

Aurita Bazar Patrika

BI-WEEKLY EDITION---PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY AND SUNDAY

VOLV XXXVI.

CALCUTTA THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 1904.

No. 25

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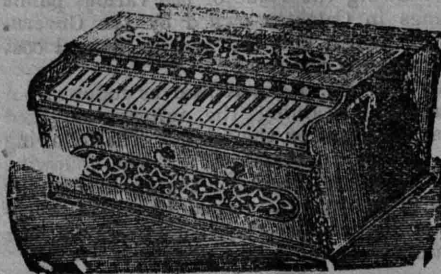
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এতদ্বিধ এই জুয়েলারি ফার্মের ১০ মটকার বস্ত্রাদির কারবার প্রস্তুত। বালুচী শাড়ী, মুতী, শাড়ী, চাঁদীর ও কেট পান্ট হনারির উপযোগী সাদা ও কালি বুনট থান প্রস্তুত বহিঃ দেশী কাপড়াদি বিক্রয়ক্রমে প্রস্তুত থাকে। জড়ার পাইলে সমস্ত পাঠাইয়া থাকি। মূল্য তালিকা বিশেষ বিবরণ ক্যাটালগে। পরীক্ষা প্রার্থনায়।

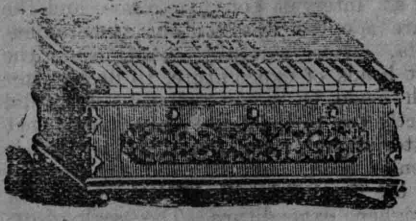
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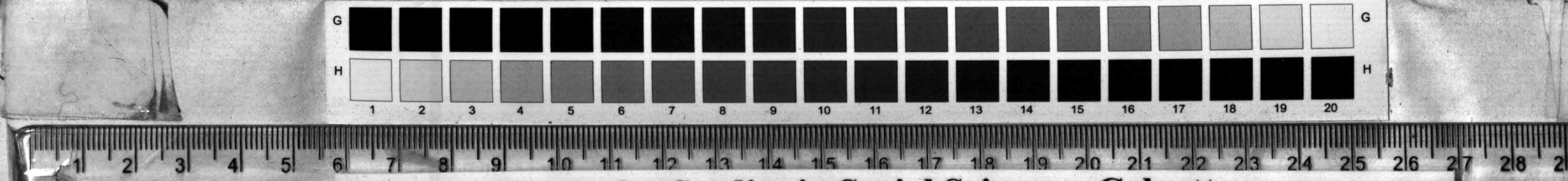


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Professor, Presidency College.



BENGAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

A meeting of the Council was held at the Council Chamber, Writers' Buildings, on Saturday. The Hon. Sir Andrew Fraser, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, presided, and there were present the Hon. Mr. C. E. Buckland, the Hon. Mr. L. Hare, the Hon. Mr. B. L. Gupta, the Hon. Mr. J. T. Woodroffe, the Hon. Mr. W. C. Macpherson, the Hon. Mr. D. B. Horn, the Hon. Mr. L. P. Shirres, the Hon. Mr. A. Earle, the Hon. Mr. R. T. Greer, the Hon. Mr. T. K. Ghose, the Hon. Mr. A. A. Apar, the Hon. Maulvi Seraj-ul-Islam, Khan Bahadur, the Hon. Rai Tarini Pershad, Bahadur, the Hon. Dr. Asutosh Mukhopadhyaya, the Hon. Babu Bhupendra Nath Basu, and the Hon. Mr. C. F. Larmour.

SUB-INSPECTORS SCHOOLS.

The Hon. Mr. Earle replied to a question put by the Hon. Babu Bhupendra Nath Basu whether the attention of the Government had been drawn to an article in the "Sanjibani" of the 17th December last on the matter of the grievances of the sub-inspector of schools. He said:—1. The attention of the Director of Public Instruction was drawn to the article in the newspaper referred to, and the points therein noticed have been considered by him. 2 (a) The orders of Government alluded to in this question have been strictly complied with. Government decided, in its letter No. 516T—G., dated the 24th July, 1897, that of the 119 Sub-Inspectors who had been transferred from Government service to the service of the District Boards, the names of the 25 most deserving should be printed in Roman type in the list of the Subordinate Educational Service, ten being placed in Class V on Rs. 100, ten in Class VI on Rs. 75, and five in Class VII on Rs. 60. The names of the remaining 94 officers were, in accordance with the orders quoted, printed in italics, such officers being regarded as seconded from the Department. When a vacancy occurs among the 25 officers whose names are printed in Roman type, one of the seconded officers takes his place. In this way no Board-appointed Sub-Inspector can enter the graded list, until all the seconded officers have been provided for. The 25 officers in the graded list are eligible for promotion to the grade of Deputy Inspector; and 14 of them have been so promoted since 1897; (b) since 1897, 46 men have been promoted to be Deputy Inspectors or Additional Deputy Inspectors, nine posts of Additional Deputy Inspector were created in districts in which the number of schools under inspection was excessive. Mahomedans were appointed to these posts in order that the Mahomedan community might be better represented in the Inspecting Agency than it had been in the past. Inasmuch as there were very few Mahomedans serving as Sub-Inspectors at the time, only one post was filled by a Sub-Inspector, the remaining eight posts being awarded to teachers. Of the 37 men who have been promoted to ordinary posts of Deputy Inspector, 19 were teachers, four were clerks and 14 were Sub-Inspectors. As, however, the 4 clerks referred to had acted previously for some years as Sub-Inspectors, practically 19 teachers and 18 Sub-Inspectors have been so appointed. The numbers of teachers in the service is, it may be explained, at least four times as large as that of Sub-Inspectors; and there are, therefore, many more graduates among them from whom a selection for posts of Deputy-Inspectors can be made. Experience in teaching is, moreover, a very valuable qualification for such posts. 3 (a) and (b). According to the orders passed at the time of the re-organisation of 1897, the maximum pay of a Sub-Inspector is fixed at Rs. 100 a month. Capable Sub-Inspectors are, however, eligible for promotion to Deputy Inspectors; and, as indicated in answer to question 2 (b), 14 Sub-Inspectors from the graded service have been promoted to Deputy Inspectors since the year referred to. Some Sub-Inspectors also have been promoted to posts carrying higher salaries, such as clerks in the offices of the Inspector of Schools and the Director of Public Instruction and to teachers in schools. 3 (c) The meaning of this question is not quite clear. The principles and orders governing the selection of Deputy Inspectors have, however, been fully stated in reply to question 2 (a) and (b). 4. The position of the transferred Sub-Inspectors is fully explained in reply to question 2 (a) and (b). The main object of the Subordinate Educational Service which have recently been submitted to the Government of India is to include in the graded service a large number of ungraded officers—many of them graduates—who are at present in receipt of very small salaries, and who have little chance of promotion in present circumstances. It was not considered necessary to include in the scheme any proposal for the improvement of the prospects of the transferred officers. There is no proposal that Government should take over all the Sub-Inspectors now serving under the District Boards into Government service. There are, however, proposals under consideration for improving the prospects of Board-appointed Sub-Inspectors. As, however, the question has not as yet been laid before District Boards for consideration, it is not desirable to give further information on the subject at present.

VERNACULAR EDUCATION.

The Hon. Mr. Earle replied to a question put by the Hon. Babu Bhupendra Nath Basu, whether the attention of the Government had been drawn to the articles published in the "Sanjibani" of the 10th and 27th August last on the introduction of the new scheme of vernacular education into all classes of schools in the province. He said:—1. The attention of Government has been drawn to the articles in the newspaper referred to. The whole subject of the introduction of the new scheme of Vernacular Education was fully discussed in Government Resolution No. 1 of the 1st January, 1901, which was published in the "Calcutta Gazette" of the 2nd idem. A reference to that Resolution will show that the scheme in question is compulsory only in the case of Government and aided schools; and that the position as regards unaided schools is that if they wish to compete for scholarships, they must conform to the rules in force in respect of Government and aided schools. 2. In the Resolution referred to, the difficulties connected with the introduction of the new scheme were exhaustively considered, and the best means of overcoming the same were fully discussed. Action has since been taken, and is still being taken, with the object of facilitating the introduction of the scheme; and no useful purpose would, in the Lieutenant-Governor's opinion, be served by instituting an inquiry

such as that suggested by the hon. member. 3. A perusal of paragraph 10 of the Resolution, above quoted, will show that the difficulties in connection with the training of teachers were fully considered before orders were passed approving of the introduction of the scheme. It was not expected, it was said, that teachers would, all at once, teach the new subjects well; it was almost certain that they would teach them badly. What was contended, however, was that the teaching would not be worse than the then existing entirely mechanical system of training the memory, whereby all the other faculties were dulled at the expense of monotonous parrotlike exercises. It was urged that even inferior teaching with a good educational system would produce better results than bad teaching with an unsound system. Hence, the change was considered necessary, notwithstanding the great difficulties which would have to be faced. Immediately after the issue of the Resolution referred to arrangements were made at the various training schools of the province with the object of imparting instruction in the new methods; the result being that about 250 trained teachers are now being turned out annually. Facilities have also been given to teachers who were trained according to the old methods to qualify themselves in the additional subjects introduced under the new scheme. Training schools for primary school teachers have been opened at most of the sub-divisional headquarters under trained masters. English teachers have been trained in batches at the Kurseong Training College, and their knowledge in the modern methods is being turned in various ways. Inspecting officers are being trained in the new subjects in the training schools. Lastly, frequent conferences of teachers and inspecting officers are being held for the purpose of advancing the new system. In the circumstances, His Honor does not consider it desirable to postpone the introduction of the scheme, as suggestion by the hon. member. 4. A reference to paragraph 12 of the Resolution above referred to will show very clearly that the case of private high schools was carefully considered by Government, and that the privilege of sending up candidates for middle and upper primary scholarships was for the first time conceded to them, with the special object of encouraging them, to substitute Vernacular for English text-books in the lower classes. In the same paragraph the evil results of teaching subjects such as Arithmetic, History, and Geography through the medium of English instead of the Vernacular, in the lower classes of these schools, were discussed, and the system then in force was pronounced to be "perfectly disastrous to the sound education of the pupils in the English which their parents want them to acquire." It may also be noticed that the Government of India, in paragraph 26 of the Education Resolution of the 11th March 1904, have held that the line of division between the use of the Vernacular and of English as a medium of instruction should broadly speaking, be drawn at a minimum age of thirteen. In the circumstances, His Honor sees no reason for modifying the orders already passed on this subject.

GURU TRAINING SCHOOLS.

The Hon. Mr. Earle replied to a question put by the Hon. Babu Bhupendra Nath Basu whether the attention of the Government had been drawn to a paragraph in the "Sanjibani" of the 3rd December last on the subject of guru-training schools, and another in the "Sanjibani" of the 10th idem on the same subject. He said: 1. The articles in question have been brought to the notice of Government. 2. (a) The number of Guru Training Schools already opened is 100, and not 79, as stated. Of these 100 schools, 91 have been supplied with Head Pandits. Information is not immediately available as to the exact number of Head Pandits who have come from first-grade training schools. (b) The number of gurus under training in schools under the 91 Head Pandits is 560; while the number of such persons under training in the 9 schools as yet unprovided with Head Pandits is 44. 3. The instructions issued by the Director of Public Instruction are to the effect that the Head Pandit of a Guru Training School must, if possible, be a person who has passed the final examination of a first-grade training school, that is to say, a person who has passed the second year examination of the new training school course, or the third year examination of the old course. In case no candidate satisfying either of the above conditions is available, a second year pass man of the old course may be appointed, provided that he produces a certificate from the Head Master of a first grade training school that he is well grounded in object lessons and Kindergarten principles, and is able to train gurus in these subjects. The pay of the Head Pandits having been recently raised from Rs. 9 to Rs. 12 generally, there should be no difficulty in giving effect to these orders, and it is probable that it will soon be possible to dispense with the services of any second year pass men of the old course who may have been appointed. 4. The subject of the amount of the stipend which should be given to a guru during the period of his training is being separately considered. If funds are forthcoming an endeavour will be made to increase the amount fixed under present orders in cases in which it appears to be inadequate.

PIG STICKING IN RAJSHAH.

The Hon. Babu Bhupendra Nath Basu asked the following question: 1. Has the attention of the Government been called to a circular letter purporting to be issued by the Magistrate and Collector of a district in Eastern Bengal, which has appeared in the Asian sporting news of the 13th February, 1904, and calling upon the local Rajas and Zemindars to join in the sport of pig-sticking to be undertaken to clear the jungle of certain tracts from Mansakian Jhoolia to Dighapatia and to bear expense of the parties to be organised for the purpose. European and native gentlemen being invited to take part in the sport? 2. Is it true, as stated in the "Amrita Bazar Patrika" of the 3rd February, 1904 that the Magistrate and Collector referred to in the Asian is Mr. Garrett of Rajshahi? 3. Will the Government be pleased to state what sum of money, if any, has been collected in pursuance of the circular above mentioned, and how the same has been applied? 4. Has the Government taken any action with reference to the circular in question.

The Hon. Mr. Macpherson replied as follows: 1. The attention of Government had been previously called to the circular letter in question. 2. The Magistrate and Collector who issued the circular is Mr. A. Garrett, Collector of Rajshahi. 3. No money has been received by the Collector as the result of the circular as the execution of the scheme was arrested in time. 4. The Lieutenant-Governor called on the Commissioner of Rajshahi for a full report on the matter on the 9th February last, and has recently received that report. Meanwhile, however, the Commissioner, hearing of the matter, had instructed the Collector at the end of December last to stay action in execution of his scheme until he had reported all the facts for the Commissioner's consideration. The Commissioner has now intimated to him that the scheme was impracticable and injudicious, and must be abandoned. In this opinion the Lieutenant-Governor concurs.

GOVERNMENT PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

The Hon. Babu Bhupendra Nath Basu asked the following question: Will the Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing the value of the various public buildings in Calcutta owned by the Government of Bengal and the average annual cost of maintaining the same?

	Value of buildings.	Average annual cost of maintenance.
	Rs.	Rs.
1st Calcutta Division ...	79,69,557	54,467
2nd ditto ...	68,24,873	83,206
Total ...	1,42,94,430	1,37,673

AMOUNTS TO DISTRICT BOARDS.

The Hon. Mr. Earle, in reply to a question by the Hon. Rai Tarini Pershad, put on the table the following statement showing the distribution of the sums of Rs. 3,71,700, Rs. 63,000, and Rs. 18,240 transferred to District Boards for expenditure on Primary Education, the appointment of Additional Sub-Inspectors of Schools and additional Lower Primary Scholarships:—

DIVISION.	I. Distribution of the sum of Rs. 3,71,700 transferred to District Boards for expenditure on Primary Education.	II. Distribution of the sum of Rs. 63,000 allotted to District Boards for the appointment of additional Sub-Inspectors of Schools.	III. Distribution of the sum of Rs. 18,240 assigned to District Boards for the cost of additional Lower Primary Scholarships.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Burdwan...	40,000	15,000	4,464
Presidency excluding Calcutta	40,000	3,000	2,496
Rajshahi ...	42,700	2,000	1,392
Dacca ...	56,000	11,000	3,696
Chittagong ...	23,400	6,000	1,104
Patna ...	84,000	5,000	2,976
Bhagalpur ...	38,000	4,000	1,152
Orissa ...	23,000	11,000	768
Chota Nagpur ...	24,500	6,000	192
Total ...	3,71,700	63,000	18,240

POLICE REFORMS.

