevolence had now made him eager to suggest and adopt whatever he saw would tend to the melioration of so many human beings; and I think it might not have been difficult, had he fortunately been still living, to convince his fine understanding that, in the unbending and universal application

of the Ryotwaur scheme, he had made a great mistake. It would indeed have been satisfactory to acquire his sentiments of administering the revenue-affairs of India, agreeably to views unshackled by the pledge by which he seems to have bound himself to support the Ryotwaur system. But there still remain many eminent and experienced men, whom his Majesty's ministers may consult. In the first rank are the sound and intelligent Sir Henry Strachey; the magnanimous, the just, the virtuous, Elphinstone, a gentleman whose views as a statesman, and whose conduct as a man, are stamped with the most admirable wisdom and kingly liberality. Let them be consulted. There are also Sir John Stuart, Lord William Bentinck, Mr. Colebrook, and a host, I may say, of others but little their inferiors, all well informed on Indian affairs, who have the ability and knowledge requisite to furnish solid and wise opinions. I had almost forgotten to mention Sir John Malcolm; but that gentleman has talked and written so much, that his own is perhaps the only eulogium or recommendation of which he may be ambitious.

The first point that should be clearly determined is, the policy to be pursued. Is it or is it not the intention of Government to advance the nations of India to as high a step of civilization as is consistent with the maintenance of our

political supremacy? I shall suppose that his Majesty's ministers do intend that their measures shall be suited to that end; and that they consider with me the following observations of Lord Bacon, peculiarly applicable to India. "The "matter of seditions is of two kinds, much "poverty, and much discontentment. It is cer- "tain so many overthrown estates are so many "votes for troubles. Lucan noteth well the "state of Rome before the Civil War,

> "'Hinc usura vorax, rupidumque in tempore fœnus,
> "'Hinc concussa fides, et multis utile bellum.'

"This same 'multis utile bellum' is an assured "and infallible sign of a state disposed to sedi- "tions and troubles; and if this poverty and "broken estate in the better sort be joined with "a want and necessity in the mean people, the "danger is imminent and great; for the re- "bellions of the belly are the worst."——"Let "no prince measure the danger of discontent- "ments by this, whether they be just or unjust: "for that were to imagine people to be too rea- "sonable, who do often spurn at their own good." This philosopher also says, "The surest way to "prevent seditions (if the times do bear it) is to "take away the matter of them, for if there be "fuel prepared, it is hard to tell whence the "spark shall come that shall set it on fire."

I shall then suppose that the object is to civilize the people of India, and in such a manner as, during the execution of the design, to secure our own supremacy unimpaired. And here let me protest against the specious maxims of some politicians, who would scare us with propositions about the necessity there is for abandoning the application of general truths and maxims to so singular a race of men as the inhabitants of India. What is true in Europe is true in Asia also. How cautiously soever we may proceed, it is undeniably true that we ought to work with the best instruments and materials here, as elsewhere, if we wish to make perfect our design. Cautiously acting upon true principles we are certain of success. Timorously and foolishly adopting expedients and palliatives, we may cover defects and diseases, but we shall never cure or eradicate them.

If the question were simply to civilize a people who had no institutions of their own, it could very easily be solved. But, in this case, we have not a block of marble to shape into any figure we please, but a ready-formed image badly sculptured to mould and polish, with the consent of hosts of jealous guardians, so as that it shall attain a high degree of beauty. We should first ascertain what there is of good in the institutions and manners of the people, and what there is of

bad. We ought to retain all that is good, and project plans for reforming what is bad. But these plans ought to be cautiously executed. Reforms must be insinuated, not insisted upon; otherwise the open hostility of those to be reformed will be the certain result. Our wisdom and firmness must be led blindfold by conciliation. If we advance a step without that guide, we shall be entangled in a labyrinth, or fall into a pit, from which all our wisdom will never extricate us. Taking the natives along with us, they will voluntarily work with our implements, and complete our design. Advancing without their concurrence, they will deprive us of the means, and probably destroy us for our attempt to benefit them. These cases are of course put in the extreme, but, knowing the best and the worst, we shall at least act with moderation and judgment. It is truly said by Lord Bacon that "it is the solecism of power to think to com-"mand the end, yet not to endure the means."

The natives, especially of the higher castes of Hindoos, and the Mahomedans, are eager to acquire learning. Their own, of course, they esteem and prefer, but they are now daily becoming more desirous, particularly Bramins, Kayets, Prabhoos, and Sonars, of learning what we know, and of fitting themselves to serve us by an acquaintance with our language and

government officer in a state of opposition to each other, producing thereby chicane on the one hand, and corruption on the other. It subverts the established order of society, by reducing all classes to the same level. It requires enormous civil establishments, and demands the agency of extraordinary talents, zeal, and integrity throughout every branch; and, lastly, it is a novel invasion of the ancient usages and institutions of the people.

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Part III

CHAP. III.

COMPARATIVE VIEW OF THE ANCIENT AND MODERN SYSTEMS.

THE ancient history and form of the Hindoo government have been examined; those of the Mahomedans have been explained; the revenue systems of the three Presidencies in India under our own government have been exposed; and, finally, a review of the arguments for revenue contracts, and for detailed management and land assessment, has been just laid before the reader, in which we find strong objections against every system that has been as yet attempted. It seems necessary to go a little farther, and to investigate upon what principles we have been hitherto acting, and what are the motives which actuate our government in supporting the present system—a system that has been, for the last eighteen or twenty years, so stoutly advocated by the legislators at home, and by some of those abroad.

I shall not stop to refute the doctrines of those who maintain "the danger * of admitting the proprietory right of individuals in the land;" nor of others who pretend that "the right of the state to tax at discretion the landholder, is undoubted and

* Grant on the Northern Circars: vide Appendix to 5th Report.

Reference to Alla-ood-Deen (Khiljee) p. 120 "we find ... imposing a land-tax equal to the value of half the produce".

undeniable*;" because I hope that better knowledge has since been obtained, and at all events that the evidences of Hindoo and Mahomedan law and practice, previously adduced in this work, have shown not only that private property does, and always has existed throughout the earliest ages in every field in India, but that our predecessors, whenever they professed to govern according to law, fixed a limit which, among the Hindoos, never exceeded a sixth in time of peace, and which, under the last Mahomedan governments, was restricted to a fourth of the value of the crop estimated on the actual produce.

Were these facts universally admitted, I should at once proceed to the discussion of the policy or otherwise of continuing our present plan of finance; but, so far from this being the case, it has been strenuously maintained that the land belongs to the sovereign†; and, in virtue of the doctrines and practice erroneously supposed to be derived from our predecessors, the government maintains the policy of taking from the cultivator the whole surplus produce.

That India has been, from the earliest ages, considered the most wealthy country with which the western world was acquainted, is a matter of simple

* Marquess Cornwallis's Minute, 1793: vide ut supra.

