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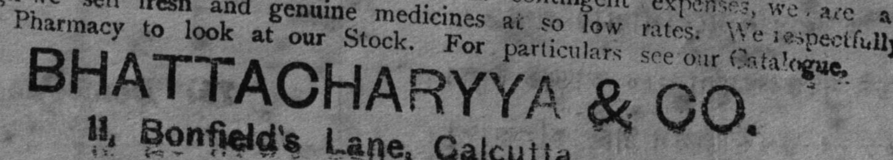
BEST PEBBLE  STEEL FRAMES RS 5.

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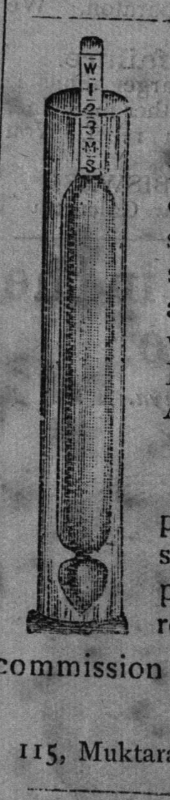

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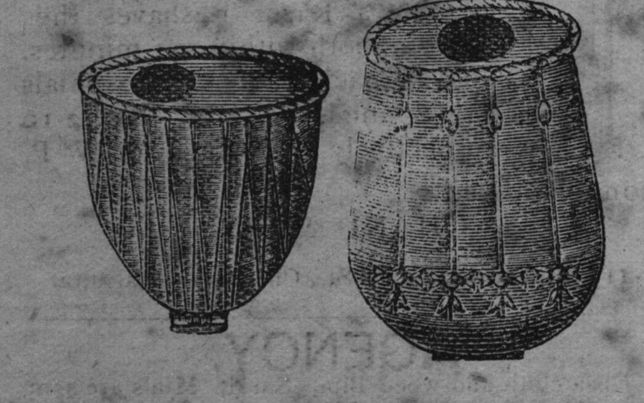

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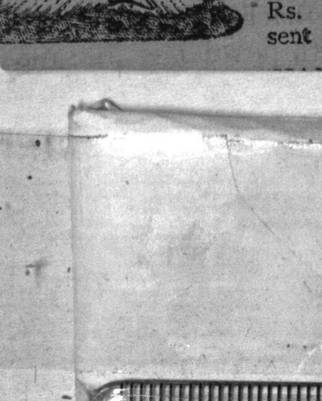

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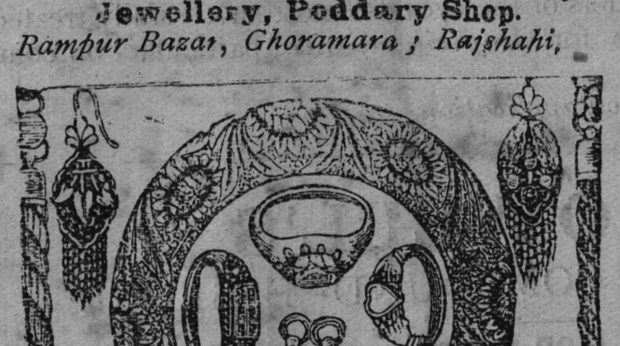