The Hon. Mr. Macpherson, replying to a question put by the Hon. Rai Tarini Pershad, said: Certain reforms in the Police Department have been carried out in the current year as is shown by the fact that the expenditure has risen from Rs. 63,15,000 last year to Rs. 64,06,000 this year. The sum of four lakhs specially set apart for reforms in connection with the Report of the Police Commission has, however, not been spent, because the orders of the Secretary of State have not yet been received.

AGRICULTURAL BANKS AND GRAIN GOLAS.

The Hon. Mr. Earle replied to a question put by the Hon. Rai Tarini Pershad. He said: The number of Agricultural Banks which have been newly opened during the current year 1903-1904, is seven. Last year, (1902-1903) there were 48 banks open, viz.,—20 in Government estates, 16 in Wards estates, and 12 in private estates. There are now 65 such banks open, viz.,—25 in Government estates, 15 in Wards estates, and 15 in private estates. No grain golas have yet been opened.

THE BUDGET.

The Hon. Mr. Shirres said: I beg to lay on the table the Financial Statement for 1904-1905, together with the usual appendices and accounts. Some of the Budgets which my predecessors have laid upon the table have been prosperity Budgets; others have been famine Budgets. The Budget for 1904-1905 is neither a prosperity Budget nor a famine Budget, but is what I may call a Financial Settlement Budget. It is the outcome of the Financial Settlement which has just been made by the Imperial Government with the Government of Bengal. This Settlement constitutes a new departure, and since it not only furnishes the frame work of the Budget which is before us to-day, but most powerfully, although indirectly, strengthens the financial position of the Local Government, I may be permitted to say a few words regarding it. I need not enter into the past history of Provincial decentralisation which is no doubt sufficiently well known to the members of this Council. It is sufficient to say that the previous Financial Settlements were concluded at intervals of five years, and the procedure adopted was for the Government of India, after carefully scrutinising the different heads of expenditure, to decide how far each could be safely reduced. They did not exactly say to the Local Government that the latter should spend more money under a particular head, but they did say that in making the Settlement they would not allow for a higher expenditure. The scale of expenditure which was thus evolved they called the ruling account, and they then proceeded to make over an income just sufficient to cover this expenditure. Now in the first place it is obvious that when a Financial Settlement is concluded in this manner, the Local Government has practically no alternative but to adopt the ruling account as the basis of its Budget estimate. Indeed, the ruling account and the Budget would be identical were it not for two reasons. In the first place, the ruling account corresponds

with the revised estimate of the year in which it is made, and the Budget estimate of the following year may and should show an increase. In the second place, when the Government of India have prepared a ruling account and shown that the revenue of a Local Government exceeds its necessary income, they do not usually resume the whole difference, but share it with the Local Government. In a word, the Government of India makes over not only enough income to cover the ruling account, but also something over. This something over, however, is for the most part required to meet expenditure, the necessity of which had been affirmed on the one side and denied on the other. All this is to explain that few reforms involving recurring expenditure can be hoped for in such a Budget as this, unless provision has actually been made for them as part of the settlement. Of course, we should not be justified in making ourselves liable for new recurring expenditure on the strength of a lump grant, for when the lump grant was exhausted, the recurring expenditure would continue, and we should have nothing wherewith to meet it. That briefly is the relation between the new settlement and the present Budget estimates. One other point, however, remains to be explained, namely, how a large lump grant has been made to the Local Government as part of the settlement which has just been concluded. The new settlement differs from the previous one in this respect that it is to last for an indefinite period. A little consideration will show that such a Settlement cannot be concluded precisely on the same terms as one that is to last for only five years. Hitherto at the end of every five years the expenditure has been cut down, and income has been allotted sufficient to cover the expenditure on the revised scale. The position of the Local Government in each case depended upon the extent to which it had been cut down and upon its recuperative power, that is upon the extent to which its new income was made up of expanding revenue. If, however, there is no intention to cut down the expenditure at the expiry of five years, it is obvious that the same proportion of expanding revenue cannot be given, for otherwise, at the end of the five years, the Local Government would be in a much better position than before. On the other hand, if the proportion of the expanding revenue is reduced and compensation is not otherwise given, then for the first five years the Local Government will be in a worse position than previously; for no benefit from the change of system will be felt until the five years are over, and meanwhile the Local Government will suffer from the curtailment of its growing revenue. The obvious remedy is for the Government of India, while cutting down the expanding revenue, to make a large grant so as to compensate the Local Government for the disadvantageous position in which it would otherwise be placed during the first five years of the new system. This is the explanation of the fact that the Government of India has given us a lump grant with which to enter on the new settlement. Moreover, as the grant is to compensate for a disadvantage which will last for five years, this also explains the condition on which the grant is made, namely, that the expenditure is to be spread over several years. I may say, however, that we did not expect so large a grant as 50 lakhs, and that in this and other respects the Government of India have dealt generously with us.

Now as to the effect of the new settlement on the financial position of the Local Government. One drawback of the system followed in the case of the previous settlements has been that the Government of India have been no more willing to allow the Local Government to undertake recurring expenditure than if no Financial Settlements had existed. The reason of this is that at the end of five years it was practically impossible for the Government of India to cut down recurring expenditure for which the Local Government has made itself liable. Consequently at the end of five years the liability for the new expenditure had to be allowed for in the new settlement and practically it was passed on to the Government of India. The new settlement which has now been made, however, is not for five years, but for an indefinite period. No doubt the sanction of the Government of India will be necessary in the future as in the past, but they will not be able to put forward the argument hitherto used that the liability will pass on to them at the expiry of the settlement, and practically the Local Government will be in a very much stronger position when it advocates recurring expenditure. But if the Government of India became liable for any recurring expenditure, on the other hand they snapped up any recurring income created by the Local Government. Thus an ordinary remunerative investment had no attractions for a Local Government, because at the end of the five years the revenues would be taken into account in the new settlement. Thus, for example, if a Local Government built houses for its officers the rent received would, when a new settlement was concluded at the end of the five years, be counted in as part of the resources made over to it for the purpose of meeting the new expenditure under that new settlement. It may be pointed out also that, theoretically at any rate, the Local Government is now in a position to give a guarantee or to borrow money. Of course, it does not follow that the Government of India will permit the Local Government to do so. Nevertheless, the change constitutes a step towards greater financial autonomy, and is bound to have a strong indirect influence. In addition to the lump grant of fifty lakhs to which I have referred, the Government of India have also made to us two other grants—one of five lakhs and one of fifty lakhs. The former is for expenditure on special public objects which has not been provided for in the settlement, and the distribution of it amount has been left to the Lieutenant-Governor. The manner in which His Honor has distributed the grant is shown in paragraph 15 of the explanatory notes which I have put on the table. The other grant, namely, that for fifty lakhs, represents the contribution of the Government of India for the structural improvement of Calcutta. It is a condition that the money shall be reserved exclusively for this purpose and it cannot be appropriated until the scheme is approved by the Government of India. It is earnestly to be hoped that a reasonable scheme for the improvement of Calcutta may be devised and adopted, so that the money may not have to be ultimately refunded to the Government of India.

I now wish to make a few remarks about the Budget Reforms. The scale of the recurring expenditure has been cut down and the income has been adjusted to it, and it is not, therefore, possible for the Local Government to introduce many reforms involving such expenditure unless these have been agreed upon with the Government of India and funds have either been provided or promised. It will be found, however, from paragraph 14 of the notes that liberal provision has been made for those in the list, the largest and most important is the assignment of four lakhs for the improvement of the position of ministerial officers. This is a reform which I have always advocated, and I am sincerely glad that it has fallen in my lot to introduce the Budget under which it will be brought about. Nothing, it is true, can be done until a detailed scheme has been drawn up and sanctioned; but the details have been worked out and the scheme will be submitted to the Government of India almost immediately. Another very important reform is the increase of the staff of Deputy Collectors. The harassment of the present staff of Deputy Collectors through overwork and constant transfers is very great, and the increase will not only be a great boon to the officers personally, but will also effect a very great improvement of a lakh of rupees for Sub Deputy Collectors has been repudiated from the current year's Budget. The scheme could not be carried out because sanction was not obtained. The expenditure on the staff of Commissioned Medical officers is not confined to this Province alone, but forms a part of a scheme for the whole of India. The remaining provision for reforms consists of half-a-lakh for an instalment of Police reforms in Calcutta, and a sum of Rs. 48,000 to allow for an Additional Judge for the Calcutta High Court. I wish to add one word regarding the expenditure of 15 lakhs out of the 50 lakhs made over to the Local Government. As this lump grant is to compensate for the disadvantageous condition of the Local Government for the first five years of the new settlement, it has, as already explained, been made subject to the condition that the expenditure should be spread over several years. It has, however, been arranged that 15 lakhs should be spent in 1904-1905. Of this sum, half or 7½ lakhs has been added to the allotment for Civil Works under the Public Works Department. Of the remaining 7½ lakhs, 6 lakhs have been set apart for the housing of the Police in Calcutta and the Mofussil, one lakh will be expended on what is believed to be a remunerative scheme for leasing out land in the Sundarbans; and the remainder, Rs. 50,000, is one-half of a grant of one lakh which will be read over two years and which will be devoted to the continuance of the experiments for the improvement of cultivation of indigo.

The only other point I need notice is that the expenditure shown in the Budget for the year considerably exceeds the income of the year by non-recurring expenditure, as is shown in paragraph 13 of the explanatory notes. Owing to the large grant which has been made to the Local Government, it will be in a position next year to expend considerable sums on buildings or other purposes the expenditure on which is non-recurring, although it is not in a position to increase its recurring expenditure to introduce reforms other than those stated which involve such expenditure. The Financial Statements will come up for discussion on the 6th of April, and in the meantime my colleagues and I shall be happy to give to hon. members any information which they may require. We shall also be greatly obliged if hon. members will extend to us the courtesy shown to our predecessors and will give notice to us as soon as possible of any points which they propose to bring forward so that we may be prepared with the necessary explanations.

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT BILL.

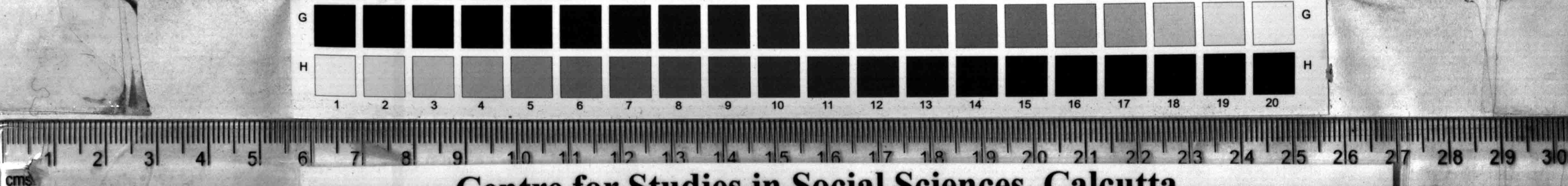
The Hon. Mr. Shirres moved for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Bengal Local Self-Government Act of 1885. The motion was put and agreed to. The Hon. Mr. Shirres then introduced the Bill, and moved that it be read in Council. He said that when an important Act such as the Local Self-Government Act was passed, no long time elapsed before proposals for amendments were made to the Local Government. Most of these amendments were on trivial points or on technical points referring to matters of drafting. Each of them, however, was carefully inquired into, and if the proposals were found to be sound and approved of, an order was passed that they should be brought up when the Bill came up for amendment. Almost all the amendments to this Act were of a formal character. There were two important amendments however. The earlier of these in point of time was a proposal to enable District Boards to pay for the building of bridge by levying tolls on them. The second was a measure for giving greater power and responsibility to District Boards in connection with the construction of light tramways or railways. The Bill would not come before a Select Committee till next cold weather.

The following is the Statement of Objects and Reasons:—The object of this Bill is to make various amendments in the Bengal Local Self-Government Act III of 1885 for the following purposes, namely:—(1) To give legal authority to the practice now already in existence under which District Boards incur expenditure on veterinary objects; (2) to impose tolls on newly-constructed bridges until the initial cost and the capitalised value of the cost of maintenance and renewal have been recovered; (3) to give power to levy a rate to enable District Boards to pay sums guaranteed by them by way of interest on capital expended on railways or tramways; and (4) to remove certain flaws and omissions in the Act which experience of its working has brought to light.

The motion was then put and agreed to and the Secretary read the title of the Bill. The Council then adjourned to Wednesday, the 6th of April next, when the Budget will be discussed.

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THE AMRITA LAZAR PATRIKA.

CALCUTTA, MARCH 31, 1904.

VICEROY ON CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY.

In his speech while explaining the object of the co-operative society his Excellency was pleased to observe:—

"It is the feeling that he should be helped as a strong and as sincere as I believe it to be among the Native community, they have, as pointed out by the Honble Mr. Adamson in this Bill, an unrivalled opportunity of giving a practical and unostentatious demonstration of their sympathy with the most deserving and the most helpless class of their own countrymen. Will they take it? Government has played its part. I invite them to play theirs."

Yes, the Government has played its part and that in many ways. It has done all that it could possibly do to another the feeling of self-reliance in the people by centralizing all powers in its hands, and now it comes forward to offer a challenge. We had our Panchayat system; we had our village communities; we had our institutions for imparting education: all these have been destroyed. The village communities were co-operative societies, only they were more comprehensive in their scope and more perfect in their organization. The Government of Sir Richard Temple planted the germ of local self-government in the capital of the Empire. But 25 years after, it was uprooted.

The Government of Lord Ripon followed suit and introduced a more extensive system of local self-government in the interior; but it has been rendered into a farce. Now that the people are demoralized, pauperized, nay almost enserfed, they are told triumphantly that the Government is willing to do its part of the duty, but they are also expected to do theirs. His Excellency, however, should know that, if self-reliance is essential to success in this scheme, people have lost it long ago, and through no fault of theirs.

Lord Curzon is of opinion that too much Government help is not desirable; for, in Germany and France, the Government liberality has done more harm than good. This can be no precedent. In Germany the people have a share in the administration of their country, in France they rule themselves. They fight for their country and develop its trade and industries. They have thus ample opportunities of acquiring self-reliance and depend upon their own resources. But what are the Indians? They are only "human sheep," as an American paper styled them, born to forget their independent existence and obey the orders of their masters who would do everything for them.

It seems, in the opinion of His Excellency, the peasants are the most deserving classes in India. Pray who are the least deserving? Are they the Babus who lay a claim to public services and criticize Government measures? There is no doubt that the Government can do without the peasants, who till the ground and maintain a costly rule by growing crops, while the Babus are not wanted at all, for they find fault with its doings. The Babus are now eye-ores, though, at one time, they were very much needed. The higher classes are, however, disappearing fast, so very fast indeed that they must vanish completely in the course of the next 40 or 50 years.

From the Government point of view, we believe, there are some other classes who are also as worthy as the peasants, as for instance, the Sepoys who fight for the Government on a pay of 9 or 10 Rupees a month, and the petty ministerial officers, clerks, peons and so forth without whose help the administration cannot be carried on.

His Excellency in one place remarks:—"What I desire to point out, however, is this. Here is a sincere and patient effort to ameliorate the condition of the peasantry of what we are constantly being told is the poorest country in the world. Not a day passes in which hundreds of articles are not written in the Native Press to prove that the material interests of those poor people are neglected or ignored by an alien Government, and are only correctly understood by the leaders of the Native community."

This is sarcasm. In a measure, which is benevolent in its object, His Excellency might have avoided such pleasantries which conceal veiled attacks, and which have the effect of provoking replies. Firstly there is some exaggeration in the statement that every day hundreds of articles about the poverty of India appear in the Indian papers. One great reason for this is that they have no space or opportunity to do so. For the last three months, they were fully occupied in dealing with such questions as the Universities Bill, the Official Secrets Bill, and the partition of Bengal.