† "In the ceded districts, and throughout the Deccan, the ryot has little or no property in land: HE HAS NO POSSESSORY RIGHT: he does not even claim it." Col. Munro's Letter, 15th Aug. 1807.

history. It cannot be denied that when the Mahomedans invaded the country, and during the whole course of their campaigns of six centuries' duration, it every where afforded abundant plunder, for enriching those merciless bands, to the admiration of themselves and the whole world. The flourishing condition of the country, under the Mogul Emperors, is recorded by all the European travellers who have visited the east within the last three centuries; and the wealth, the population, and national prosperity of India, far surpassing what they had seen in Europe, filled them with astonishment. That the condition of the people and the country under our government presents no such spectacle, is every day proclaimed by ourselves, and we may therefore assume it to be true. If, as is asserted, it be correct that, in deriving all our revenue from the land, and leaving no surplus profit with the landholder, we have merely followed the practice of those governments under which India once flourished, it is clear we must seek for the cause of the great difference in the condition of the people in some other source: but if I have proved that we have departed from the practice of our predecessors—that we have established a system far exceeding theirs in rigour, even in the worst of their regular governments, then indeed there is some reason to call for a reform, and to hope at least for investigation.

The impartial reader will perhaps be satisfied with the evidence on this subject that has been

already laid before him; but the weight which attaches to great names, and the deference so naturally paid to commanding talents, extensive experience, and spotless integrity, have combined to render in some measure sacred, the opinions and sentiments of the late Sir Thomas Munro. That these sentiments should have met with consideration is not to be wondered at; but it is to be regretted that the statesmanlike opinions of the Revenue Boards and Councils of Madras and Bengal, so often recorded in opposition to the sentiments of the officer above mentioned, should have been so little regarded, when we consider the fundamental principles on which those opinions were grounded.

I am far from wishing to detract from the character of one whose name deserves to be held in such high veneration as the late lamented Governor of Madras; but it would be leaving my task unfinished, were I restrained, from my veneration for the individual, to suffer his opinions to stand on record and unrefuted, when perhaps the welfare of many millions of people may be at stake in their adoption.

The impracticability of fixing money assessments, equal to from thirty to forty per cent. of the gross produce, I have already shown; and I should have been content to proceed at once to seek for remedies, had not Sir Thomas Munro taken pains to show that the ryotwar system, as it exists, is calculated to lead to inestimable benefits. At the

same time, he has endeavoured to prove that the heavy imposts on the land, which I conceive are the cause of the present exhausted state of the country, have always existed in the same, or rather in a greater degree, under all the native governments, from time immemorial.

It appears, from the commencement of the document from which I shall have occasion to make some extracts, that the late Sir Thomas Munro framed a Minute in 1823, at a period when he was preparing to quit his government, but did not record it till the last day of 1824. This document is full of philanthropy, and contains many noble and amiable sentiments, and is particularly valuable as containing the latest opinions he entertained on the subject of our finance and on landed tenures generally.

He observes, "I do not expect that my remarks will contain much information. Their object is chiefly to show that we possess very little; to recommend our going on with patience and perseverance in acquiring more; and to inculcate the necessity of our avoiding every attempt to form any permanent system whatever, in the present very defective state of our knowledge.

"We are now masters of a very extensive empire; and we should endeavour to secure and improve it by a good internal administration. Our experience is too short to judge what rules are best calculated for this purpose.* It is only within

* An experience of sixty years, during which we have had the immediate rule over from thirty to ninety millions of people.

the last thirty years we have begun to acquire any practical knowledge: a longer period must probably elapse before we can ascertain what is best. Such a period is as nothing in the existence of a people; but we act as if this were as limited as the life of an individual. We proceed in a country of which we know little or nothing as if we knew every thing, and as if every thing must be done now and nothing hereafter. We feel our ignorance of Indian revenue, and the difficulties arising from it; and, instead of seeking to remedy it by acquiring more knowledge, we endeavour to get rid of the difficulty by precipitately making permanent settlements, which relieve us from the troublesome task of minute or accurate investigation, and which are better adapted to perpetuate our ignorance than to protect the people. We must not be led away by fanciful theories, founded on European models, which will inevitably end in disappointment. We must not too hastily declare any rights permanent, lest we give to one class what belongs to another. We must proceed patiently; and as our knowledge of the manners and customs of the people, and the nature and resources of the country, increases, frame gradually, from the existing institutions, such a system as may advance the prosperity of the country and be satisfactory to the people. The knowledge most necessary for this end is that of the landed property and its assessment; for the land is not only the great source of the public revenue, but on its fair and moderate

assessment depend the comfort and happiness of the people."

How can it be said that we are still in such a state of ignorance, regarding the tenures and institutions of the people, that we are yet unfit to legislate for them? Nearly forty years have been employed in obtaining information. To the indefatigable labours of Colonel Read and his coadjutors, among whom was Sir Thomas Munro himself, we are indebted for the most perfect statistical information—information which the Madras Board of Revenue declares to be "as complete as that of any country gentleman of his own estate;" and if we look at the nature of the investigations which have been made, and are now lying before the government, the Board is fully justified in the assertion.

The Board, according to Sir Thomas Munro *, "suppose that the land assessment, under the Hindoo government, was low. That the Mahomedan exactions converted the Hindoo tax into a land rent, reduced the landlord to a land occupant who ceased to employ tenants, and restricted himself to such land as he could cultivate with his own servants; and then government transferred the vacant land to strangers temporarily, and more often permanently." Sir Thomas Munro adds, "but there is no proof whatever of this former state of light assessment, of the time when it existed, when the change began, or when it reached its present standard." Assertion, however, can-

* Revenue Selections, vol. ii. p. 607.

not be allowed to stand in the place of proof. In order to bring this part of the argument to issue, we can only place the various evidences already adduced on one side, and Sir Thomas Munro's opinion on the other. In support of this same doctrine, he observes: "Had the public assessment, as pretended, ever been, as in the books of their sages *, only a sixth, or a fifth, or even only a fourth of the gross produce, the payment of a fixed share in kind, and all the expensive machinery requisite for its superintendence, never could have been wanted." Sir Thomas Munro has failed to exhibit the expensive machinery to which he alludes. There is in fact LITTLE MACHINERY requisite: the corn is divided, the revenue is calculated according to the price of the market, and the farmer pays his money; or, in most instances, an intermediate broker undertakes to pay a certain sum of money, and takes the sale of the corn into his own hands. The simplicity of the whole proceeding is well explained by Mr. Prendergast, in his Minutes in the Bombay council.† "It was," says Sir Thomas Munro, "because the assessment was not moderate that assessments in kind were introduced, or continued." But in ancient Greece and Rome, where the assessment did not exceed *one tenth of the produce*, the revenue was paid in kind. In China, where the assess-

* The sages alluded to probably are Menu, Vidyaranya, and the several celebrated law works, whose evidence is thus tauntingly alluded to.