Has His Excellency any doubt about the abject poverty in India? Let His Excellency give only five minutes of his time to form an idea of the amount of money taken away from this country to England, from the beginning of the British rule up till now, for which the people have got no other return than the costliest army and the most highly-paid Civil Service in the world as well as an India Office in England which costs about twenty-five crores a year, and he will have some conception of the poverty of India.

His Excellency sarcastically remarks that the Indian leaders understand the interests of the masses better than the Government do. But is there any doubt about it? The leaders are the kith and kin of the people; they meet constantly with one another and know their mutual wants. The generality of the people, when they have a grievance, will run to the leaders, and not to the Viceroy or the Lieutenant-Governor, for advice. The Viceroy is unapproachable; indeed, Lord Curzon, though he is full five years in this country, has not, we believe, come across more than two dozen men in Bengal,—almost all of them members of the aristocracy,—and had no talk with any of them about the real condition of the country for the simple reason that the interview must be brought to an end within five or ten minutes at the most. The Local Government and other members of the Government are also inaccessible, though not to such an extent as the Viceroy. Where is the wonder then that the interests of the peasantry are better understood by the leaders?

If the Government are desirous of understanding the interests of the people correctly, the Viceroy, the Lieutenant-Governor, and

other responsible authorities should make themselves more approachable to the public; learn to converse with the peasantry in their native tongue, and show greater sympathy to them than they do now. The wonder is not that the Indian leaders understand the interests of their own countrymen correctly, but the wonder is that an intelligent Viceroy like Lord Curzon should doubt it.

THE PROGRESS OF MILITARY EXPENDITURE.

Is the reader aware of the great honour done to India by the Government at home? But, before we refer to it, we shall quote the following passage from the budget statement of our Finance Minister, Sir Edward Law:—

"We still pursue our aim of increasing the efficiency of our defensive military forces more special attention being paid to questions connected with armament, stores, supply, transport, and mobilisation. I give the figures of net expenditure during the last five years, including the estimate for the coming financial year:—

Table with 2 columns: Year, Expenditure. 1900-1901: £14,265,525; 1901-1902: £14,786,342; 1902-1903: £16,321,402; 1903-1904 (Revised Estimate): £16,784,100; 1904-1905 (Budget Estimate): £18,215,000.

The recent heavy increase of expenditure is in itself very regrettable. I can only say that the advice of the most expert military authorities shows it to be inevitable, and that it is small as compared with the charges accepted by other powers whose persistent and deliberate advance towards our Indian frontier obliges us to take precautionary measures."

Thus nearly six crores of rupees for military charges have been quietly fastened upon the starving people within the last 4 years, though millions of them have not yet been able to recover fully from the shock of the last great famine. Add to this the fact that a loan of 8 crores and 75 lakhs has been contracted within the last two years, which will further swell the interest of the huge permanent debt of India, and increase the burden upon the country. Need any body wonder now if India,—the country of the pagoda trees,—has been converted into a permanent abode of famines and pestilence?

It was never believed that military expenditure would rise up to such frightful figures during the Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon; for, His Excellency opposed the proposal of the increased pay of the British soldiers as well as that of throwing the cost of the South African garrison upon India in a manner which no Viceroy did before. Yet His Lordship could see his way to acquiesce in an arrangement which, in his opinion, was a gross wrong to the helpless people of this country. And the officials talk of their conscience and so forth!

The fact is, even a coolie is more independent than a member of the service, however high his position may be; and from the highest to the lowest, they are only mandate-obeying machines. In their private life they are angels; but, as servants of the State, well, they must look up their honest convictions in an iron safe, and carry out, like a blind force, whatever is dictated to them by their superiors.

Since the seventies, every Viceroy, except Lord Ripon, has done his level best to increase the cost of the army. In reply to Mr. W. Redmond M.P., Lord George Hamilton stated in July 5, 1901 that, the net military expenditure in 1875-76 was £9,763,013. In 1900-01 it came up to £14,239,100; and, in the current year, it will amount to £18,215,000. That is to say, the cost has doubled within the last 25 years! There would have been no harm in this frightful increase of charges if India had gone on growing in prosperity. But, the succession of famines, each greater than its predecessor, does not certainly proclaim the material progress of the country. On the other hand, it is a sure sign of the deep protest of Nature against a financial arrangement which is unnatural, and must therefore be fraught with dire evils.

The great progress of military expenditure since 1870 was the direct consequence of the policy of "greater military preparedness" which led to expeditions and annexations beyond the frontiers of India. It is not within our province to criticize the wisdom or the unwisdom of that policy; but, there is no doubt that a return to the policy of Lord Lawrence and Lord Ripon would remove the cause for the increased military expenditure and justify a return to the scale of expenditure considered safe and sufficient by the Simla Army Commission.

Strangely enough, though, Lord Curzon adopted the policy alluded to above, yet the military expenditure, instead of coming down, has swelled up from fourteen millions sterling to eighteen millions during his administration. And why? Because, although there were no frontier expeditions, the pay of the 75 thousand British soldiers in India was increased, though they had already been sufficiently paid, and secondly, because, the cost of modern arms of precision have been thrust upon this unfortunate country for the purpose of an experiment!

It is some comfort to learn that the Finance Minister regrets the increase of expenditure. But just see how he tries to explain the situation. He says that as other powers are increasing their military charges and making "persistent and deliberate advance towards our Indian frontiers," so we have no help in the matter. But who are these "other powers"? These "other powers" can only be Russia. But is it a fact that Russia is on our frontiers just now? On the other hand, is it not a fact that Russia has enough troubles of her own in connection with Japan to think of India? The statements of some of the members of the Government simply take away our breath. If an ordinary man had made a statement to the effect that Russia, whose existence in the Far East is threatened, has chosen this particular moment to make a deliberate advance towards India he would have been laughed at. But we cannot treat a similar statement from a responsible member of the Government in that fashion.

That India is quite unable to bear the heavy financial strain of 75,000 British troops is an admitted fact. It is also in evidence that, when Russia's activities in Central Asia and the disturbance of Afghanistan were causing serious uneasiness here, some fifteen thousand British troops were withdrawn from India for employment in the Transvaal War. If, at a time of war, when the strain is great upon the Empire, it is safe to withdraw 75,000 troops from India, it stands to reason that,

on a peace-footing the number of British troops may be safely reduced by 20,000 men. Why was not this done by the Government of Lord Curzon? Will the Viceroy or the Finance Minister kindly explain it? India has not only to maintain a huge and costly army, not only for an aggressive and wealthy nation, but has to lend it for the uses of the whole Empire. Here is a table showing the expenditure incurred by England for the purpose of defending her colonies:—

Table with 2 columns: Country, Expenditure. Canada: £520,709; West Australia: £16,635; South Australia: £32,776; Victoria: £719,392; New South Wales: £223,937; Queen's Land: £94,401; New Zealand: £196,944; And so on.

The gravity of the wrong will be fully realized when it is remembered that India is the poorest, and England, the richest country in the world.

Now to the honour done to India and alluded to above. The following quotation from Sir Edward Law's statement will explain what we mean:—

"This year we have devoted a specially large sum to expenditure on armament, and particularly for the re-arming of the artillery with the most modern and effective weapons, it having been decided at home that India must be allowed priority of supply in the matter of new armament. This priority of supply involves priority of payment and consequently we have been obliged to provide in our estimates the extraordinary sum of £700,000 for armaments."

So India has the priority of supply of these modern arms. Should we not be proud of this fact? Before a soldier in England has seen the face of any of these weapons, our soldiers will have learnt to handle them. Is not this glorious? But, then we will have to pay for this honour at a very heavy cost, amounting to more than a crore of Rupees. And is it necessary to explain why this honour has been so readily thrust upon India? It is not yet known whether these modern arms will serve the purposes for which they have been invented. And, as India is the land of experiments, the artillery here is going to be re-armed with them. If the experiment succeeds, good and well; if it fails, well, it is India which will suffer.

THE OLD AND THE NEW SETTLEMENTS.

Those who form the present Government of Bengal are all new men. The Lieutenant-Governor is new to the Province; the officiating Chief Secretary has entered the Secretariat only these few months; and the Financial and Municipal Secretary has no experience of the Secretariat work. What they should have done, therefore, we submit, on the occasion of an important event like the presentation of the Financial Statement, was to give the public an idea of the financial condition of Bengal during the administration of their predecessors and then to state how they themselves propose to spend its revenue. What was the financial policy of their predecessors? Do they intend to follow it or to chalk out a path for themselves? Or, do they propose to adopt a middle course, partly following in the wake of the late Government and partly creating a policy for themselves? One gets no information on the point from the speech of the Financial Secretary.

The speech of the Hon'ble Mr. Shirres, the Financial Secretary, is no doubt very good in its way; but, it is not as clear as one wishes it to be. He says that his "Budget" is neither a prosperity Budget nor a famine Budget, but is what I may call a Financial Settlement Budget. But what is this "Financial Settlement Budget"? We are told that this "Settlement" constitutes a new departure, and "must powerfully, although indirectly, strengthen the financial position of the Local Government." But what is this new departure, and how will the financial position of the Local Government be improved? He does not explain it.

Then he goes on to say, "I need not enter into the past history of Provincial decentralisation which is no doubt sufficiently well known to the members of this Council." On the other hand, it is not at all or very little known to the members of the Council. Nay, we can guarantee, Mr. Shirres, before he was made a Financial Secretary, was in no better position than his colleagues in the Council or perhaps he had only a general hazy notion about it. So, what he ought to have done, in our humble opinion, was to give a history of the previous decentralisation schemes, point out the few departures, and then show the advantages the Local Government has obtained from the present settlement.

To us, laymen, the difference between the old and the new settlements appears to be a fiction. Previously the settlement was concluded at intervals of five years, and now it is to last for an indefinite period. Is that all, or has any new privilege been conferred upon the Local Government? For instance, can the Local Government, under the new arrangement, expand its revenue and enjoy it entirely? Or, on the Local Government inaugurate any reform of its own motion without consulting the Supreme Government? Nothing of the kind.

In fact, the Local Government is as helpless now as it was before. It is as dependent upon the mercy and sweet will of the Supreme Government now as it was previously. If it wants money for any useful work, it must stand now as it did previously, as a beggar before the Supreme Government. Its position is exactly like that of the bullocks Ram and Shyam in the story. "Have you heard, brother Shyam," says Ram mournfully, "that master is going to sell us?" "Yes," replied Shyam carelessly. "You seem to be very indifferent," says Ram solemnly. "Why should I not be, brother," replies Shyam. "Here we work and get some hay and water; there we will have to work, and get some hay and water."

Under the old dispensation, the Local Government got some small sum as "a grant" for five years; under the new dispensation, they will also get a grant, only somewhat larger, for an indefinite period. Mr. Shirres is in great glee and enthralled with the generosity of the Government of India, because the grant made to the Government of Bengal under the new settlement from the Imperial

Exchequer amounts to 50 lakhs. But, as there is no knowing when the Government of India is likely to show similar generosity again—it may not open its purse-strings for the next ten years—so it were better if our good Finance Minister had checked this outburst of joy. Indeed, there is no cause for the display of this grateful feeling when the Finance Minister himself admits that a lump sum of 50 lakhs has been granted on the distinct understanding that the Local Government must spend it in five years, that is to say, only at the rate of ten lakhs a year.

The Bill introduced last Saturday at the meeting of the Local Council to amend the Bengal Local Self-Government Act, 1885, is not only a very important one, but some of its features are most alarming. It is a measure of further taxation, and, as such, it is bound to meet with universal opposition. Fancy that the District Boards, which are mere tools in the hands of the Magistrate-Collectors, are proposed to be entrusted with legal powers to impose tolls to meet expenditure on veterinary objects and pay interests on capital expended on railway or tramways. The District Board, which was originally intended to be a machinery for teaching the people the art of local self-government, is thus going to be converted into an engine for pumping the pockets of the people. Our only hope lies in the strong sense of justice of Sir Andrew Fraser. We dare say His Honour will never allow his name to be associated with a measure which is likely to prove a source of oppression to the peasantry.

If Sir Andrew will kindly go through the literature on the Road Cess, he will find that already gross wrongs have been done to the payers of the Cess by the misappropriation of its proceeds; and it will be adding an additional injustice to them if they are made to pay a further cess or toll to carry works which ought to be executed by the Local Government. It is not within the province of the District Board to find money for veterinary schools or tramways and railways; the obligation in this connection rests upon the Local Government. By the way, there was not a single Hon'ble member in the Council to enter a protest against the principle of the Bill. This was apparently, because, the non-official members were taken aback, as no one had an idea that such a measure was going to be introduced. Why did not the government take the public into its confidence before bringing it in the Council? It is mainly by this disregard of public opinion that the Government courts suspicion and adverse criticism upon its measures. If the Bill were published for general information before it was formally introduced, most probably some of its objectionable phrases might have been removed in the light of public opinion, and the expected unpleasant friction between the people and the Government over this question avoided.

The Punjab Government has after all published a statement giving some information about the inoculation campaign carried on in that Province and principally dealing with the Mulkowal case. The statement is so meagre and incomplete that none is likely to gather much solid information from it. It is more of a justification than explanation. It is presumed, from the tenor of arguments used, that inoculation was carried on without cessation throughout the last year, and it is being continued even now. So, though it is clear that sufficient experiment was made in that direction, no attempt has been made on the part of the authorities to supply the people with actual figures relating to the success or otherwise of the operations which are so eagerly sought for by the public. It is strange that the present statement is totally silent over this important matter. The question to be settled is—incubation a prophylactic? To this we get no reply.

Again, about the events leading to the Mulkowal disaster, which would never be again a blot in the history of the inoculation campaign in India as also in the administration of Sir Charles Rivaz, the authorities have not been as clear as the preceding moment assumed. It appears from a perusal of the statement just published that the plague research laboratory suddenly announced that the fluid which it proposed to supply would be prepared by a method different from that which had been in the beginning followed in the preparation of the fluid used in the Punjab. Naturally it gave rise to misgivings on the part of the authorities who thereupon sat to decide whether it would be "safe to proceed." Then the statement runs as follows:—

"It soon became apparent that the proportion of the new fluid which was unfit for use was many times greater than had been the case with the old. The unfitness was judged by the smell of the contents of the bottles, and observation of their colour and general appearance. The reports received from the inoculating officers in all parts of the Province showed that bottles of bad smell or containing a fluid of an abnormal appearance were not uncommon. Abcesses occurred more frequently with the new fluid than they had with the old, and though they might possibly have been due to careless inoculation there was good reason to believe that they were due to the impurities in the fluid itself. Moreover, it was reported that the reaction of the new fluid was insufficient according to the standard fixed for the old, and for this reason doubts as to its prophylactic value were aroused. Finally a few deaths were reported to have closely followed inoculation, and though subsequent investigation showed that they were not due to that cause the reports of these deaths added to the suspicion with which the new fluid was regarded."

So it is clear that the authorities were thoroughly satisfied with the worthlessness of the fluid which the Plague Research Laboratory had supplied. But let us see how the Government proceeded in the matter. It was in the middle of September that the Plague Research Laboratory announced that they were henceforth to supply with a new kind of serum; but without previously putting this new fluid to any bacteriological test or otherwise ascertaining whether it was safe to inoculate with it, the inoculation was carried on with the same vigour, with this demer-

gerous fluid, as was done in the beginning. When, however, on actual experiment, this new fluid was found to be suspicious, the Government resolved to put a stop to its use. So an order was issued to that effect as late as 1st of November. But what had happened on the day previous? On the 30th October at Mulkowal, in the Gujrat District, 19 persons were inoculated with the contents of one bottle of the new fluid and all of them contracted tetanus and died!