† Vide Part II. Bombay, pp. 308, 399.

ment does not at present exceed *one tenth of the produce*, the revenue is paid in kind. In Venice, where the assessment does not exceed three per cent. of the produce, the revenue is regulated according to the produce. In England, owing to the fluctuation and value of the crops, many great landed proprietors have been obliged to have recourse to corn rents, because payments IN MONEY were too unequal; and the same reason prevails for the continuation of a similar practice in Scotland, Sir Thomas Munro's native country. A revenue levied according to produce, therefore, is no proof that the tax must necessarily be heavy. I shall hereafter show, that Doctor Smith asserts a tax regulated on that principle is better suited for durability than any other land-tax; and its duration in India and China, till the present day, verifies the assertion. It is recorded that the ancient Hindoo land-tax did not exceed one sixth: tradition even limits the demand *to one tenth;* and experience shows us, in Ceylon, Travancore, Cochin, and the little principality of Coorg on the Malabar coast, that *one tenth only is still* exacted by those governments. To Sir Thomas Munro these afford no proofs of a light assessment. But what says he himself: "* On our accession to the province, (of Canara) the ancient land-tax of the Hindoos was estimated at 361,802 pagodas, and the extra assessments by the Bednore government and Hyder Ally raised it 579,715 pagodas. Tippoo's assess-

* Major Munro's Report, 31st May 1800.

ment exceeded six lacs. His* (Sir Thomas Munro's) settlement for the first year after our acquisition, Fusly 1209 (1799-1800), was 440,630 pagodas, being still an increase on the rekha (Hindoo tax) of about 34 per cent.; but about a lac and thirty-nine thousand pagodas below the rekha and shamil of Hyder." Thus it appears from *the statement* of Sir Thomas Munro, submitted to the Revenue Board in 1800, that he himself fixed the assessment of Canara 34 per cent. higher than that of the Hindoo government, though it was still 25 per cent. lower than that of the Mahomedans.†

It is in the face of these proofs, of which he is himself one of the witnesses, that Sir Thomas Munro proceeds to say, "I never could discover the least foundation for the assumption that the Hindoo assessment had been raised by the Mahomedan conquest, or for believing that the assessment which we now find did not exist before that period. We find the assessment as high in the territories of Hindoo as of Mahomedan chiefs. Among the only Hindoo chiefs unsubdued by the Mahomedans, the Rajas of Ceylon, Travancore, Cochin, and Coorg, the land-tax is still but ten per

* Minute Board of Revenue, 5th Jan. 1818.

† Sir Thomas (then Major) Munro's Report, dated 31st May 1800, will be found in the Appendix to the 5th Report. In that document he distinctly states, that although the Bednore government made some addition to the ancient assessment, that made it, according to calculation, appear like one fourth, yet in reality the assessment was nearer one sixth than one fourth when Hyder invaded the country in 1762.

cent. How can it be said, then, that the assessment always was and is as high in the territories of Hindoo as of Mahomedan chiefs? Again:—"* This cannot have been owing to the progress of the Mahomedan arms, because over many of the petty states they never established more than a nominal dominion, nor ever assumed the management of their revenue." And he goes on to exemplify this reasoning by referring to "the chieftains of the Northern Circars, descended from the ancient sovereigns of Orissa, and the Rajas of the Upper and Lower Carnatic."

For nearly two hundred years before our intercourse with these Hindoo chiefs, they had been the prey of the Mahomedan kingdom of Hydrabad. Scarcely a year passed without a campaign, the object of which was to subdue them, and seldom ended without the imposition of a heavy tribute. How was this demand to be met by the Hindoo chiefs but by having recourse to their landholders? Benevolences, contributions, and finally imposts, were levied, either to defray Mahomedan tribute, or to resist Mahomedan invasion. These imposts, so often renewed, gradually became permanent; and the increase of the land-tax in those Hindoo states not absolutely governed by Mahomedan rulers was occasioned by Mahomedan warfare.

Sir Thomas Munro, assuming that real pro-

* Minute by Sir Thomas Munro, 31st Dec. 1824.

perty exists but rarely in India, observes *, "But private landed property † is of slow growth in countries where it has not previously existed, and where the government revenue is nearly half the produce; and we must not expect that it can be hastened by regulations or forms of settlement, or by any other way than by adhering steadily to a limited assessment, and lowering it wherever, after full experience, it may still, in particular places, be found too high. By pursuing this course, or, in other words, by following what is now called the ryotwar system, we shall see no sudden change or improvement. The progress of landed property will be slow, but we may look with confidence to its ultimate and general establishment."

I leave it to the reader to judge at what period land, paying a permanent land-tax in money, equivalent to nearly half of the produce, will arrive at that state to become real property.

Thirty years have passed away in the ceded districts since Sir Thomas Munro's assessment, but there have been yet no symptoms of its formation. Sir Thomas asserts, "This long continuance (thirty-six years) of a known and fixed assessment has begun to introduce saleable private landed property into the Baramahl, where it was never known before.

"*In many Mootahs* ‡ several fields are saleable, and in some every field is so."

* Minute by Sir Thomas Munro, 31st Dec. 1824.

† My enquiries have not enabled me to discover any country where private landed property does not exist—even in Turkey.

‡ A division of villages, the land-tax of which is farmed to a contractor, to whom all waste lands are also consigned in perpetuity.

It is not, then, under the ryotwar system that any such improvement has yet taken place, but in the Mootah or Zemindarry system, where a quantity of waste land is made over to a farmer of revenue, who is competent to sell it or rent it at what rate he pleases. He may also find it his interest, as no doubt he would, to lower * the "*limited assessment;*" for though limited it be, it amounts, even according to Sir Thomas Munro, to nearly half the produce, and very frequently to much more. This limited assessment, or *maximum*, as it is also called, is the favourite standard of Sir Thomas Munro, nor can he be brought to admit the validity of any proofs to the contrary. The evidences of the present condition of the unconquered Hindoo states; the laws of Menu and Vidyaranya; the institutes of Akbur; the history of the Rajas of Vijayanagar; the numerous deeds of sale of land in the south of India, all pass away as nothing in the scale of evidence; and he broadly asserts, that "there is no proof whatever of light assessment, of the time when it existed, when the change began, or when it reached its present standard." But he is equally incredulous regarding the Mahomedans. In a plan for making a permanent

* Since writing this I have been informed by Mr. Hodgson, that the assessment of Baramahl has every where been lowered by the Mootahdars, or revenue contractors, which at once accounts for the land becoming saleable.

ryotwar settlement in the ceded districts, Colonel Munro applies his theory of the right to take half the crop for the government, opposing himself, as usual, to recorded history.*

"† The assessment of Akbur is estimated by Abul Fuzl at one third, and by others at one fourth, of the gross produce‡; *but it was undoubtedly higher than either of these rates.*" His mode of refutation of this historical evidence is singular: "for," adds he, "had it not been so, enough would have remained to the ryot, after defraying all expenses, to render the land private property; and as this did not take place, *we may be certain that the nominal one fourth, or one third, was nearly one half.*" In order to bear out this reasoning, it would be necessary to prove, in the first instance, that by only taking one third or one fourth of the crop, the land would become private property; and, secondly, that it did not become so: but the proof rests on bare assertion. Sir Thomas Munro was never in his life, I believe, in any part of the country which formed the dominion of Akbur. It is more than two centuries since that monarch reigned; and it is notorious that his successors abandoned the light assessment (such as it was) that he wished to establish. The argument, however, is not at an end. Sir Thomas Munro proceeds to say, "This (an assessment

* Appendix, 5th Report, p. 941.
† Col. Munro's Letter, 25th August 1807.
‡ One third if taken in grain, one fourth if taken in money.

equal to one half of the crop) seems to have been the opinion of Aurungzeeb; for he directs that not more than one half of the crop shall be taken from the ryot. It is evident that AURUNGZEEB THOUGHT that one half was, in general, enough for the ryot; and that he ought in no case to have above two thirds." Sir Thomas Munro also agreed with Aurungzeeb; but being more liberally disposed, he recommends to the Madras government, that, instead of making his first assessment of 45 per cent. of the crop permanent, the public demand should be limited in future to one third, that is to the whole of the landlord's profit — the standard from which the government conceives no material evil can accrue, if limited to that point. Now it is singularly unfortunate for the argument, that, according to history, Aurungzeeb, the great-grandson of Akbur, notoriously departed from the policy and institutes of his great ancestor. He adopted the cruel and unjust system of Alla-ood-deen; he persecuted his Hindoo subjects; he imposed a poll-tax on them, which had long been abolished; and, by his exorbitant exactions on the land, he sowed the seeds of that revolution among the Hindoo states which laid his mighty empire in ruins in a few years, and subverted for ever the dominion of the Great Mogul, the monarch of a hundred millions of subjects.

It was long, as I have before shown, a favourite maxim of the ryotwar school, that the land was the exclusive property of the sovereign. Sir

Thomas Munro, in early life, asserted it*; and gave it as his opinion, that in the Deccan, at all events, it reverted to the sovereign at the end of each year. But in the celebrated Minute of 31st December, 1824, he states, "It has been supposed by some that the Zemindars were the landlords or proprietors, and the ryots their under-tenants or labourers; and by others (among whom was Sir Thomas himself), that the sovereign was the sole landlord, and the ryots the mere cultivating tenants. BUT THE RYOT IS THE REAL PROPRIETOR; for whatever in the land does not belong to the sovereign, belongs to him."

This admission of the proprietory right in the ryot, with the qualification, is absolutely worth nothing, if the portion belonging to the sovereign be not so limited as to leave the proprietor something beyond his food. At all events the assertion, though vague, is in opposition to that unqualified claim of yore which made the sovereign the sole proprietor, and which has been attempted to be proved out of the mouth of the venerable Menu himself, the legislator and the defender of his country's rights.

It was erroneously maintained by Sir Thomas Munro and others†, that in the institutes Menu has ordained a fine to be imposed on the husbandman for not sowing his land; and on this circum-

* Vide note p. 392. Colonel Munro's letter, 15th August 1807.

† Vide Wilks's Mysore, vol. i. chap. 5.

stance an argument was founded of the proprietory right of the sovereign in the soil. The learned author of the History of Mysore has sufficiently combated the error of this conclusion, by pointing to the laws of Greece and Rome, wherein the cultivators were urged to till their lands, because a portion of the produce formed a part of the revenue of the state; but it is unfair, he observes, to conclude therefore that private lands belonged to the state. In the present instance, however, there is not a shadow of foundation for drawing such a conclusion. The passage alluded to in the institutes is thus translated by Sir William Jones:—"If land be injured by the fault of the farmer himself, *as if he fails to sow it in due time,* he shall be fined ten times as much as the *king*'s share *of the crop that might otherwise have been raised;* but only five times as much if it was the fault of his servants, without his knowledge." This passage occurs in the eighth chapter; but in the original there is no reference whatsoever to the sowing of land. The words in Italics are the interpolation of the commentator, which Sir William Jones very judiciously caused to be so printed, to distinguish that passage from the text.

In order to understand the bearing of the above passage, it is necessary to take the context.*

"229. I NOW will decide, exactly according to principles of law, the contests usually arising from

* Institutes of Menu, chapter viii.

the faults of such as own herds of cattle, and of such as are hired to keep them."

The subsequent verses advert to the duties of the herdsmen and their owners towards each other. At length we have a description of the boundary hedges of villages, for the protection of cultivation from such cattle.

"V. 240.* Should cattle, attended by a herdsman, do mischief near a highway, in an enclosed field, or near the village, he shall be fined a hundred panas†; but against cattle which have no keeper let the owner of the field secure it.

"V. 241. In other fields, the *owner of* cattle *doing mischief* shall be fined one *pana* and a quarter; but in all places the *value of the damaged* grain must be paid: such is the fixed rule concerning a husbandman.

"V. 242. For damage done by a cow before ten days have passed since her calving, by bulls kept for impregnation, and by cattle consecrated to the Deity, whether attended or unattended, Menu has ordained no fine.

"243. ‡ If *damage be done* by the fault of the farmer, the fine ought to be decuple for each; but if owing to servants, the farmer being ignorant, then shall the fine be half.

* Chapter viii. † Fanams.

‡ The following are the words of the text, literally translated:

Kshetrikasyà tyaye dando bhâgâd dashaguno bhavet:
Of the farmer if by the fault the fine for each decuple ought to be:
tato addhadando bhrityânâm ajnânât kshetrikasyà tu.
then half the fine by the servants in the ignorance of the farmer but if.

"244. These rules let a just prince observe in all cases of transgression by masters, their cattle, and their herdsmen.

Thus, it appears, in the original text there is no allusion made to sowing of fields at all: the law has reference solely to their protection, or to the injury to which they are liable from cattle. The passage refers to the fine to be imposed on the cattle of husbandmen trespassing on fields, in distinction to the cattle of graziers; and Menu therefore imposes ten times the fine on farming cattle which he does on the cattle of graziers, and the reason is obviously to prevent husbandmen allowing their cattle to graze down their neighbours' crops. It is to be hoped we shall hear no more such futile arguments against the validity of real property.*

I have fulfilled a painful task, in endeavouring to expose the fallacy of the opinions of one for whose memory I cherish a very high regard; but when I consider the paramount duty we owe to the millions whose interests hang on the decision of the legislature, whether landlords shall or shall not be suffered to exist in India, personal respect for the individual must give way to the welfare of nations. Were it admitted that the people of India have, from time immemorial, flourished under such a system as prevails under our government, in vain

* While correcting this proof-sheet, I have found an able refutation of a similar passage on the same subject by a native revenue officer of Madras.

should we endeavour to better their condition; but I conscientiously believe that under no government whatever, either Hindoo or Mahomedan, professing to be actuated by law, was any system so subversive of the prosperity of the people at large as that which has marked our administration.

Let it not be supposed, however, that I mean to reflect on the good intentions of any of those who have legislated for India; I believe never were motives more pure than those which have actuated all who have rendered themselves conspicuous in the East or in the West. We have, however, been acting in ignorance and darkness. History has been disregarded or misunderstood: interested persons have deceived some, while others have shut their ears to advice rather than wait to receive it. Had Mr. Hastings and Sir John Macpherson been suffered to prosecute their investigations, had the voice of Lord Teignmouth been attended to, we might have become well informed forty years ago; but the hasty project of a statesman, inexperienced in the history and institutions of India, laid the foundation for a system surrounded with difficulties, from which I fear it is scarcely possible to disengage ourselves. The revenue schemes of Madras have hitherto failed, and the province of Guzerat alone, in all India, seems to form the Oasis in this desert of error. To the discreet forbearance and long experience of Mr. Jonathan Duncan I ascribe the flourishing condition of that district, and, in general, to the unwillingness of

his successors to alter existing institutions, which appear to have been more respected under the Bombay Presidency than under any other of our Indian governments.

The foregoing statements, so far from impugning the merits of our administration, only show the extraordinary difficulties we have to encounter; difficulties which the fullest and most impartial investigation of facts can alone tend to remove. It is one among other proofs of the necessity of our comprehending every part of the subject before we venture to encroach on the ancient institutions of the country *, —institutions which, by a powerful writer, have been compared to a magnificent pile of building, "a fabric neither without shape nor beauty, but of which many parts are in a dilapidated state, and all more or less soiled or decayed. Still it is a whole, and connected in all its parts: the foundations are deep laid, and, to the very summit, arch rests upon arch. We are now," says the author, "its possessors; and, if we desire to preserve while we improve it, we must make ourselves masters of the frame of the structure, to its minutest ornaments and defects: nor must we remove the smallest stone till another is ready to fill the vacant niche; otherwise we may inadvertently bring a ruin upon our own heads and those of others, on that spot where we too eagerly sought to erect a monument of glory."