It is needless on our part to comment on the utter neglect and absence of responsibilities displayed by the authorities in this matter as evidenced in the present statement, for an ounce of truth is more telling than bushels of words. The Government has tried to justify the conduct of the inoculating officer in this way:—"The Lieutenant-Governor is satisfied that tetanus was not due to any carelessness or fault on the part of the inoculating officer, Dr. Elliot, who later on was granted a gratuity and permitted to resign his appointment at his own request." Something more than a mere assertion is, however, necessary to exculpate Mr. Elliot from all blame. For, what he did was this. Though fully aware that a new kind of serum was being supplied for inoculation, which had not passed through a bacteriological test and declared safe; and though complaints were reaching from several circles of its suspicious character, he was so careless or ignorant as to inoculate a whole village with a bottle of this dangerous fluid without previously testing its effects in a satisfactory manner. Does not this prove that he was unworthy of the responsible post he held and that he was not entitled to the salary which he drew? But India is a land of experiments, and who cares?

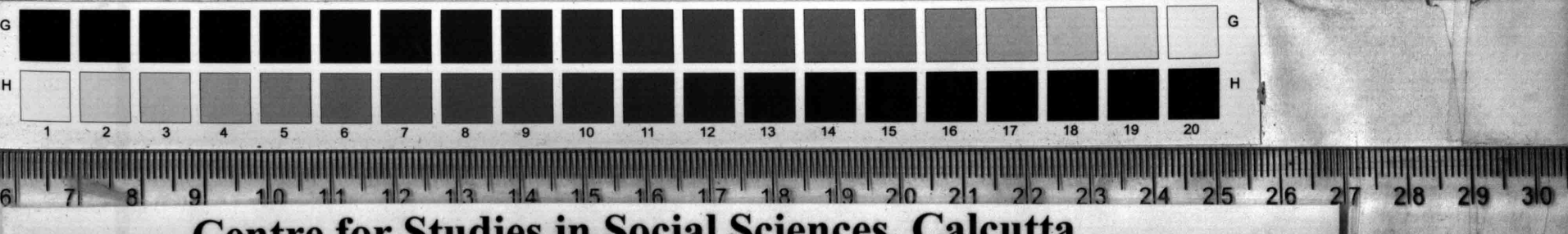
The result of the Tilak case, it seems, has produced no result upon that strong-minded and famous Judge, Mr. Aston. He is always for conviction, and the wonder is he was allowed to sit on the Criminal Bench of the Bombay High Court. This Bench was composed of himself and the Hon. Mr. Chaudhary, and it had to dispose of an appeal preferred by one Lachumrao, who had been convicted and sentenced to three months rigorous imprisonment for giving false evidence. The Hon. Judges differed in their opinion,—Mr. Aston of course being for conviction and the other for acquittal. The matter was consequently referred to the Chief Justice Sir Lawrence Jenkins for final disposal, who quashed the conviction and sentence and acquitted the accused. It is high time for Mr. Aston to retire and pass his last days in pious contemplation.

The appointment of a European Barrister in the place of Mr. Justice Amir Ali is a gross wrong to the Indian community. There ought to be at least four Indian Judges in the Calcutta High Court. That was, we believe, the intention of the Public Service Commission. But, now we are going to have only two. A member of the Mussulman community has the first claim to the seat vacated by Mr. Amir Ali. It is absurd to say that there is no Mahomedan Vakil or Barrister able to occupy it with credit. But, if there is a dearth of men among the Mussulmans, which we do not admit, why not recruit one from the Hindu or Parsee community? By the way, we also find that Mr. Bonnaud, the Barrister-at-Law, is going to take the place of Mr. Abdur Rahim, as second Deputy Presidency Magistrate. We have the highest regard for Mr. Bonnaud, but we must say at the same time, the Government has no business to put a European in a position which belongs to the Indians. It is such acts of the Government which fill the minds of the people with utter despair.

While referring to the Arbitration Court at Poona, in one of our editorial paragraphs, we expressed a doubt if it still existed. We are glad to learn from Mr. B. P. Bapat of Poona that the "Lalaj" or Arbitration Court established at Poona by that patriot, the late Mr. Ganesh Vasudev Joshi, popularly called "Sarvajit Kaka" (uncle) in the Deccan, is still in existence and has been doing splendid work. He then goes on to say:—"The institution renders account of its work to the public of the Poona city and cantonment annually by holding a public meeting in the hall of the Sarvajit Sabha, which is presided over either by the District Judge of Poona or a member of the Executive Council of the Government of Bombay. The meeting held in the month of October last, was presided over by Sir James Montleath, the then acting Governor of Bombay."

The enquiry into the alleged "corruption" in the Calcutta Income-Tax Office which was conducted by Mr. Savage, who had been specially deputed by the Government for the purpose, was brought to a close on Tuesday, in addressing two of the officers concerned Mr. Savage is reported to have said:—"It has been satisfactorily proved that you have been systematically carrying on bribery for years together. Consider yourself fortunate that I have not ordered for criminal prosecution against you. The order is that you are simply dismissed from the Government Service." We thank the Commissioner that he has not gone to the bitter end by instituting a criminal prosecution. The offenders, we think, will be sufficiently punished by the dismissal from service. We are informed that a separate report relating to the administration of the Income-Tax will be submitted by Mr. Savage, in which it is expected that proper measures will be recommended for the protection of the assessors.

From one point of view, the unveiling of the statue of the late Maharajah of Durbhanga, by the head of the Local Government, is a most unique incident. Although born and brought up as a nobleman, the late Maharajah was absolutely free from the vice which unhappily are contracted by many in his high position. What endeared him most and made him an object of great respect to his countrymen was his superior character. He was incapable of doing an act which his conscience did not sanction. Indeed, his fearless independence sometimes brought him into collision with the officials. He was not



FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT

LONDON, March 11, 1904. SOME PHRASES FOR THE WEEK.

CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY TESTIMONY TO HINDU VIRTUES.

What one who knows and loves India misses in the book 'Things as They Are: Missionary Work in South India,' by Miss Wilson Carmichael is any sign of true perception by the author of the domestic virtues of the Hindus, of the Scotch-like self-sacrifice of the mothers for the education of promising sons at school and college, for the unflinching self-effacement of many Hindu men for the benefit of other members of their family, of the noble reverence for aged and sickly relatives, of the love strong as death that animates their domestic life.

A BIG NEW INDUSTRY FOR BENGAL.

Jute preparation and cultivation constitute a great industry in Bengal. Within a comparatively brief period an altogether unsuspected source of wealth has been discovered and turned to good account. What has happened in regard to jute may be repeated and vastly increased in connection with the rhea plant which is indigenous in eastern India. In saying this I am not uttering a novel doctrine. The fact has been recognised again and again, and nowhere so persistently and so encouragingly as in Bengal. Why it is that the enterprise has remained so long a mere matter of speculation is to the London Correspondent of the 'Patrika' a great puzzle.

COOPERS HILL COLLEGE.

Sir Seymour King asked the Secretary of State for India, on Wednesday, whether, in accordance with the assurance of the Secretary of State on 16th July 1903, the Government of India had been consulted with regard to continuing or discontinuing the Royal Indian Engineering College at Coopers Hill; and whether any decision had been arrived at. The answer of Mr. Brodric was as follows:— 'The Government of India were consulted as promised by my predecessor, and I hope shortly to announce the decision arrived at by the Secretary of State in Council on this question.'

'SUPERSTITIOUS EUROPEAN TASKMASTERS.'

Some time ago I drew the attention of the readers of the 'Patrika' to the very able communications on the trend of events in Asia, contributed to a New York daily newspaper by a Mohammedan gentleman, who signs himself 'Mohammad Barakatullah'. The writer has a great command of English. He writes that language with facility and force; in this respect he is a much rarer example of an educated Indian than is the caricature of a Bengali babu at which a thousand people are laughing every night at Daly's Theatre, where the production of a play having Ceylon as its subject provides occasion to misrepresent and belittle the educated gentlemen of India. Since the time when Dave Carson, in Calcutta, launched his derisive song concerning the Bengal Babu—now forty years ago—nothing so discreditable as the caricature at Daly's has been seen. It will not be easy to estimate the harm to Indian character and reputation which the caricature—now making much money for a theatre proprietor—will do to make difficult a right appreciation of educated Indians by their British fellow-subjects. However, this paragraph has to do with an able Indian in New York and not with a distortion of a Hindu in London, so, for the present at least, I leave Daly's theatre and its much appreciated play alone.

EDUCATIONAL REFORMS IN INDIA.

Just as I am closing my letter, I see that a Reuter cabled message appears in this evening's papers giving some particulars of a Government Resolution dealing with educational reform in India. We are told that sweeping changes require to be made, and that it has been decided to abolish competitive examinations, replacing them by the selection of candidates for public offices on probation. Primary education is to be dealt with more satisfactorily, and commercial, technical, artistic, and agricultural training are dealt with in the Resolution. I can only mention the fact of the publication of the message; when full particulars are available, I shall return to the subject.

PLAGUE IN INDIA: DISTRESSING STATISTICS.

Mr. Weir, in asking Mr. Brodric if he would state the number of deaths from plague that occurred in the month of January last in Central India and Rajputana as compared with January, 1903, elicited yesterday some distressing facts. The answer was as brief as possible. It ran thus:—

Table with 2 columns: Location, Deaths. Rows: Central India (92), Rajputana (10).

The numbers are:— January, 1903. January, 1904. Central India 92 3,721. Rajputana 10 716. To a further question as to the percentage of deaths of persons inoculated with the plague serum, Mr. Brodric replied:— 'Calculated on the figures of inoculations and deaths in the several provinces given by my predecessor in Office in reply to a Question asked by the honourable Member on 11th June 1903, the percentage of deaths is .24. I have no later information on the subject, but the Government of India have lately taken steps to secure a more accurate record for the future.'

HOME CHARGES. To-morrow morning, in the printed answers to questions circulated with the Parliamentary papers, will appear an answer to an enquiry by Mr. C. E. Schwann as to Home Charges and the Budget which is in these terms:— 'To ask the Secretary of State for India, what is the excess amount, up to date, drawn for Home Charges from India by Council Bills and Transfers, above the £17,619,300 as entered under that head in the Indian Government's Budget last March, and in what way is that excess being utilised or applied here, and will these excess drawings be treated in the Indian Budget, now nearly due, by way of deductions from the Home Charges remittances in the ensuing year.'

RIFLE FACTORY. Mr. Weir asked the Secretary of State for India yesterday, whether having regard to the fact that the Indian Financial Statement for 1903-04 shows that the Johore Rifle factory is expected to be in a position to commence the manufacture of rifles during the present year, arrangements would be made for the manufacture at that factory of some of the new Army rifles required for the troops in India. Mr. Brodric replied by saying that it is not expected that under the most favourable circumstances manufacture can commence before December next. There is, therefore, little probability of any outturn of importance during the next financial year. The supply of rifles for Indian requirements will then be carried on from the factory as far as it is able to produce them.

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only a staunch supporter of the Congress, but every year sent a special message to the President of the Congress expressing his sympathy with the movement. This naturally offended many officials. In connection with the Bengal Tenancy Bill he incurred the severe displeasure of Lord Dufferin by an indiscreet act, and related to us how he had to appease his Lordship by founding a Lady Dufferin Hospital at Dumabanga. In short, he was exactly the sort of man who could never please the officials. Yet such was the force of his character that he always extorted their respect. He was a highly cultured gentleman and his education was of a varied kind. The manner in which the Chief Justice and the Lieutenant-Governor spoke of the illustrious dead leaves no room for doubt that, in their heart of hearts, the really noble-minded officials here like independence in our countrymen, specially in those who belong to the aristocracy. The latter should, therefore, profit by the noble words of the Lieutenant-Governor when he said that the late Maharajah not only exercised high influence while alive, but he has also, after his death, left behind him an example which others should follow.

OUR Hyderabad correspondent writes:— 'As promised in my last letter, I shall today say a few words about Mr. G. C. Walker. I hope His Excellency the Viceroy has been good enough to read what has already appeared in your columns concerning our Finance Minister's doings. In so, I beg leave to place before him more information; and I am sure His Excellency will find it equally interesting.'

'We have got a Department known as the Sarkhas Lakha; and it is charged with the administration of His Highness the Nizam's private Jaghirs. Owing to serious mismanagement, in the course of many years, its affairs had got into a frightful mess. Probably, more money went into the pockets of unscrupulous underlings than ever found its way into His Highness' coffers. Naturally, His Highness was anxious to remedy this intolerable state of things. But he found that it was not enough merely to dismiss the old officials and appoint a new set of men of proved probity and ability. There were heavy encumbrances to pay off. So His Highness applied to his Minister for a loan of fifty lakhs of rupees and desired to know on what terms it could be granted from the Government treasury. This was a praiseworthy endeavour to set things right in the 'Sarkhas' without unnecessarily hampering the administration of the State. And, it may be parenthetically remarked, that though, according to the law of the country, His Highness is entitled to nearly one-third of the revenues of the State, his annual incidents have never amounted to more than fifty lakhs. But these facts never seem to have impressed Mr. Walker very much. His Highness's application for a loan went up before him in due course. And, curiously enough, two or three days afterwards, a large sum of money lying idle in the treasury was converted into British Indian coin without any the least necessity for so doing, and, a week or ten days later, a reply went to the Minister that there was not sufficient money in the Khazana to grant the loan applied for. A few weeks later still, paying a surprise visit to the treasury, His Excellency the Minister discovered that about eight lakhs of newly-minted coin had not been entered into the books at all. Asked for an explanation, the treasury officer is reported to have said that he had merely carried out the orders of the Finance Minister. I am informed that some very interesting correspondence has passed on the matter between the Minister and Mr. Walker. But, so far, the result has not transpired.'

'Some months ago, I saw in one of your Calcutta contemporaries a very eulogistic reference to Mr. Walker's great independence and anxiety to serve the Hyderabad State faithfully. It was based upon a report—I know not how your contemporary had got hold of it—that some pressure had been brought to bear upon the Nizam's Government to contribute a decent sum to the Victoria Memorial Fund but that the independent Mr. Walker had put his foot down and said "No." The facts, however, turn out to entirely the other way. Within a few weeks of the announcement by the Calcutta journal, above referred to, it became known that a donation of two lakhs of rupees to the Victoria Memorial Fund had been sanctioned by His Highness's Government. And as if this was not enough, a press communique from the Financial Office announced, only the other day, that an additional sum of two lakhs had been given. So that, in all, this State has contributed, up to now, four lakhs of rupees to the Victoria Memorial Fund. Will your contemporary make a note of this undeniable fact, and comment upon it adequately?'

'There is one little item of news; and this letter is done. There is a Mr. Miller here, an Englishman I am told, and an artist whose art has not found any great appreciation since Mr. Eyed Ali Belgrami, our former Public Works Secretary, left these shores to settle in England. Until recently, this gentleman had a grievance against the Nizam's Government. He had a little bill, owing to him for a long time, he used to say, of eighty thousand rupees for services rendered. And the proof lay in a private note written to him by Mr. Eyed Ali Belgrami, when the latter was Public Works Secretary, asking him to paint certain scenery. But the claim was not admitted by previous Financial Secretaries. Mr. Belgrami's note, said they, is no evidence that the Government placed any order at all in Mr. Miller's hands. And there is no doubt whatsoever that, if the matter had gone before any Court of Justice, they would have been held to be right. Mr. Walker has however, ordered payment to him of sixteen thousand rupees in full satisfaction of his claims. And the Hyderabaders have reason to be thankful considering that the Finance Minister might have paid from the public funds the whole of the eighty thousand claimed.'

FRENCH doctors are alleged to have been largely responsible for the greatly developed habit of spirit-drinking as it obtains now in England. At least, so says the 'New Age' to hand, which publishes the following under

SCRAPS.

His Majesty the King-Emperor has been pleased to make the following appointments to the Orders of the Star of India and the Indian Empire:—The Hon'ble Mr. T. Raleigh, C.S.I., Law Member of His Excellency the Viceroy's Council, to be a Knight Commander of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India; the Hon'ble Sir H. T. Prinsep, Kt., a Puisne Judge of the High Court of Judicature, Bengal, to be a Knight Commander of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire. His Excellency the Viceroy will, we understand, invest Mr. Raleigh and Sir Henry Prinsep with the insignia of the Orders at Government House, after the farewell dinner to be given to these gentlemen by His Excellency.

The Military Budget for 1904-05 shows a steady increase in the expenditure since 1901, and this notwithstanding the earnest desire of Lord Curzon to check the unnecessary increase in this direction. The Financial Secretary regretted in submitting the comparative statement of expenditure for the last four years. Yet we see a little later seventy four lakhs of rupees set apart for the increase of pay of British soldiers. Again provision is made for some 114 lakhs on account of the military escort with the Aden Delimitation Commission. As regards another Boundary Commission that is still in the field, namely, that under Colonel McMahon on the Sistan border, the provision for its military escort is Rs. 1,61,000, for the coming financial year.

The people of the East are said to be superstitious, but examples of queer superstition are not wanting in the West. A curious superstition concerning external and visible ailments of the body has just come under the notice of surgeons at a Vienna hospital. Quite recently a child was taken to the hospital with a malignant growth upon one of its toes, which was tightly bound round with a thin but strong cord of hair to "prevent the internal disease from passing to the foot." A similar incident happened again the other day, the child's toe being so tightly compressed as to seem almost severed. The surgeon found it necessary to perform amputation, partly on account of the violence used in binding.

A strange tale comes from Tomsk, the Siberian capital. The surrounding villages, it appears, have been in a state of religious ferment ever since the outbreak of war. A number of moujiks, unable to pay their railway fares, march daily through the streets, declaring their intention to walk all the way to the great monastery of the Iroitz, near Moscow, where they will pray for the success of the Russian arms. On being questioned, they declare that a bloody hand grasping a sword with a cruciform handle has been seen in the sky in many parts of Western Siberia; and they believe this to be the hand of St. George the Victory-Bringer, Russia's most militant saint. A priest named Athanasius has advised the moujiks that three months hence the whole figure of St. George, riding a horse of flame, will pass over Siberia, and, arriving at the sea, will strike terror into the hearts of the heathen Japanese. The Tsar's armies will win a great victory, and the sea of Japan, like the Red Sea before the Israelites, will dry up and enable the Russians to march victoriously to Tokio.

Here is an instance to show that the human nose are treated more as cattle than people to beings. The following account is supplied to the 'Lahore Tribune' by a respectable correspondent from Amritsar, and the train in question belongs to the North-Western Railway. 'On Sunday, March 20, the train that was due at 2-49 p. m. at Amritsar refused to put in an appearance until it had been three hours late. The first, second, and some inter-class passengers sought shelter in waiting-rooms, but the third-class passengers—a large number of men, women and children—were driven out in the open and made to stand in the sun for full three hours. They could not leave the place for fear of the gate to the platform being opened in their absence and shut up before their arrival. The roars and growls that lifted the skies occasionally during the first hour of the terrible ordeal, for permission at least to women and children to enter the third-class passenger-car, were liberally answered by blows and kicks from some persons in authority assembled to add to their comfort. The indignant clamour by and by sank into tearful entreaty—and at last into deep silence, frequently broken by screams of children, sobs of women, and groans of men. It could have broken an adamant heart to see mothers uncover their own reeling heads to protect their children from increasing fierceness of the sun, but some policemen evidently enjoyed the fun! Unable to bear it any longer I passed on. At the end of the dreadful ordeal many of the sufferers appeared to be ill and I observed some women unable to walk without support. Imagine the sad condition to which so many of God's creatures, poor and dumb though they are, were put by being kept exposed for three hours to the scorching rays of the summer sun in the Punjab. Who is to take notice of this scandalous mismanagement? Will His Excellency do it?'

SINCE the passing of the Calcutta Municipal Act or rather since the Calcutta Corporation was officialised, how its affairs are managed is best known to our readers. In the maffail, under Magistrate-Chairman, matters are no better. Here is an instance showing how farcical are the proceedings transacted at Municipal meetings. Some time ago Captain Dredge while driving in a certain street at Bangalore met with an accident on account of it, it is said, the bad condition of the road. His trap was damaged. The Captain claimed Rs. 346-12 for damages from the Municipality, the amount for which the trap was purchased. At a meeting of the Municipality, when this item came on for consideration, one member wanted to know the condition of the trap before the accident and the Chairman in reply said that 'he really did not think they ought to go into all that.' Captain Dredge had simply claimed the amount by which he was out of pocket, and had said nothing about personal damages. If the case went to Court he would very probably get a great deal more. After that none dared speak a word about the amount claimed and it was resolved that the whole amount be paid.

Cases of assault on Indians by Europeans travelling on different railways have of late become so notorious that they require the earnest attention of the authorities. The latest case reaches us from Bankipur. It is a case not between two passengers, or between a passenger and an employe but between two railway employes—the man assaulted was an Indian clerk while the assailant was an European guard. The 'Behar Herald,' from which the facts are taken, says that on Tuesday the 15th instant when no. 8 Down Passenger train arrived at the station at 5-10 p. m., the guard of the said train having made over the guidance and way bills to Babu Mukheswar Rai, parcel, went away towards the office of the Assistant Station Master. In the meantime the parcel of the passenger the said bills found one sealed cover missing. He thereupon demanded the cover from the guard who alleged that he had already given it to the clerk. The denial of the clerk resulted, as alleged in a serious assault by the guard upon the poor man and the slaps and kicks that he received caused severe injury to his face and teeth. He was covered with blood and was almost in a senseless state, when he was rescued by the Railway police. The man, we are told, is still confined in hospital for treatment. The matter is a serious one and we doubt not the authorities will make a sifting inquiry and do justice to the aggrieved clerk.

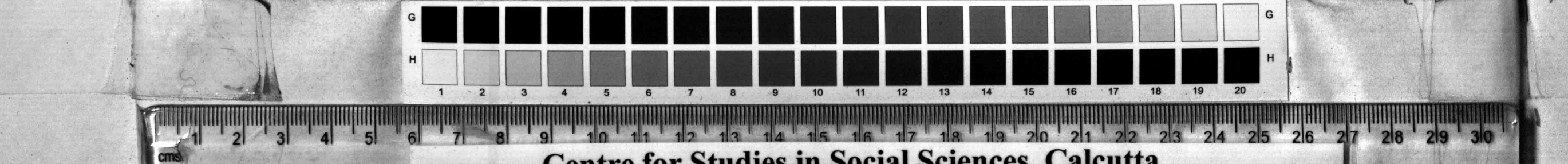
Like the Smith's Prize, the Sir Isaac Newton Studentship, worth £200 a year and tenable for 3 years, is the highest ambition of the mathematical students in England. We learn from the mail papers that this year Dr. Ziauddin Ahmed has been elected to this Studentship. Dr. Ziauddin was educated at Aligarh and the M. C. College of Allahabad and was awarded the State scholarship by the Syndicate of the Allahabad University in 1901. He was then an Assistant Professor of Mathematics at Aligarh and over 21 years of age; but the Syndicate recommended the Government that this condition should not be insisted upon, as they were convinced that Dr. Ziauddin wished to go to Europe for the purposes of study only and would on his return devote himself to education in India. As required by the regulations under which the Newton Studentship is held, Dr. Ziauddin has declared his intention of taking up the study of certain astronomical problems and of devoting himself to the subject of Arabian astronomy. From the days of Delambre and Sedi Uot who wrote about 1820 no one seems to have approached the subject of Arabian astronomy from the scientific point of view. Since that time a number of manuscripts have been discovered and some of them translated, but the subject has not since been dealt with by scholars familiar with modern astronomical science; and though a good deal has been published regarding the results obtained by the Arabian astronomers no attention has been devoted to the methods and means employed by them.

Russian telegrams state that the numerical strength of the daring Chuchuscal bands in Manchuria is rapidly increasing, and it is now the usual remark that several of the bands are commanded by Japanese officers.

M. Kokozov, head of the Russian Finance Ministry, has informed the representative of a Paris paper that the expenditure on the war would not effect the vita forces of Russia, and that the cost would not be a fourth of that incurred by Great Britain in the South African War.

The 'Novoe Vremya' seems to be deterred at any cost to maintain the charge against England of having permitted the Japanese to use Wei-hai-wei as a base for their naval operations. It publishes in one issue a perfectly clear official denial of the accusation, and in the next renews it in a definite, but perhaps even more dangerous form. 'Legally,' it says, 'Wei-hai-wei possibly did not serve as a base for the Japanese fleet. But where was its base? The open sea? Or Nagasaki, which lies at a distance of 30 hours steaming from Port Arthur?' It is probable that in spite of all official denials the majority of the readers of the 'Novoe Vremya' now cherish the suspicion that there must be something in the story.

At the Madras High Court their Lordships disposed of a criminal appeal from the Nellore District against the conviction of one Battini Ramkrishna Reddi by the Sessions Judge on a charge of murder under Section 302 of the Indian Penal Code. The accused in the case was charged with having caused the death of a young girl, aged eight years, by throwing her into a well. It was in evidence that the accused was on terms of criminal intimacy with the mother of the deceased, and that, on the occasions of his visit to the house of the woman, the deceased apprised her blind father of the same. The motive alleged against the accused was, that he wanted to get rid of the girl, as she was a hindrance to him. The accused pleaded not guilty, and stated that the circumstantial evidence, on the strength of which he was convicted, had been got up by his enemies. Their Lordships dismissed the appeal, and enhanced the sentence of transportation for life awarded by the Sessions Judge to one of



England. Japan, he declares, is fighting England's battles as much as she is fighting her own. He establishes, to his own satisfaction, at least, the truth of his thesis, by pointing out that while England was occupied in the late South African war Russia took time by the forelock, planted herself in Manchuria, opened friendly relations with Tibet, sent some disguised emissaries to Kabul, acquired preponderating influence in Persia, and thereby became pre-eminently dominant throughout Asia.

England will make some pretext for the effectual occupation of the Persian Gulf littoral. Nay, for some time the Indian Boundary Commission, with vernacular-speaking Indian Survey officers, has been quietly engaged in the work of extending the frontiers of the British Empire in Yemen, though the outside world knows little about it. Through this Russo-Japanese war England's conquest of Tibet is also ensured.

DEVIATION OF PARLIAMENTARY CONTROL. SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.

The management of the affairs of the British Empire is becoming too heavy a responsibility for the Imperial Parliament as at present constituted. Several of the most important functions of government are ignored or left aside by the legislators at Westminster. India does not receive so much attention as it did in the past, and the reason of this neglect is partly to be found in the little time that is available for the transaction of business.

On Friday there were over 18,000 tons of shipping in the Rangoon harbour loading rice for Japan. Up to date it is estimated that some 300,000 tons of Burma rice have been despatched to Japan.

On Tuesday the 15th instant, before Mr. Rustomjee, C. S. District and Sessions Judge of Allahabad, the case of King Emperor vs. Guaid St. L. Cleveland, charged under sections 408 and 411 I.P.C. came on for hearing.

S. Hewins, who surrendered his position as Principal of the London University School of Economics to undertake the duties of Secretary to the Tariff Reform Commission, replies forcibly to the arguments of Sir Edgar Vincent. He deals first with the more personal aspect of the dispute, and declares breezily of Sir Edgar's letter that "it confirms my view of the confusion of thought revealed in the questions he put to me, because he actually mistakes eight Free Trade points for Thirty-Nine Articles of Protectionist Faith and thirty-two quarters in Protectionist heraldry."

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The latest plague returns are indeed little short of appalling. The Central Provinces, Central India and Rajputana are all infected, and the disease seems to be getting a firm hold on Kashmir, though its progress is happily slow.

Calcutta and Moussil.

The Military Member.—General Sir Edmond Elles, Military Member, will leave Calcutta on the 31st. He will proceed to the Nepal Terai and thence to Simla.

P. W. Member.—Sir A. T. Arundel, Public Works Member, leaves Calcutta on the 31st and will proceed to Lahore. He will arrive at Simla on the 7th April.

High Court Judgeship.—Mr. A. P. Handley, Chief Judge, Small Cause Court, is gazetted to officiate as Judge of the High Court, vice Mr. Justice Harington, on furlough.

E. I. Railway.—Mr. W. A. Dring of the East Indian Railway proceeds home about the 10th of April for six months' leave, and Mr. Huddleston will officiate during his absence.

Legislative.—The Lieutenant-Governor is pleased to nominate Mr. Charles Frederick Larmour to be a Member of the Bengal Council.

"Gazette of India".—The last issue of the "Gazette of India," Part I, will be published in Calcutta on the 2nd April, and future issues, beginning with the 9th idem, will be published at Simla.

S. C. Court Chief Judge.—Mr. F. W. Ormond will, we understand, officiate as Chief Judge of the Small Cause Court vice Mr. A. P. Handley, who becomes a Judge of the High Court.

The Home Member.—The Hon'ble Sir Denzil Ibbetson, K. C. S. I., Member of Council, Home, Revenue and Agriculture Departments, leaves Calcutta on the 31st instant, and after a couple of days' halt at Lucknow en route, arrives at Simla on the 4th April.

Official Changes.—As already announced Mr. Buckland, Member of the Board of Revenue for Bengal, proceeds to England to leave at the end of April.

New Bear House at the Calcutta Zoo.—One of the new attractions is the New Bear House, at the back of the Carnivora House. Its construction is due to the munificence of the Nawab of Dacca, and its recent occupation has proved a source of no little interest.

A Munsiff in Trouble.—Says the "Weekly Chronicle"—One Babu Rajani Chandra Gupta has lodged a criminal complaint of defamation against Babu Radha Nath Sen, Munsiff of the Second Court, Sadar. It is alleged that the Munsiff abused the complainant in vulgar language while he appeared before him as witness.

A Whiteman Fined.—The "Kashipur-Nibarsi" says.—Mr. H. L. Woodrall is the local agent to the Nawab of Dacca. He one day, of course out of affection, tested the solidity of the physique of his Burmese cook by means of a few kindly meat fists, to which, however, the unlettered cook took serious exception, and even went the length of lodging a complaint against his master at the local criminal court.

The Plague.—Plague is steadily rising in Calcutta. On the 26th, 91 cases and 79 deaths were reported, the total mortality being 126. Plague cases and deaths were distributed as follows: District I—27 cases and 27 deaths; district 2—43 and 34; district 3—13 and 11; district 4—8 and 7.

Imperial Library.—His Excellency the Viceroy has recently presented the following valuable works to the Imperial Library.—1. Daniell (Thomas and William). Oriental Scenery. 150 views of the architecture, antiquities and landscape scenery of Hindoostan.

The Partnership Case.—At the High Court on Tuesday, before Mr. Justice Sale, Mr. Dunne on behalf of Mr. Peterson, plaintiff in the case of C. A. Peterson vs. F. M. Schiller and others, applied to His Lordship that an early date be fixed for the hearing of the case.

It is reported at Seoul that an engagement took place on the 23rd instant between a detachment of the Japanese infantry and Cossacks between Anju and Chongju, and that the Japanese were victorious, the Russians retiring slowly.

TELEGRAMS.

REUTER'S TELEGRAMS.

THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

London, Mar. 26.