* Sir John Malcolm's instructions to his assistants.

THE LAND TAX AND FAMINES IN INDIA.

[WHO ARE THE PROPRIETORS OF THE SOIL OF INDIA?]

(*From Alexander's East India and Colonial Magazine, No.* 98.)

THIS important subject was brought under the consideration of the governing powers in this country, on the 19th Dec., at the usual quarterly Court of Proprietors of the East India Company. We rejoice to find that the Court of Proprietors will probably be made the arena for discussions on the affairs of India—and that thus truth will be elicited and information will be diffused, which may tend to bring into due notice one of the most important sections of the British Empire. We have long lamented the apathy that exists in this country on Indian subjects, and no where is it more observable than in the Court of Proprietors of the East India Company, who, it would seem, deem their sole duty is, to receive dividends of ten per cent. on a doubled capital, without the least political, social, or moral obligation to attend to the condition of a country, on whose well-being, not only their dividends, but their capital is dependant.

We do not intend, at present, to advert to the necessity of the Court of Proprietors taking an active share in debates on subjects for the consideration of which that Court was constituted, unless they would wish to excite, in the moral and religious portion of the community, a strong and determined opposition to the present construction of the Anglo-Indian Government.

The base of all social improvement in India, depends on the Land Tax; there can be no prosperity in a country unless the people be enabled to consider the soil as their own; so long as a Government sets up the monstrous doctrine—that it is the proprietor of every acre of ground, and can let it out to cultivators, or middle-men, at annual or more extended leases, there can be no social edifice,—no structure on which the people can build private right or general happiness. With this feeling—a feeling based, we trust, on sound political economy and Christian principles—we proceed to give, as nearly as possible, the substance of the important debate above alluded to.

Mr. Montgomery Martin stated truly at the onset, that the subject was one of vital interest, not only to the East India Company, but also to England, and its continued connection with India. His object was, to treat of the system under which India had heretofore been treated, and not to the individuals who had conducted that system; —"For," said the Hon. Proprietor, "the records of no Government ever presented such an aggregate of virtue, talent, and valour, as was displayed by the civil and military servants of the East India Company. But, although they had 'tempered the wind to the shorn lamb,' their very goodness had tended to uphold and extend a system of land taxation which would otherwise have been unendurable, and long since abandoned." Mr. Martin dwelt at considerable length, on the "reputed prosperity of India," and demonstrated most fully the utter fallacy of an assertion,—fraught with the greatest danger, because it was a concealed one. He pointed to the failure of six houses in Calcutta, in 1831-32, for £20,000,000, of which not five shillings in the pound would be realized,—to the general fall of prices throughout India, caused by the power of consumption being, from extensive impoverishment, inadequate to agricultural production,—to the lowness of wages and the high rate of interest of money; a proof, on the one hand, of individual poverty, and, on the other, of insecurity of property,—to the astounding fact, that nine-tenths of the people are obliged, at certain seasons, to borrow the grain for their daily food, for which they have to pay 50 per cent., and for their seed corn, 100 per cent.,—to the diminished custom duties, internal and maritime,—to the decaying revenues (except where the land tax was fixed),—to the degrading and disgusting slavery which prevails under the Madras and Bombay Governments; —to the reduced commerce which we carry on with 100,000,000 of people inhabiting a country whose earth, air, and soil teems with wealth,—to the falling off of the shipping of the country,—to the neglect of public works,—the destruction and decay of almost every species of manufacture in India, the muslins of Dacca, the brocades of Benares, the shawls and jewellery of Delhi, &c.,—to the disaffection and discontent now pervading every part of British India; among the Coles in Orissa and Benares, the Coorgs in Canara, the Dooplas in Assam, the Bheels and Shekawattees in Assam; and the hostile attitude of all our neighbours, who, knowing the state of feeling among our subjects, are only waiting for a favorable moment to spread themselves over our territories.

These, and other subjects, such as the extensive emigration of the unfortunate Coolies, and the periodical famines and pestilences which desolate British India, completely refuted the assertion of prosperity.

Mr. Martin read a list of the famines that have desolated India from the earliest times, shewing that famines have been more frequent during the British rule than while the Hindoos were under Mahomedan sway. One striking fact elicited, was—that Bengal was several times desolated by famine during the Moslem and British rule—(the famine of 1770-71 destroying nearly half the inhabitants),—but since the formation of the permanent settlement of the land tax, by the Marquis Cornwallis, in 1793, there has not been a single famine, while every other part of India has been several times attacked with this scourge. "If," says Mr. Martin, "it be asserted, that the great quantity of rain which falls in Bengal renders that country less liable to famine than the North Western Provinces, where rain is more uncertain, that is a still further claim for fixing the land tax in the N. W. Provinces, in order that the people may obtain a surplus of capital for investiture in wells, tanks, bunds, &c., in order to provide for irrigation." The picture drawn by Mr. Martin, of the famine now desolating the N. W. Provinces, was most painful: its extent over 40,000 square miles of country, among 20,000,000 inhabitants, of whom at least 500,000 have perished: but as these distressing accounts are familiar to most of our readers, we need not recapitulate the heart-rending details. It would be beyond our limits to follow Mr. Martin through the whole of his arguments; he quoted a variety of official facts in support of his assertions, and observed, that he was only prevented from entering more fully into the subject, on account of the position in which England at this moment stood, with every nation in the world, in secret hostility, and into whose hands he did not wish to put weapons of offence.

The commercial injustice which the Legislature of Great Britain inflicted on India, under the pretence of free trade, was strongly commented on, and most deservedly reprobated.

In 1816, England compelled India to receive British woollens, hard-ware, &c., free of duty, and Lancashire cotton goods, &c., at 2½ per cent. duties; while the cotton and silk goods of India, when attempted to be brought into England were stopped by duties of 30 per cent.,—coffee, 100 per cent.,—Indian sugar, by 100 to 150,—rum and spirits, 200,—pepper, 500,—and tobacco, 1,000 per cent. And, while British shipping entered the ports of India as they do

those of Ireland, India-built shipping was virtually excluded from England. Well might Mr. Martin exclaim,—"Dare England act thus to a free and independent nation?" The assumed claim of the proprietorship of the soil was, of course, forcibly dwelt on; the absurdity of the Court of Directors declaring, in one despatch, that they did not wish to "revive the doctrine of the sovereignty of the soil, either *de facto* or *de jure*;" and, in their next despatch, gravely directing their Governments that,—"they could do no harm if they abstained from taking more than the *net* produce of the land," was well pointed out. Mr. Martin clearly shewed that the Jews, the Turks, the Greeks, Romans, Persians, Chinese, Burmese, &c., never took more than one-fifth of the produce, while the East India Company exacted nominally half the produce, but, from obliging the farmer to convert his produce into a money tax, it amounts to 70, 80, and 90 per cent. of the crop. Sir Thomas Munro's famous Ryot war settlement, which cost £640,000, and which, he stated, would admit of being collected without the aid of a single sepoy,—after 20 years' standing was found, by Sir Thomas Munro, when he went out to Madras, as Governor, to have fallen off one-third, and now, in 1838, there is a Commission appointed, with Mr. Cotton at its head, to investigate the continued decrease.

The instructions which the Court of Directors have recently sent out to the Bombay Government, to annul certain exemptions which had been made in favor of lands on which cotton and Mauritius sugar-cane was growing, was pointed out by Mr. Martin, not only as a proof of reduced resources, but that cotton and sugar could not become articles for general use, under the present system. The resumption of the rent-free lands—a measure as impolitic as it is unjust, received merited condemnation. Mr. Martin shewed that it was by means of the rent-free lands that the farmers were alone enabled to pay the taxes on the cultivated lands; and declared, that even Lord Cornwallis's permanent settlement could not have been sustained, but for the profit derived from the rent-free lands in Bengal.

We quite agree with Mr. M., that the Hindoos were much more prosperous and happy under their own Princes; aye, and under their Moslem conquerors, than they are under the British; for it is a disgrace to us, as Mr. M. justly observed, to read the discussions, now going on among the Indian Councils, in their newspapers, as to the suffering they would be relieved from, if France or Russia, or any other power, were to drive out the British; "for," as stated by the Hon.

Proprietor, "although we have given them political security, they are fast becoming a nation of beggars." The breach of faith with the people of the N. W. Provinces (the speaker correctly observed), relative to the granting of a permanent settlement, is fast alienating from us the brave inhabitants of Rohilcund and the Doab, and it would be unnatural to expect that those poor creatures, who have escaped from the recent famines, would be desirous of aiding the English against the Russians or Afghans, or against any power which would hold forth a promise of a permanent settlement on the land.

The neglect of advancing the Natives to offices of emolument and honor, was another point dwelt on by the speaker, who alluded to Madras—the capital of a kingdom, containing 15,000,000 inhabitants, the city itself, with a population of 400,000—of which we have had possession 200 years; and yet but recently, as an act of great liberality, we have appointed three Natives as Justices of the Peace! Either this speaks much against the Natives, or against their Rulers.

These were the leading points of Mr. Martin's speech; he was seconded by Sir Charles Forbes, Bart., the long tried, ardent, benevolent, and beneficent advocate for the Natives of India. Sir Charles fully confirmed Mr. Martin's statement, and declared that he would rather live under the Mahomedan than under the British Government in India. The worthy Baronet alluded to the statement made to Sir Thomas Munro, by a Native, when asked what was the difference betweeen the Moslem and English sway, namely,—that the former never allowed any money to remain in the pockets of the Hindoos, but the latter never allowed any to get in; which, Sir Charles observed, was "six of one and half-a-dozen of the other." But it is not exactly so,—for there must have been pleasure derived from the acquisition of the money, which pleasure, under the English sway, is denied to the Hindoos; we can, therefore, quite participate in Mr. Martin's feelings, when he stated that he would rather suffer any death, however ignominious, than be a subject of Great Britain, in India, where the land tax is not fixed.

Colonel Sykes, whose local experience in the Deccan, renders his testimony the more valuable, corroborated several of Mr. Martin's statements; proved that neither the Hindoo nor Mahomedan Rulers ever claimed or exercised the Proprietorship of the soil;—that there were not merely 40 local taxes on the land, independent of the 45 per cent., but *sixty* (*puttees*) extra cesses. Sir Jeremiah Bryant gave his testimony in favor of the strong desire which the brave inhabitants of the North Western Provinces are expressing up to the present day for the fulfilment of the solemn pledge of Government that a permanent settlement should be established; and which pledge has now for

nearly 40 years been left unratified. The gallant Officer also hoped that the serious and important question of the resumption of the rent free-lands would, in all its bearings, be brought under the consideration and judgment of the British public. There was not the shadow of any real argument offered in opposition to Mr. Martin's motion; the Chairman lost his temper, and endeavoured to put Mr. Martin down—and, failing in that, used language towards the Honorable Proprietor, which we feel assured nothing but a strong degree of respect for the Court, and an impression that the gallant officer was led away by the warmth of his feelings, prevented Mr. Martin rebuking as it deserved. One of the objections used by the Chairman, that Mr. Martin treated the subject as a statesman, by entering into all its collateral bearings—was praise, but not censure. The objection of Mr. Weeding, that the speech of Mr. Martin was more that of "the Prime Minister of a Native Prince in India, than of a member of the Court of Proprietors of the East India Company," was (though not intended as such) the gravest charge that could be brought against the Court. Mr. Weeding's assertion that the documents for which Mr. Martin moved were already printed by Parliament, showed his ignorance of the subject on which he ventured to speak, as did also his assertion that the Hindoo and Mahomedan Sovereigns of India claimed the Proprietorship of the soil of India,—an allegation refuted by Colonel Sykes. The answer to Mr. Martin's query, what has been done for the Natives of India since the Charter, was most feebly answered by saying, that the Transit duties had been abolished. Why, they ought to have been abolished 40 years ago,—they did not pay the expense of collection—and the Government sought its own interest in their abolition. Then, as to the assertion of the Chairman, that the Court had sent out instructions to grant long leases to the farmers and land occupants (unfortunately we cannot say landlords)—by what right do the Court of Directors of the East India Company dare to arrogate to themselves the Proprietorship of a Country nearly as large as all Europe, and undertake to lease it out to some millions of tenants? The Charter granted by Parliament in 1833, never contemplated delegating to the East India Company such a monstrous power; nor indeed could any Parliament, or any authority on earth, give to the East India Company millions upon millions of tilled land, which for countless ages has belonged to the residents and occupiers of the soil. This, however, is too important a subject

to be discussed here, and we shall recur to it: in the meantime we recommend to the landed Association now formed at Calcutta by the Natives, to make this one of the prominent features of their Society; to teach their countrymen that resistance to such an assumption to the claim of the Proprietorship of the soil either *de facto* or *de jure*, by the East India Company, whether by resuming the rent-free lands,—by putting such a rate of taxation on the cultivable soil as to leave no more than a bare subsistence for the cultivator, and destroys all rent to any but the Government,—or, by professing to have the power to grant leases for short or long periods—that resistance to such a monstrous assumption becomes a duty, and acquiescence in it a crime. Let the statement of Mr. Martin be reflected on; namely, that in sixty years, from 1778 to 1838, a handful of Englishmen have levied from the soil of India by taxes and imposts, £1,000,000,000 sterling!—remember that this is *principal* not with interest;—that of this sum one-fifth has been remitted to England, which, if left in India, would at compound interest have amounted to nearly the same sum as the national debt of England (£800,000,000.) What, as Mr. Martin asks, have the Hindoos received for this? The reply of "good Government" is answered by the facts mentioned in the preceding parts of this article; by the general impoverishment of India—by the famines, pestilences, and discontent now pervading that beautiful land. Instead of blaming the Honorable Proprietor for bringing this question before the Court, and entreating the Company even to commence doing justice to India ere it be too late to begin,—Mr. Martin is deserving the thanks of all who wish well to India, and who desire the continuance of our connection with those vast and fertile regions of the Eastern hemisphere. Mr. Martin truly observed that there is no danger so bad as a *concealed* danger, and that we have nothing to dread from Russia, from the Nepaulese, the Burmese, &c., so long as we act with common justice to our own subjects. We trust that both the Court of Directors and Proprietors, although they have for the present negatived Mr. Martin's motion, will attend to that gentleman's earnest entreaties—which, as Sir Charles Forbes assured them, had for their object the real and permanent welfare of India. We would recommend Mr. Martin to persist in the course he has begun in the India House; let him try what the Board of Control and her Majesty's Ministers will do for India; if he fails in both, let him appeal to the good sense and moral feeling of the religious portion of the people of

the United Kingdom, for as Mr. M. justly observes,—our conduct in Hindostan has brought shame and disrepute on the sacred name of the faith we profess. There are many individuals in this country who would cheerfully aid in forming a "*Hindoo Emancipation Society*," and which would doubtless procure redress for the East even more effec tually than has been done for the West Indies. Mr. M. adverted to this at the close of his speech; he implored the Court to take time by the forelock, and not to compel the people of this country to raise an excitement respecting India, which might end in disastrous consequences for the East India Company; many, indeed, would rather that India were at once separated from England, than continue, as she is at present, until a sanguinary contest should terminate the connexion—but not before oceans of blood had been shed, and incalculable misery consummated. How melancholy is the reflection that Governments often grant to fear what they refuse to justice; if the friends of India cannot obtain from the East India Company that redress for the grievances of the Hindoos which they now patiently, quietly, and constitutionally seek—they will be compelled to resort to other measures.