A band of Russians has been captured crossing the frontier in order to evade military obligations. Three women were shot and thirty men taken prisoners.—"Englishman."

In the Japanese Parliament to-day, the whole House, standing up and cheering, unanimously voted thanks to Admiral Togo and his officers. M. Yamamoto, Minister of Marine, in the course of a significant speech, said the fact that the Russians at Port Arthur now had four battleships, five cruisers and ten destroyers about showed that repairs were being efficiently carried out.

The Russian cruiser "Olyabia" and two destroyers have arrived at Algiers from Suda Bay, and will probably proceed to Lisbon on Tuesday.

It is stated at St. Petersburg that a considerable Cossack force is operating east and south-east of the Japanese communications between Anju and Pingyang, with the object apparently of preventing the junction of the troops landed at Chinampo on the west and Gensan on the east.

A telegram from St. Petersburg says that the troops between Yalu and Pingyang were compelled to retire on their entrenchments on the south bank of the Yalu before the first Japanese Army Corps, 40,000 strong, whose advance guard with artillery occupied a fortified forty-five mile line extending from Kasan to Anju, Yengpiang and Pekohun.

General Kurapatkin has proceeded to Mukden. Admiral Makaroff telegraphs to the Tsar: "I left Port Arthur on the 26th inst. with battleships, cruisers and torpedoes to make a reconnaissance of some of the adjacent islands."

This morning four Japanese fireships attempted to block Port Arthur. The Russian torpedo boats attacked and destroyed the foremost, two others were stranded on the rocks and the fourth sank. The harbour passage remains open.

The Russians have proclaimed martial law at Niuchwang. The Russian Administrator has since informed the Consul that the proclamation means that Consular jurisdiction has been annulled.

Bar Percy in reply to a question in the Commons said that the Consul at Niuchwang urged the retention of a British warship at Niuchwang but Admiral Noel concurred with Admiral Bridge that it would not be advisable.

An infernal machine was found on board the fireships and the connecting wires were cut by officers who boarded the sunken steamer and extinguished the fire.

An official despatch published at St. Petersburg states that early on the morning of 27th four large merchant steamers conveyed by torpedo boats, approached Port Arthur harbour, but were discovered by the searchlight.

It is reported at Seoul that an engagement took place on the 23rd instant between a detachment of the Japanese infantry and Cossacks between Anju and Chongju, and that the Japanese were victorious.

Military circles at St. Petersburg declared that it is now too late for the Japanese to advance on Harbin from the Tumen River, as almost the whole of the eastern coast of Korea is occupied by the Russians.

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TELEGRAMS.

REUTER'S TELEGRAMS.

GENERAL.

London, Mar. 24.

France has vigorously protested to the Vatican against the Pope's speech to the members of the Sacred College on the 19th instant.

The final report of the Washington Census Bureau on the cotton crop says that the quantity ginned is equivalent to 10,045,614 standard bales of 500lbs. compared with 10,588,250 on the 14th March, 1903.

The "Times" has reason to believe that Lord Curzon will succeed the late Lord Salisbury as Warden of the Cinque Ports.

A cyclone utterly devastated Re-union on the 21st and 22nd instant. The crops were destroyed and thousands were rendered homeless.

King Emmanuel accompanied by his Foreign and Navy Ministers visited the Kaiser on board the "Henzern" at Naples to day.

The troops which were on board the transport Assaye when she was collided with in the Solent will re-embark in her voyage as soon as she is repaired.

It is officially announced that Lord Curzon is appointed Warden of the Cinque Ports.

INDIAN TELEGRAMS.

THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR.

The Pioneer's London Correspondent writes under date 26th instant:—The third part of the War Office Reconstruction Committee's report is accompanied by a letter to Mr. Balfour again urging the importance of accepting the recommendations in their entirety.

The Adjutant-General regains some of the duties withdrawn in 1880, and becomes responsible for the establishment, composition, raising, organisation, and mobilisation of the forces, their distribution in peace time where strategic considerations are imperative.

The Report does not admit that the status and credit of the Medical Services will be thus lowered. It argues that it is impossible to make the Army Council representative of all the several arms and Departments.

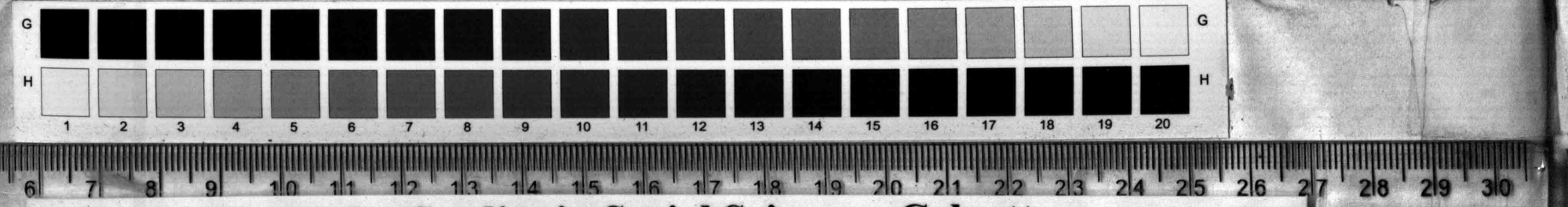
Besides the Crown Prince of Japan, His Highness Prince Arisugawa is about to join the Head-quarters of the Army and take part in the operations against Russia.

News has been received here from an unimpeachable source that the Russians have a secret coal-supply at the Island, Jebel Zukur, and that the warships that have been patrolling the Red Sea have there obtained their necessary fuel.

There is a constant movement of large Russian forces along both banks of the Yalu, where miles of fortifications are being constructed.

The attitude of the Chinese is beginning to cause alarm to the Russian authorities, the rolling-stock being massed on the China Eastern Railway in the vicinity of Peking.

The troops in Mukden and Niuchwang are suffering severely from the intense cold. The Russian forces now at Leoyang number fifty-eight thousand infantry and cavalry.



NEWS LATER THAN THE MAIL. RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR.

APPOINTMENTS AND TRANSFERS. Mr. H. W. C. Carnduff, I. C. S., is appointed to be a District and Sessions Judge of the second grade, and to act as Judicial Commissioner of Chota Nagpur.

Japan and Corea have signed the Wiju-Seoul Railway concession. The St. Petersburg correspondent of the "Aurore" a Paris daily journal, declares that an enormous percentage of Jews have been sent to the front.

FAREWELL DINNER AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE. One of the largest and most brilliant functions that has taken place at Government House for some time was that on Monday evening last, the 28th March, when His Excellency the Viceroy entertained the Hon. Sir Thomas Raleigh, the Hon. Justice Sir Henry Prinsep, the Hon. Mr. Justice Anwar Ali, and Mr. E. W. Latimer at a farewell dinner on the eve of their departure from India.

self. It is not for me to speak of Sir Henry Prinsep's work as a Judge. At the farewell banquets that have been given to him during the past few days by the members of his own profession, I have no doubt that much has been said on that point by those who are better qualified to speak than I. What has always struck me has been the elasticity of intellect and temperament that has made and kept him young to the end, always abreast of the times, never losing in freshness what he gained in experience.

THE SUPREME LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

A meeting of the Supreme Legislative Council was held at the Throne Room, Government House on Wednesday at 10 a.m. There was a large and fashionable gathering to witness the ceremony. His Excellency the Viceroy presided and there were present His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India, the Hon. Mr. T. Raleigh, the Hon. Sir E. F. G. Law, the Hon. Major-General Sir E. R. Eyles, the Hon. Sir A. T. Arundel, the Hon. Sir Denzil Ibbotson, the Hon. Sir Rai Sri Ram Bahadur, the Hon. Mr. A. W. Cruickshank, His Highness the Raja Bahadur of Sirmur, His Highness agha Khan, the Hon. Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, the Hon. Mr. E. Cable, the Hon. Sir Nawab Saiyid Muhammad Sahib Bahadur, the Hon. Mr. H. Adamson, the Hon. Mr. A. A. Elder, the Hon. Mr. T. Morrison, the Hon. Dr. Bhandarkar, the Hon. Mr. J. B. Bilderbeck, the Hon. Mr. D. M. Hamilton, the Hon. Sir Rai Bahadur B. K. Bose, and the Hon. Dr. Asutosh Mukhopadhyaya.

LEAVE. The Hon. Mr. R. T. Groer, C. S. I., Chairman of the Corporation of Calcutta, is allowed combined leave from the 30th March 1904 to the 15th November 1904.

THE CASE OF LIEUTENANT WITTON. The refusal of the Imperial Government to release Lieutenant Witton of the Bush Veldt Carbineers, has caused deep disappointment in Natal. The action of the Government in Witton's case is being contrasted with the extreme leniency shown to "Colonel" Arthur Lynch, who was convicted of treason, and to certain Dutch rebels who were guilty of heinous crimes.

LAND RECORDS AND AGRICULTURE IN THE U. P. We take the following from the Resolution on the report on the operations of the department of land records and agriculture in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh for 1902-1903.

THE MULLAH'S DESPERATE FLIGHT. Bombay, Mar. 28. Advice from Somailand state that at the time the mail left two columns under General Basken and Major Brooke had started in advance and next week was expected to bring to hand news of the Mullah's exact whereabouts, and probably some intimation as to whether the enemy are going to make a stand or not.

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BENGAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 1904-1905.

GENERAL REVIEW.

1. When the revised estimates for 1904-1905 were laid before the Council on the 26th March, 1903, the closing balance of that year was estimated at Rs. 56,43,100. The actual closing balance was not known till the accounts were finally closed some months later, and it then turned out to be worse by Rs. 1,14,000. The receipts had been under-estimated by Rs. 89,000, but, on the other hand, the expenditure had also been under-estimated by Rs. 2,03,000. The real closing balance was, therefore, Rs. 55,29,000.

2. The next step towards the preparation of the Budget for the year 1904-1905 is the revision in the light of the latest information of the estimate for the year 1903-1904 which last March was laid upon the table in the form of a Budget Estimate. More accurate information is now available and certain changes have been made. A year ago the opening balance of the year 1903-1904 was a matter of estimate, now the actual figure is known from the accounts of the year 1902-1903; moreover, since then the progressive income and expenditure have been closely watched month by month; also savings under some heads have been transferred for expenditure under others; and, lastly, certain extraordinary items, chiefly large grants from the Imperial Government, have to be brought into the account.

3. During the first half of the current year the rainfall was unsatisfactory and the ordinary revenue was considerably less than had been anticipated, so much so that at one time it was actually found necessary to curtail expenditure. When the "Hatiya" rains had passed, however, there was a complete recovery, and now it is evident that the receipts from ordinary revenue will exceed the estimates.

4. In March, 1903, the forecast of my predecessor was that the year 1903-1904 would open with a credit balance of Rs. 56,43,000, that the total revenue would amount to Rs. 5,16,25,000, that the total expenditure would be Rs. 5,52,68,000 and that the year would close with a balance of Rs. 20,00,000. 5. As already noted, however, the opening balance of 1903-1904 which corresponds with the closing balance of 1902-1903, has proved to be worse than the estimate by Rs. 1,14,000. On the other hand it is anticipated that there will be a net improvement in the receipts from ordinary revenue amounting to Rs. 2,24,000. This is the net result, on the one hand, of increases under Land Revenue, Stamps, Miscellaneous, and Irrigation and Navigation, and on the other hand of decreases under Jail Manufactures, Forests Assessed Taxes and Provincial rates. If the opening balance and ordinary receipts be taken together, they show a net improvement of Rs. 1,10,000.

6. To these receipts must be added certain extraordinary items aggregating Rs. 4,04,000, which bring the total net improvement on the receipt side up to Rs. 5,14,000. The items in question are the following:—(A) A credit of Rs. 2,15,000 on account of the sale-proceeds of the premises No. 29, Chowringhee Road, which were the quarters of the Commissioner of Police, Calcutta. Nearly the whole of the amount realised has been paid away in the purchase of another house for the same officer. (B) An assignment of Rs. 1,89,000 from the Imperial Revenues, which is made up of (1) Rs. 87,000, the balance of a loan taken by the Port Commissioners of Chittagong for the purchase of the steam vessel "Gekko" the reversion of which was sanctioned by His Excellency the Viceroy during his recent visit to that Port. There is a corresponding charge under "Miscellaneous" on the expenditure side. (2) Rs. 1,00,000 as a contribution towards the cost of the Teesta Valley Road in Sikkim. (3) Rs. 2,000 to pay for the additional police force sanctioned for the frontier. These grants are distinct from the large grants amounting to Rs. 1,05,00,000 which are referred to below.

7. On the expenditure side there have been savings amounting to Rs. 28,48,000 and increases amounting to Rs. 20,63,000, the result being a net improvement of Rs. 7,85,000. When this is added to the net improvement of Rs. 5,14,000 on the receipt side, the sum is a total net improvement of Rs. 12,99,000. The revised estimated closing balance is, therefore, raised by this amount, and becomes Rs. 32,99,000 in place of Rs. 20,00,000.

The savings referred to are principally made up of the following amounts:—(a) and (b) Rs. 3,02,000 under Land Revenue, and Rs. 3,49,000 under Judicial Courts, owing partly to over-estimates in the Budget and partly to the provision for the reorganization of the Subordinate Executive Service not having been fully utilized; (c) Rs. 2,69,000 under Jails, chiefly in raw materials owing to smaller demands for manufactures; (d) Rs. 5,50,000 under Police owing to the suspension of any large reforms pending orders on the recommendations of the Police Commission; (e) Rs. 1,72,000 under Marine owing to no payment having been made for the new steamer ordered to replace the Pilot vessel "Sarsuti"; (f) Rs. 3,84,000 under Education of which a part is nominal having been added to the Public Works Department grant for expenditure on Educational buildings and a part is due to the scheme for the Provident Fund for gurus not having yet been sanctioned by the Secretary of State; (g) Rs. 2,52,000 under Medical owing to smaller outlay on preventive measures against plague; (h) Rs. 95,000 under Scientific and other Minor Departments, owing to the grant of Pusa Farm not having been utilised, and no expenditure having been incurred for the Dumsong Division of the cinchona plantation; (i) Rs. 3,07,000 under Irrigation and Navigation owing to no outlay on the suction dredger for which a provision was made in the budget; (j) Rs. 38,000 under Stamps; (k) Rs. 40,000 under Customs. This enhanced expenditure occurred under the following heads:—(1) Rs. 1,14,000 under General Administration chiefly under "Commissioners" due partly to privilege

leave allowance, and larger expenditure in steam boat contingencies at Chittagong and Dacca, and partly to the adjustment of the value of tents and furniture added to the Lieutenant-Governor's tour and camp establishments; (2) Rs. 75,000 under Stationary and Printing owing to larger supplies of stationery from the Central Stores; (3) Rs. 81,000 under Miscellaneous to enable the balance of the "Gekko" loan to be written off; (4) Rupees 17,69,000 under Civil Works.

8. The effect of the improvements noted above has been, as already stated, to raise the closing balance in the revised estimates from Rs. 20,00,000 to Rs. 32,99,000. To this latter amount, however, must be added three grants from the Imperial Government aggregating Rs. 1,05,00,000 which finally raise the closing balance to the extraordinary figure of Rs. 1,37,99,000. These grants are (1) Rs. 50,00,000—a special grant in connection with the Provincial contract. (2) Rupees 5,00,000—a special grant from Imperial and Provincial for such objects or institutions as hospitals, museums, colleges, public libraries, hostels, public spaces or gardens, etc. (3) Rupees 50,00,000—the Imperial contribution towards the carrying out of the scheme for the Improvement of Calcutta.

BUDGET ESTIMATE, 1904-1905.