With a Free Press in India (as now existing) appeals can be made from England to the Natives—translated into their own languages, and widely disseminated. The "*British Hindoo Emancipation Society*" would soon collect funds, as did the "*Negro Emancipation Society*," to send missionaries and agents into every part of Hindostan to teach the people their rights, and assist them in their obtainment. If Mr. Martin, and the Quakers and others who act with him, cannot therefore prevent the continuance of the famines and pestilence now annually destroying countless thousands of our fellow subjects, they must—nay, we say they ought as Christians, to resort to a moral organization here and in India, which would compel justice being done. There is no occasion for violence; on the contrary—all tendency to violence should be seduously avoided,—and argument, persuasion, and moral means be alone used.

Let us fain hope, however, that there be no occasion to seek this *dernier resort*;—that the fatal delusion of "Indian Prosperity" will be exploded, and that men of all parties, and of every shade of feeling, will forget the past, and combine with generous emulation and in cordial efforts for the welfare of that which has been rightly called "the brightest gem of the British diadem."

Ireland — Church 3

THE

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

I.—WHY SHOULD THE KING MAINTAIN A CHURCH WHERE THERE IS NO CONGREGATION?

II.—WHY SHOULD HE EXACT TITHE TO MAINTAIN THE PRIESTS OF SUCH CHURCH FROM PERSONS WHO DIFFER FROM IT?

IN

A LETTER OF INSTRUCTION

TO

THE PEOPLE, SENATORS, AND LORDS MORPETH AND J. RUSSELL,

ON THE

IRISH CHURCH BILLS.

BY A CATHOLIC PRIEST OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

Author of The Church's Revenues.

The Rev.d Mr. Glover. when writing this was Rector of Charlton in Devon.

"Qui, cedo, Rempublicam vestram tantam amisistis tam cito?
"Proveniebant Oratores novi, stulti, adolescentuli."

Cicero, De Senectute.

"Read, not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider."

Lord Bacon.

Second Edition.

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1835.

'This quality of condition, in respect to wealth in land; this general distribution of the soil among a yeomanry, therefore, if it be not most adapted to agricultural improvement, is best adapted to attain improvement, in the state of property, manners, and institutions, which prevail in India; and it will be found still more adapted to the situation of the country, governed by a few strangers, where pride, high ideas, and ambitious thoughts must be stifled. It is very proper that in England, a good share of the produce of the earth should be appropriated to support certain families in affluence, to produce senators, sages, and heroes for the service and defence of the state, or, in other words, that great part of the rent should go to an opulent nobility and gentry, who are to serve their country in Parliament, in the army and navy, in the departments of science and liberal professions. The leisure, independence, and high ideas, which the enjoyment of this rent affords, has enabled them to raise Britain to the pinnacle of glory. Long may they enjoy it;—but in India, that haughty spirit, independence, and deep thought, which the possession of great wealth sometimes gives, ought to be suppressed. They are directly adverse to our power and interest. The nature of things, the past experience of all governments, renders it unnecessary to enlarge on this subject. We do not want generals, statesmen, and legislators; we want industrious husbandmen. If we wanted rank, restless, and ambitious spirits, there are enough of them in Malabar to supply the whole peninsula; but these people are at least an encumbrance, if nothing worse; they can never do good, and, at all events, consume a good deal without rendering any equivalent service to the public. We must, therefore, avoid the creation of more; though we submit to the necessity of supporting those who now are.

'Considered politically, therefore, the general distribution of land, among a number of small proprietors, who cannot easily combine against Government, is an object of importance. The power and patronage, and receipt of the sircar rent, will always render zemindars formidable, but more or less so, according to the military strength and reputation of the Government. It is difficult to foresee what may happen in the course of a few years; and it is our interest to retain in our own hands as much power and influence as is consistent with the preservation of the rights of the people. By retaining the administration of the revenues in our own hands, we maintain our communication and immediate connection with the people at large. We keep in our own hands the means of obtaining information, the knowledge on which alone the resources of the country can be drawn out; the policy administered with effect; and perhaps the body of the proprietors secured in their possessions.

'Our first object is to govern India; and then to govern it well; and in these provinces it would seem that both these objects, a strong government and the security of private rights, would be attained by such a settlement as I have proposed.'[1]

[1] Pp. 990-991, Appdx., Fifth Report, Sel. Com. E. I. Co., 1812. W. Thackeray

'It is very proper that, in England, a good share of the produce of the earth should be appropriated to support certain families in affluence, to produce senators, sages, and heroes for the service and defence of the State.'

And, in India? Are not Indians human beings? It may be, in the opinion of some, a contemptible few, that they are human beings; according to Mr. Thackeray if they are human beings they are of quite another order than ourselves, ranking distinctly below that order of human beings of which British folk are members.

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'OUGHT TO BE SUPPRESSED.'

'We do not want generals, statesmen, and legislators; we want industrious husbandmen.'

Clearly, an Indian hath not eyes, hath not hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions, is not fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same summer and winter, as hath and as is an Englishman. If we prick Indians they do not bleed—at least, they do not bleed as do Europeans; their suffering from famine, fever, and pestilence is not like the suffering of others: they are occupants of a 'human cattle farm,' placed in that position after careful thought and consideration, and—kept there.

Mr. Thackeray was without excuse. Lord William Bentinck, who of set purpose selected Mr. Thackeray as his mouthpiece, they holding ideas in common, is even more without excuse. 'Tis not as if they considered the people of India were incapable of reaching great intellectual heights, of developing and exhibiting noble character. In this same report Mr. Thackeray says:—'It would be impertinent to show that the people of hot

administration of the country? How can we expect that the Hindoos will be eager in the pursuit of science unless they have the same inducements as in other countries? If superior acquirements do not open the road to distinction, it is idle to suppose that the Hindoo would lose his time in seeking them; and even if he did so, his proficiency, under the doctrine of exclusion from office, would serve no other purpose than to show him more clearly the fallen state of himself and his countrymen. He would not study what he knew could be of no ultimate benefit to himself; he would learn only those things which were in demand, and which were likely to be useful to him, namely, writing and accounts. There might be some exceptions, but they would be few; some few natives living at the principal settlements, and passing much of their time among Europeans, might either from a real love of literature, from vanity, or some other cause, study their books, and if they made some progress, it would be greatly exaggerated, and would be hailed as the dawn of the great day of light and science about to be spread all over India. But there always has been, and always will be, a few such men among the natives, without making any change in the body of the people. Our books alone will do little or nothing; dry simple literature will never improve the character of a nation. To produce this effect, it must open the road to wealth and honour and public employment. Without the prospect of such reward, no attainments in science will ever raise the character of a people.