9. The Budget Estimate for 1904-1905 is practically a detailed statement of the new Provincial Settlement made by the Imperial Government with the Government of Bengal. The surplus opening balance is mainly composed of Imperial grants, on the revenue side of the budget there are the receipts from the sources of Revenue made over to this Government, the lump assignment, and the special grant of 4 lakhs for ministerial officers; and on the expenditure side there are the various items that make up the ruling account. Provision on a generous scale has been made for reforms, but the greater part of the expenditure has either been allowed for when the ruling account was drawn up, or has been provided for in subsequent grants which have been separately made or promised.

10. The estimated opening balance is Rs. 1,37,99,000 and the manner in which this is arrived at has already been explained.

11. The estimate shows receipts aggregating Rs. 5,04,43,000, an expenditure of Rs. 5,36,97,000, and a closing balance of Rs. 1,95,46,000.

12. The ordinary Provincial minimum closing balance is Rs. 20,00,000; but in addition to that amount the Government of Bengal has agreed to keep the special grant for the improvement of Calcutta untouched, and not to spend more than 15 lakhs during the year 1904-1905 out of the grant of 50 lakhs made in connection with the Provincial Settlement; so that under the present conditions, the minimum closing balance is Rs. 50 x 50 x 35, or 105 lakhs. The estimated closing balance is therefore Rs. 45,000 in excess of the present minimum.

13. The expenditure of the year exceeds the income by Rs. 32,54,000. The difference is, however, fully made up by the following items of "non-recurring" expenditure:—(1) Part of the grant of 50 lakhs to be spent on Public Works, Police Buildings, etc., Rs. 20,00,000; (2) Special grant of the Government of India Rs. 50,00,000; (3) Other Public Works expenditure in excess of Rs. 40,00,000—Rs. 10,00,000; (4) Purchase of Pilot Vessels to replace "Sarsuti," Rs. 3,84,000; (5) Grants to District Officers for reader rooms Rs. 2,00,000; (6) New provision for Dacca Commissioner Rs. 60,000; (7) Revision of gazetted Rs. 40,000; (8) Extension of Revenue College Rs. 40,000; (9) Dacca Madrassa Rs. 12,000.

14. Provision has also been made for the following reforms, all of which involve recurring expenditure:—(1) Increase of salaries of ministerial officers and subordinate appointments to apprentices Rs. 4,00,000; (2) Improvement of the position of I. M. S. Officers Rs. 1,20,000; (3) Increase of Sub-Deputy Collectors Rs. 1,00,000; (4) Calcutta Police Reforms Rs. 50,000; (5) Pay of an additional Judge for High Court Rs. 45,000; (6) Increase of Deputy Magistrates and Collectors Rs. 45,000. To these sums must be added 2½ lakhs which the Government of India has promised to provide when a scheme has been prepared and sanctioned for strengthening the staff of Deputy Magistrates and Collectors.

15. The assignment of 5 lakhs made by the Government of India out of the Imperial surplus has been provisionally allotted as follows:—Grants-in-aid of Leprosy Asylums Rs. 37,000; for flooring and dadas of the Medical College Hospital Rs. 75,000; for remodelling of the Campbell Medical School and Hospital Rs. 50,000; for additional ward in Outback General Hospital Rs. 15,000; for equipment and structural improvements in North Suburban Hospital Rs. 20,000; for the construction and equipment of a hospital at Kurseong Rs. 50,000; for equipment of Howrah General Hospital Rs. 20,000; grant to the Medical Mission at Kalna Rs. 20,000; for equipment in surgical instruments and aseptic furniture in smaller dispensaries maintained from District and Municipal Funds Rs. 25,000 other dispensaries for completion of buildings or equipment Rs. 17,000; Young Women's Christian Association for a Home Rs. 15,000; Calcutta Free School for Kindergarten Department Rs. 10,000; Marcus Square recreation ground in the northern part of Calcutta Rs. 10,000; Calcutta Orphanage for Hindus Rs. 5,000; Deaf and Dumb School Rs. 5,000; Kurseong Orphanage Rs. 40,000; Quarters for the Superintendent of Aims House and Workshop, and filling up a putrid tank within the compound Rs. 36,000. For the establishment of a laboratory and teaching museum in the Royal Botanical Garden, Sibpur, Rs. 50,000; Total 5,00,000.

16. ON OF THE TRIUMPHS OF MODERN SURGERY.—By applying an antiseptic dressing, cuts, bruises, burns, and like injuries before an infection sets in, they are healed without maturation and in one-third the time required by the old treatment. This is one of the greatest discoveries and triumphs of modern surgery. Chamberlain's Pain Balm acts on this same principle. It is an antiseptic and when applied to such injuries causes them to heal very quickly. It also allays the pain and soreness. Keep a bottle of Pain Balm in your house and it will save you time and money, not to mention the inconvenience and suffering such a medical case entails for sale by

Smith, Stanstreet and Co. Wholesale Agents, 5, Paul and Co., Abdoel Karaman and Abdoel Karaman, Calcutta.

INDIAN NOTES.

A SHOOTING PARTY.

A Mysore correspondent writes: Lord Kitchener is expected here about the first week in April, and arrangements are being made to get his Lordship some tiger shooting during his short stay. Mr. Ricketts in arranging for it in the Hegg-d-evankota Taluq, noted for tigers, and Mr. Theobald has gone to Tumkur and Arsikere to make similar arrangements, these if there are any tigers about.

A HAND-TO-HAND FIGHT WITH A TIGER.

On Monday last says the "Hindu" a villager pluckily attacked a tiger that was lying on the railway line near the Mosu Station. It was a life and death struggle; the villager was only armed with a cudgel with which he made a desperate attack on the tiger, but was eventually overpowered by the infuriated brute which tore and bit him all over, and then retired. The unfortunate man has since succumbed to his injuries at Arkonam.

KIDNAPPING A LAWFUL WIFE.

Sometime ago a case was brought before the court of the Joint Magistrate of Cawnpore in which a Head Constable and two others were charged by a Musalman with having enticed away his lawful wife.—The Court dismissed the case as the marriage was not legal. On the 9th January last the case came up before the Sessions Judge in revision who transferred it for retrial on 3rd February last to the Court of Nawab Saifullah Khan, Khan Bahadur, Deputy Magistrate. About 23 witnesses were summoned on behalf of the prosecution. The date for hearing came off on the 21st March, witnesses were summoned from other districts.

A SHIKAR ACCIDENT.

The circumstances under which Major R. G. Burton, with his recent shikar accident, have, it is not been correctly described in an account which was quoted in these columns a couple of days back from a Bombay paper. It appears that Major Burton, accompanied by Lieutenant Wallis and two Sikh sowars of the 20th Deccan Horse, who were following up a wounded panther when the animal charged from a few yards' distance. Major Burton fired and hit it in the chest, but failed to stop the beast, which seized him and bore him to the ground. Mr. Wallis and one of the Sikhs, who had a shot gun, fired into the animal, and the Sikh then clubbed his gun and beat it on the head. It was his driven off and afterwards found dead close by. Major Burton whose left arm and leg were severely injured, was conveyed to Bolarum, where we are glad to hear he is progressing very favourably.—"Pioneer."

ONE RUPEE DAMAGE AWARDED AGAINST GOVT.

In 1901, Mr. P. R. Venkatasulu Naidu, of Madura, was elected as a Councillor for the 10th Ward of the Madura Municipality. His rival candidate put in an objection petition impeaching the election on all possible grounds allowed by the rules with the result that the election was set aside disqualifying Mr. Venkatasulu Naidu's eligibility to a seat in the Municipal Council by reason of a conviction for insult and holding that his entry into the Council would bring the Municipal administration into contempt. Thereupon Mr. Venkatasulu Naidu sent no less than three petitions in vain to Government, praying for an inquiry as the Deputy Collector to whom the objection petition was referred to for inquiry shut out the inquiry expressing views favourable to him and held no inquiry at all into the reasons contained in the Government Order. He also further pointed out to the Government that their order was opposed and was in conflict to the previous orders. Having been unsuccessful he filed a suit in the Madura District Munsiff's Court for a declaration that the order of the Government was ultra vires and for an award of one rupee damages. The District Munsiff Mr. Kisna Rao, B.A., B.L. dismissed the suit with costs. On appeal the District Judge Mr. H. Moberly reversed the District Munsiff's decision and found on all the points raised in the case in favor of the plaintiff and held that the Government Order stated above was ultra vires and "that as plaintiff has not been removed from his appointment by election to be a Municipal Councillor, is a Municipal Councillor," and further ordered the Government to pay plaintiff the sum of Rupee one as and for damages and also his costs.—"Hindu."

A HABIGANJ SENSATION.

Nearly two months ago three coolies of the Teiipara Garden were convicted and sentenced to a fine of Rs. 2 each, by the Tipperah Raj authorities for trespassing into the Tipperah Hill forests in the neighbourhood of the said garden which has been leased to Babu Mohendra Chandra Choudhuri of Jagadishpur. It may be mentioned that the coolies were arrested by the Tipperah Raj Police with the assistance of Ijaradur's men and made over for trial and convicted on their confession. Simultaneously with the above occurrence the manager of Teiipara wired to the S.D.O. Habiganj to say that 3 of his coolies were kidnapped. On receipt of this Mr. Majid hastened to the garden and inspected the place of occurrence. About a week after, a formal complaint was lodged on behalf of the manager that the coolies were kidnapped by one Harish Chandra Choudhuri and Atul Singh. The complaint was referred to the Madhabpur Police for investigation and report. But nothing it appears, transpired for nearly a month and a half. On the 13th of March Sub Inspector Umankar Bhattacharya of Madhabpur with a posse of 70 or 80 village chowkidars and some constables came to Jagadishpur and surrounded the house of Babu Mahendra Chandra Choudhuri with a view to arrest Harish Chandra Choudhuri. The Sub Inspector was informed that Harish was not at home whereupon he wanted a search into the houses of the Choudhuries. Apprehending untoward developments, Babu Umesh Chandra Choudhuri offered to produce Harish on any day that may be fixed by the Sub-Inspector. The Sub-Inspector then demanded a bond of Rs. 500 from the Choudhuri to which he was compelled to submit under the circumstances. Harish was then produced on the date fixed and sent up under hand-cuff to Habiganj before submission of the final report. The Magistrate has refused bail.—"W. C."

NOTES FROM SYLHET.

(From a Correspondent.)

Sylhet, Mar. 25.

CIVIL COURT AFFAIRS.

The all-engrossing topic of the hour is the ensuing visit of Mr. Justice Rampini to this benighted Province to inspect the Courts and offices and acquaint himself with the needs and grievances of the law-going public of this part of the country. Not less than thirty-five years have elapsed since the memorable visit of Mr. Justice Jackson to the town of Sylhet, which resulted in the memorial of officers, who were found to be so many thorns on the side of Administration of Justice. This inspection tour of a High Court Judge, after such a length of time has caused through the Province a good deal of flutter in the breast of those who dread the scrutiny of their work. There has been some change in the programme of his Lordship, and he is not likely to visit the Surma Valley districts before the first week of April. He is going direct to the upper valley, and is timed to arrive at Gauhati by the 28th inst. It is not yet known how many districts His Lordship will find time to visit, but as at present arranged, he will reach Sylhet by the 4th proximo, and stay there for a number of days. His Lordship has been pleased to accept the invitation of the members of the Local Bar to an entertainment which they propose to give in honour of his visit to their own town. As regards the needs and grievances of the local public, it can be said that the district of Sylhet is administered by Junior Civilians and cast-off Subordinate-Judges recruited from the obscure corners of Bengal. This district has been a training ground for a large number of District Judges which Bengal now boasts of. Generally speaking, young Joint-Magistrates of Assam become the District Judge of Sylhet, and when they learn work and gain some experience of Judicial business they are shunted off to Bengal. If instances were needed, we could name Messrs. Meyers, Kelleh, Teunon, Howard, Nichols, Newbould and several others. All of these officers, except the last, who is still serving in the district, distinguished themselves in their latter life, and some of them are still ornaments to the Bench. When Sylhet was transferred from Bengal in 1874 hopes were held out and definite pledges were made in cold print that the District would continue to be administered by experienced District Judges, but these pledges have not been redeemed, and those hopes have been broken to the ear. But that generous and far-sighted statesman—Sir Henry Cotton—felt the injustice done to the district, and he moved the Hon'ble High Court to depute a first-grade Judge to this district, but it was a temporary relief, and Mr. Cameron left the Province before serving long as the District Judge of Sylhet. The people of Sylhet may therefore expect that the matter will receive the earnest attention of Mr. Justice Rampini. The Subordinate Judges who are sent out to Assam are the "undesirables" of the Bengal service. It is an admitted fact that the civil suits of this district are of an exceptionally intricate nature and none but trained and experienced Judges can cope with them with credit to themselves and satisfaction to the law-going public. This is a matter which should come in for a share of the consideration of the High Court Judge.

ASSAM SECRETARIAT.

The Provincial Saraph of Assam is determined upon denouncing the Secretariat of those undesirable, who are suspected to divulge the secrets of his Administration. For sometime past there was an "in camera" inquiry in the Assam Secretariat to ascertain the cause which led to the premature revelation of "official secrets" from the Assam Secretariat. This inquiry, I am told, has resulted in the degradation and transfer of several assistants, who are under orders of transfer to the wilds of Assam, as a punishment for the "astroticities" they are "suspected" of. No formal charges were drawn up against them, and no body was called upon to submit any explanation for any dereliction of duties. In other words they have been condemned quite unheard!

JUDICIAL VAGARIES.

Two cases of considerable local sensation have cropped up in quick succession in the Sylhet district of this Province. A lensidar or Sicular while recording evidence in a mutation case pending before him reported to have used abusive language towards a gentleman concerned in the case. The aggrieved party laid a formal complaint before the Deputy Commissioner of Sicular, who has dismissed the complaint under Section 203 of P. C. as frivolous and vexatious. The other case has been instituted in the Court of an Assistant Commissioner at Sylhet by onekajani Kumar Gupta on the allegation that he was abused by a local Munsiff in very obscure language in the course of his examination as a witness in connection with a suit pending before the Munsiff. The Deputy Commissioner transferred the case to his own file and sent down the record to the District Judge for a settlement out of Court. Apart from the innocence or otherwise of the officers concerned, it will be conceded by all right-minded persons that Judicial officers should always bear in mind that petulance is a vice which they should specially guard against.

The recent decision of the Divisional Magistrate of British Cochinchina with reference to the Yypeen church agency case, has given rise to a similar dispute in the Amarapatty church. Attached to this Church is a small chapel at Eravelly, in Native Cochinchina. This chapel and the large compound in which it is situated were given as legacies to the church by a Portuguese lady about half a century ago. The provisions of the Will were defined in 1894 by the late Dr. Ferreira, then Bishop of Cochinchina. The property has been in the possession of the Vicar since it was left to the church. The other day the Trustees, with other parishioners, attempted to pick cocoanuts, and but for the timely intervention of the Police the incident would have probably resulted in bloodshed. The produce is now in Police custody while the matter is to go before the District Magistrate. There were nearly 3,000 people present when the attempt was made and the Police appeared on the scene. This may be taken as the first of a series of discussions that are to follow in the Cochinchina Diocese owing to the Yypeen affair.

THE CIVIL COURT AMIAs. A DEFENCE.

(From our own Correspondent.)

Bankipur, Mar. 24.

As the result of agitation that has been going on for sometime past against the local Civil Court "Amias" we are glad to hear that our present District Judge, Mr. Holmwood, has set his heart to put an end to all corrupt practices and for this purpose he has asked some of his subordinate officers and pleaders of his Court to keep him in training certain rules that will most effectually check the prevalent corruptions. While training Mr. Holmwood for his promptitude and good intention, we really fail to understand why he did not think it worth his while to consult some of the survey passed pleaders who are really the aggrieved party. The people whose co-operation Mr. Holmwood has sought are exactly the men who are the most to blame. For as a rule the "Amias" are a class of ill-paid and badly educated men so that it is no wonder if they tempted to earn something over and above their regular pay. But how is it that the pleaders specially those of good standing, are so very reticent over the matter? Not only that; a few of them sometimes aid the "Amias" by advising the parties to grease their palms, and some Indian "hakims," I regret, are the greatest offenders in shielding the "Amias." A few concrete instances will suffice to show how the prevalent corruptions in our Civil Courts are more due to the incompetence of our present-day "hakim" than any body else.

1. A pleader lately found out that the execution Mohurrir of the first Sub-Judge Court had got an "amin" appointed as Commissioner for the delivery of possession in a certain decree in a partition suit rather clandestinely and had Rs. 200 deposited for the remuneration of the Commissioner. Now, it is the standing rule of the District Judge that whenever a Commissioner is required the matter must be referred to him so that he may himself select the Commissioner from the list. In spite of this standing rule not only was the matter not referred to the Judge but the "mohurrir" had the audacity to write out an order appointing the Amin as Commissioner and got it signed by the Sub-Judge. When the matter was brought to the notice of the Sub-Judge, he simply warned the offender and took no further step. Now, the question is, if a simple warning met the requirement of this case. For the same "mohurrir" had been guilty of many previous offences of like nature and had once been let off by the predecessor of the Sub-Judge in question as well.

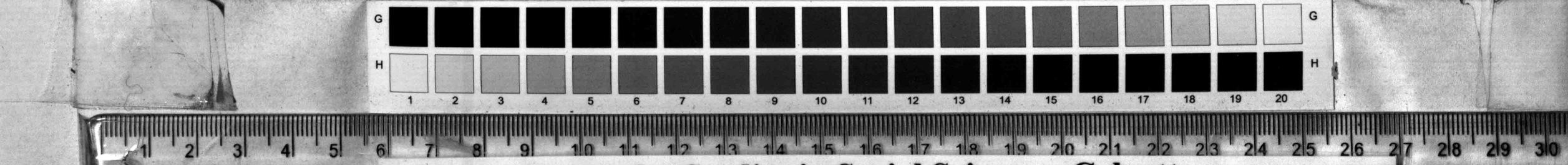
2. The above is an instance of passive tolerance but the following will show how the arbitrary conduct of some "hakims" into corruptions. Only the other day a Commissioner was required in the Court of the Munsiff, 2nd Court, to hold local investigation to find out whether a certain piece of land belonged to one "mouza" or another. The Judge was referred to for a Commissioner and a survey passed pleader was appointed. The pleader asked the District Judge to fix his fee at Rs. 25 per diem for out-door work but the Munsiff fixed it at Rs. 10 only per diem. Thereupon the pleader by an application requested the Munsiff to refer the matter of fee to the District Judge but the Munsiff wrote to the District Judge that inasmuch as the pleader nominated by him had refused to work for Rs. 10 per diem, he needed another Commissioner who would do the work for the fee fixed by him. He also argued in his letter that as the value of the suit was very small, Rs. 10 per diem was more than enough. The Judge thereupon asked the survey passed pleaders if any of them was willing to do the work for the fee fixed by the Munsiff if they all refused. Thereupon the Commission-ership was given in a most haphazard fashion to a pleader who had failed to pass the survey examination. Now, there can be no question that in this case a knowledge of survey was essentially necessary by which the survey examination of pleaders was instituted and from the circular orders of the High Court it is clear that all Commission for local investigation in which a knowledge of survey is required should be given to the Civil Court Amin when there is one and to the qualified pleaders. Now, in the present instance the Commission went neither to the Civil Court Amin nor to any passed pleader but to a third party whose appointment was quite illegal.

Thus, it will be seen that neither the Government resolution nor the circular orders of the High Court are sometimes of any value in the eyes of the "hakims" of the Patna Civil Courts. If an enquiry be made it will be seen that the pleader appointed by the District Judge never refused the Commission and how is it that the Munsiff in his letter to the District Judge wrote what was not correct. If his dignity was offended at the refusal of the pleader to work for the fee fixed by him, he should not have tried to vent his wrath by hook and crook. The pleader in question was quite justified in refusing to work for a fee which was really very low. For the District Judge had himself awarded a few days ago, a fee of Rs. 15 per diem for in-door work to a qualified pleader. If the Munsiff wanted the work to be done cheap, he should have given it to the Civil Court Amin.

The Amir, is just now busy himself with his army, and is paying particular attention to wheeled transport. Some Russian transport-carts have been obtained from Tashkent and these are to serve as patterns for use in the Kabul workshops. They are described as being very light, and are made in detachable parts presumably for easy carriage by railway in case of rapid mobilisation. Afghanistan has, however no railways, and the roads as a rule are not fit for wheeled transport. The Amir would do well to rely upon mules, ponies and camels.

THIS IS NO DANGER whatever from lockjaw or blood poison resulting from a wound when Chamberlain's Pain Balm is promptly applied. It is an antiseptic and destroys the germs which caused these diseases. It also causes wounds to heal without maturation and in one-third the time required by the usual treatment. Sold by Smith, Stanstreet and Co., Wholesale Agents, B. K. Paul and Co., Abdoel Karaman and Abdoel Karaman, Calcutta.

NOT A MINUTE should be lost when child shows symptoms of croup. Chamberlain's Cough Remedy given as soon as the child becomes hoarse, or even after the croupy cough appears will prevent the attack. never fails and is pleasant and safe to take. Smith, Stanstreet and Co., Wholesale Agents, B. K. Paul and Co., Abdoel Karaman, and Abdoel Karaman, Calcutta.



THE CHARDUAR RUBBER PLANTATION.

In India quite a number of plants are to be found that give varying qualities of caoutchouc, but the chief indigenous tree of commercial value is that known as Ficus Elastica...

Accordingly in 1873-4 a clearing was made in the forest at Charduar in the Darrang district some 15 miles from Tezpur. A number of cuttings were planted out and a nursery for cuttings established.

In its natural state the Indian rubber fig or caoutchouc tree, to quote from an interesting article written by Mr. D. P. Copeland in 1899, "starts in the forks of other trees often 20 or 30 feet or even more from the ground, from seed contained in the droppings of birds that have fed on the rubber figs, where the seed germinates and the young plant remains an epiphyte for years until its aerial roots touch the ground; as soon as this takes place the little epiphyte changes rapidly into a vigorous tree throwing out numerous aerial roots which gradually envelop the tree on which it first began life and often kill it."

In practice it was found unprofitable to plant the young seedlings in the forks of trees and the best plan experience proved was to plant them on mounds after keeping the seedlings in stockaded nurseries in the forest for about three years after germination, by which time they had grown to a height of 10 or 12 feet. The young rubber plants are regarded as a special delicacy by animals, and the attentions of deer and wild elephants have to be warded off if the plantation is to stand any chance of establishing itself.

The tapping and collecting of the rubber has to be done during the dry season as rain discolours and depreciates its value. I had an opportunity of seeing a quantity being packed for export. When it comes from the forest it is before alluded to, namely, "A" that taken direct from the cuts in the trees; "B" that which runs out and dries on the trunk, and "C" the droppings that fall on to the ground and form thin sheets.

At the outset the Government plantation had a great difficulty to contend with in obtaining a fair price for their rubber. For a great many years "Assam rubber" has been known on the market and has not enjoyed a very enviable reputation. It was generally collected by the native hill men the AKAS and DUMAS who made the rubber up into balls and the natives who snaped it into a sort of pancake. Far from being pure rubber it usually contained a big proportion of dirt, stones, leaves, twigs and other rubbish. Careless and cupidity combined to bring about this result and it is also said that the tappers resorted to these practices of mixing the rubber with bark, sand, stones etc., to get even with the buyers who cheated them in the matter of weight. However, this may be, when the forest department put the produce of their plantations on the market they had to convince intending purchasers that there was Assam rubber and Assam rubber. It is gratifying to know that the efforts of the Department, headed by the energetic conservator Mr. Carr, are having the desired effect and the mark "Assam Government Plantation Rubber" is now being accepted as a guarantee of purity and good quality.

Years ago rough and ready methods seem to have been in vogue to collect the rubber, and the "dao" was the chief instrument used to cut the bark in order that the caoutchouc might exude. But careless tapping led to serious injury to the trees, the wounds healing slowly, and oftentimes causing the trees to rot and decay. Nowadays the tapping is done by means of V-shaped gonges, the stems and branches being half encircled by horizontal cuts in the bark on alternative sides eighteen inches apart. The cut made is of a size that one could lay a finger in and little trouble is now experienced in getting the trees to heal as it were by first intention. The tapping is done as a rule by men from the Garo hills who get four annas a lb. for collecting.

It was a Sunday when I visited a plantation and the tappers were taking a holiday but I saw several trees on which they had recently been at work. To climb the trees some rising to a height of 50 or 60 feet could have been a task of no small difficulty or danger. Curious ladders formed of roughly cut wood the steps being laced on by strips of cane were resting against some of the trees. On others the straight aerial roots were used as a centre support to which cross pieces of sticks were tied at intervals of a couple of feet or so as a foot hold for the tappers ascending and descending the trees. It was necessary to make at least two ascents, once to gouge the cuts in the bark and again to strip off the rubber that had exuded therefrom.

After an incision is made in the bark two or three days elapsed before gum dries and can be pulled off. In addition to the rubber that actually fills up the cut some trickles over the edge and more again falls on the ground where bamboo mats are spread to receive the

drippings. Curiously enough considerable importance attaches to these apparently minor details as much as the rubber taken from the cuts reaches the market a higher price is obtained than when it is dried on the trunk of the tree and taken on to the ground. That which has been cut from the tappers takes on a reddish tinge that while the rubber that flows from the edges is either white or discoloured. I do not pose as an expert and there may be more in it than meets the eye, but it seems to me that the test of colour has no real bearing on the question of quality. The bark after it is cut by the gouge turns red and bits immersed in water give off an infusion. It seems pretty clear, therefore that the reddish rubber regarded as of a superior quality is simply stained by coming in contact with the exposed wound in the bark and has nothing more to commend itself over the portion that goes over the edge. The mat rubber, of course, being subject to admixture with dirt and leaves is to some extent inferior but when freed from the foreign matter its quality ought to be equal to that collected direct from the trees. In the Chandpur plantation some 2730 acres are under rubber, and extensions of 400 or 500 acres are in progress. It must not be imagined that rubber is a crop that can be collected like jute sugar or indigo, in a season.

A rubber tree takes years to mature. 20 years is none too long a time to leave a tree before commencing to tap. Some, of course, have been tapped a few years earlier but 18 to 18 years seems to have been the earliest age on which it has been thought expedient to start tapping operations. A tree having been once tapped is given a respite for a year or two. It has not yet been accurately determined what degree of tapping gives the best results. Care, of course, has to be exercised not to injure the tree by too frequent tapplings and on the other hand, it is desirable to know the maximum yield that can be obtained without irreparably damaging the source of supply. Experiments designed to provide data on this and other important points are being carried out by the Forest Department. Last year for example 293 acres were tapped between November and April, the dry season in Assam, this area containing 1,466 rubber trees. These yielded 6,462 lbs. of clean rubber giving an average of 1,441 lbs. per tree of 21.6 lbs. per acre. The age of the trees was 22 years. The same area tapped in 1898-99 yielded 1042 lbs. of an average of 97 lbs. per tree. This yield does not of course represent the maximum possibilities of the rubber plantation in its prime. As time goes on the results should be even more satisfactory.

The Government department have done well to preserve a magnificent specimen of the natural rubber tree a veritable monarch of the forest which towers to a height of some 120 feet or more above the nursery of seedlings that has been located around it at the entrance to the plantation. One tapping of this tree gave some 80 lbs. of rubber but it has since enjoyed a deservedly long rest. The plantation trees are healthy and vigorous but the survivor of the days of old is double the height of the best of them. I was glad to observe that the small rubber tree which Lord Curzon planted a few years ago during his tour in Assam is doing excellently and gives every promise of becoming a worthy memorial of the Viceroyal visit.

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THE SOMALILAND CAMPAIGN.

A NEW PHASE.

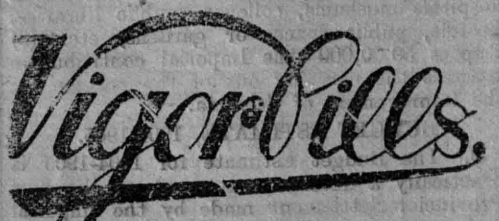
With the British force operating from Sheikh and the Mullah in Soil, the Somaliland Campaign appears to have entered upon a "new phase." It is curious how this expression has a way of recurring with such persistent regularity in our dealings with Mohammed Abdullah, and more curious still is the patience with which the announcement is always received. There can be no doubt that everyone from the Government downwards is somewhat tired of this little "show." Mr. Arnold-Forster was at no pains to hide the feelings of his colleagues and himself on the subject. "The Government took no pride in it, and did not rejoice in it," but they felt

bound in honour to carry on "this unprofitable, and to a certain extent unattractive, and to the public is apparently of the same mind, while allowing themselves to squander away millions on undertakings which have such little prospect of success. The total annual trade of the Protectorate, according to the latest figures, is below 55 lakhs of rupees, and the expenditure, which has lately been enjoying a temporary respite from its usual 100 lakhs, is costing us to the tune of 215,000 a month—all this for the sake of tribes, whose friendships during our campaigns takes the form of raiding our cattle and making themselves generally inconvenient. One wonders whether it would not have been considerably cheaper to have paid Mohammed Abdullah a handsome annuity to reconcile him to a life of peace than to have embarked on operations which have hitherto had such an "unsatisfactory" ending. It is, of course, easy to be wise after the event; but even now perhaps it is not too late to enter into amicable relations with an enemy whose enmity must command our respect. To threaten him with all sorts of penalties if he declines to accede to our imperious demands is a little undignified when the bard is so very far from being in the hand, and as likely as not General Egerton's fulminations have by this time found their way into the Somali equivalent of the waste paper-basket. It is not easy to trace the causes of our quarrel with the Mullah; but, if Major Swayne is to be believed, his first ebullition of "madness" coincided with our acquaintance in the Abyssinian occupation of Harar and our avowed friendship towards the Emperor Menelik. The Somalis expected us to side with them against the Abyssinians, and when these hopes were disappointed their resentment turned against us. Possibly had a little more tact been shown at the outset we should not have found ourselves in our present difficulties. In any case the administration of Somalia is certainly the least creditable achievement of a Government which has had such splendid opportunities of tackling the question. As it is the present expedition, though scoring a signal success at Jidballi, has entirely failed to crush the Mullah, and with the transport animals on their last legs and the infantry "leg-weary," as Renter so happily expresses it, we shall probably have to wait some time before the British force is once more capable of giving the enemy another "blow." More than that is apparently not contemplated by the most sanguine member of the Cabinet. Till the appointed time has arrived we must needs possess our souls in patience; but if the next attempt also prove a fiasco, it will surely be time to devise some new and more effective method of dealing with the situation than the present ruinous system of military expeditions.—"Pioneer."

Prince Alexander Oldenburg has caused a patriotic sensation by giving £150,000 to the War Fund, and has proposed to the Russian Emperor to raise a troop of Irregulars, drawn from the bravest tribes, the Buriats and Kalmyks of the Steppes. The Prince offers to equip and pay for the support of 1,500 of such hardened warriors throughout the war. The Czar has accepted the proposal.

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