'This is true of every nation as well as of India; it is true of our own. Let Britain be subjected by a foreign power to-morrow; let the people be excluded from all share in the government, from public honours, from every office of high trust or emolument, and let them in every situation be considered as unworthy of trust, and all their knowledge and all their literature, sacred and profane, would not save them from becoming, in another generation or two, a low-minded, deceitful, and dishonest, race.

'Even if we could suppose that it were practicable, without the aid of a single native, to conduct the whole affairs of the country, both in the higher and in all the subordinate offices, by means of Europeans, it ought not to be done, because it would be both politically and morally wrong. The great number of public offices in which the natives are employed is one of the strongest causes of their attachment to our Government. In proportion as we exclude them from those, we lose our hold upon them; and were the exclusion entire, we should have their hatred in place of their attachment; their feeling would be communicated to the whole population, and to the native troops, and would excite a spirit of discontent too powerful for us to subdue or resist. But were it possible that they could submit silently and without opposition, the case would be worse; they would sink in character, they would lose with the hope of public office and distinction all laudable ambition, and would degenerate into an indolent and

abject race, incapable of any higher pursuit than the mere gratification of their appetites. It would certainly be more desirable that we should be expelled from the country altogether than that the result of our system of government should be such a debasement of a whole people. This is, to be sure, supposing an extreme case, because nobody has ever proposed to exclude the natives from the numerous petty offices, but only from the more important offices now filled by them. But the principle is the same, the difference is only in degree; for in proportion as we exclude them from the higher offices, and a share in the management of public affairs, we lessen their interest in the concerns of the community, and degrade their character.

'It was from a conviction of the policy of extending native agency that the establishment of the revenue board cutcherry was recommended in 1822. The right of the people to be taxed only by their own consent, has always, in every free country, been esteemed amongst the most important of all privileges; it is that which has most exercised the minds of men, and which has oftenest been asserted by the defenders of liberty. Even in countries in which there is no freedom, taxation is the most important function of government, because it is that which most universally affects the comfort and happiness of the people, and that which has oftenest excited them to resistance; and hence both its utility and its danger have, under the most despotic governments, taught the necessity of employing in its administration the ablest men of the country.

'In this point, at least, we ought to be guided by the example of those governments, and employ intelligent and experienced natives at the head of the revenue to assist the revenue board. If in other departments we have experienced natives to assist the European officers, shall we not have them in this, whose duties are the most difficult and most important? We cannot exclude them from it without injury to ourselves as well as to them; we cannot conduct the department efficiently without them. But even if we could, policy requires that we should let them have a share in the business of taxing their own country.'

The above wise and weighty observations, a parallel to which is not to be found in present-day Anglo-Indian writings, are, as I have said, but a few sentences out of a hundred pages of equally luminous, high-minded, and statesmanlike utterances. Exigencies of space, however, forbid further citations.

Rightly is Sir Thomas Munro's fame maintained in Madras by one of Chantrey's finest equestrian statues. Had his spirit been permitted to pervade the purlieus of Indian administration as Chantrey's representation of the

man dominates 'the Island' in the Chinnapatnam of olden days, such a work as this of mine would have been unnecessary—would never have been written. So wise and perspicuous were his teachings that it is difficult for one who knows what he counselled to pass that statue without raising his hat as to a living personage. As for Bishop Heber, writing to the Right Honourable Charles Williams Wynn, in England, in a letter dated Karnatik, March, 1826,* he says :—

'But there is one point which, the more I have seen of India, since I left Bengal for the first time, has more and more impressed itself on my mind. Neither native nor European agriculturist, I think, can thrive at the present rate of taxation. Half the gross produce of the soil is demanded by Government, and this, which is nearly the average rate wherever there is not a permanent settlement, is sadly too much to leave an adequate provision for the peasant, even with the usual frugal habits of Indians, and the very inartificial and cheap manner in which they cultivate the land. Still more is it an effectual bar to everything like improvement; it keeps the people, even in favourable years, in a state of abject penury; and when the crop fails, in even a slight degree, it involves a necessity on the part of Government of enormous outlays, in the way of remission and distribution, which, after all, do not prevent men, women, and children dying in the streets in droves, and the roads being strewed with carcasses. In Bengal, where, independent of its exuberant fertility, there is a permanent assessment, famine is unknown. In Hindustan, on the other hand, I found a general feeling among the King's officers, and I myself was led, from some circumstances, to agree with them, that the peasantry in the Company's provinces are, on the whole, worse off, poorer, and more dispirited, than the subjects of the native Princes; and here, in Madras, where the soil is, generally speaking, poor, the difference is said to be still more marked. The fact is, no native Prince demands the rent which we do; and making every allowance for the superior regularity of our system, etc., I met with very few public men who will not, in confidence, own their belief that the people are overtaxed, and that the country is in a gradual state of impoverishment. The Collectors do not like to make this avowal officially. Indeed, now and then, a very able Collector succeeds in lowering the rate to the people, while by diligence, he increases it to the State. But, in general, all gloomy pictures are avoided by them as reflecting on themselves, and drawing on them censure from the secretaries at Madras or Calcutta; while these, in their turn, plead the earnestness with which the Directors at home press for more money.

*Perhaps, from letter dated March 21, 1826, Camp near Chillumbrum (Carnatic,) partly published in R. Heber Narrative of a Journey - ... 1824-25, 1826, Vol II pp 451-57 addressed to Rt Hon'ble C.W. William Wynn.

'I am convinced that it is only necessary to draw less money from the peasants, and to spend more of what is drawn within the country, to open some door to Indian industry in Europe, and to admit the natives of India to some greater share in the magistracy of their own people, to make this Empire as durable as it would be happy. But as things now go on, though I do not detract any part of the praise which I have, on other occasions, bestowed on the general conduct of the Company's servants, their modesty, their diligence, and integrity, I do not think the present Empire can be durable.

'I have sometimes wished that its immediate management were transferred to the Crown. But what I saw in Ceylon makes me think this a doubtful remedy, unless the Government, and, above all, the *people* of England were convinced that no country can bear to pay so large a revenue to foreigners, as to those who spend their wealth within their own borders; and that most of the causes which once made these countries wealthy have ceased to exist in proportion as the industry and ingenuity of England have rivalled and excelled them. Even Bengal is taxed highly, not indeed directly on its land, but in salt and other duties. But Bengal is naturally of such exuberant fertility, that whoever has seen it alone will form a too flattering estimate of these vast countries.'[1]

Why have I disinterred from ancient volumes the foregoing unwise and supremely wise observations? Because the conflict represented by such protagonists—

THACKERAY and JAMES MILL *against* MUNRO and HEBER

is proceeding now as it proceeded in the second and third decennial periods of the nineteenth century. The wrong step was then taken. The right step has yet to be taken. The mischief is that not a single high official connected with India at the beginning of the twentieth century considers any forward step is required. They all think of Indian Administration as the Great Duke thought of the British Constitution prior to 1832. It was from heaven. It is sacro-sanct. It may be that in the fortuitous (or other) concourse of circumstances

[1] Bishop Heber's Memoirs and Correspondence, by his Widow, vol. ii. pp. 413, 414. John Murray, 1830.