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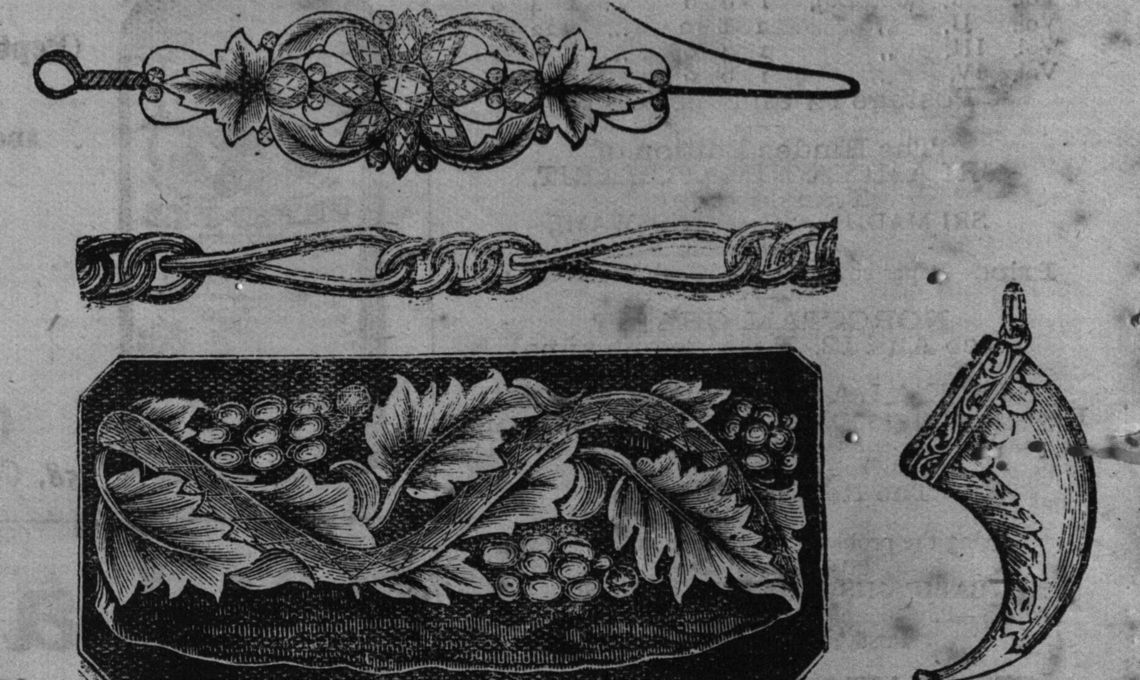

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THE
Amrita Bazar Patrika

CALCUTTA, MARCH 10. 1898.

NUDDEA AND ITS PROPHET.

TO-DAY is a sacred day with the Hindus of all parts of India, and with the Hindus of Bengal especially. The Hindus will to-day celebrate the *Holi* or *Dolejatra* festival all over the country; but, in addition to this festival, the Vaishnavas of Bengal, who form the majority of the population, will also celebrate the anniversary of Sree Gauranga or Sree Chaitanya Mahapravu, the Prophet of Nuddea. It is four hundred and twelve years ago that Sree Gauranga was born in the village of Myapore, in Nuddea. But this Myapore had been in the bosom of the Ganges for a couple of hundred years or so. It has, however, re-appeared since some time; and the exact site where Sree Gauranga was born, has at last been discovered. The devotees of Sree Gauranga have built a temple there, and worship his image and that of his consort, Sreematee Vishnupriya, with all the honour due to the Avatar of God Krishna.

Professor Max Muller thus spoke of Buddhism enthusiastically in one of his public utterances:—

As to the religion of Buddha being influenced by foreign thought, no true scholar now dreams of that. The religion of Buddha is the daughter of the old Brahmin religion, and a daughter, in many respects, more beautiful than the mother. On the contrary, it was through Buddhism that India, for the first time, stepped forth from its isolated position, and became an actor in the historical drama of the world.

It is a pity that the Professor knows nothing of Sree Gauranga who came after Buddha. The pity is the greater because the sayings and doings of the Prophet of Nuddea are in a perfect state of preservation. Of all Prophets, his triumph is the greatest; for, he made his hundred thousands of followers regard him as the Incarnation of the Supreme Being Himself, even while He was on this earth. He flourished in the city of Nuddea at a time when the inhabitants had gone mad after knowledge, and produced some of the brightest intellects that the world has ever seen. So, this Nuddea Prophet extorted the allegiance, which a man owes to the Supreme Being, not from the ordinary herd, but from the brightest intellects of that or of any age.

At no time and at no place really was seen such a state of commotion as the town of Nuddea saw during the life-time of Gauranga. War would sometimes drive a city or a town into paroxysms of madness; sometimes the townspeople would go mad over a new way of acquiring wealth; and sometimes a new religion, or, some social or political change, would convulse society. Nuddea went mad over attainment of learning. All other ideas were relinquished, and the all-absorbing thought of the time was that the acquirement of learning was the highest object of existence.

The prevailing idea was that he alone had utilized his life who had acquired knowledge. The learned only were human beings; they alone were beautiful to look at; they alone were noble and happy. Pursuit of learning began at the very early age of four. Mothers were inspired with the one wish that their sons should be learned; and fathers had naturally the same desire. Daughters would be bequeathed in marriage to learned youths only. The rich would spend large amounts of money in patronising the learned. All classes of people, even Rajas and Maharajas, would stand aside in reverence when the learned Pundits were met with in the streets. The very manners and features of the town were altered. The ladies discussed *shastras* at bathing ghats; boys held learned disputes all over the place; and devotees of learning occupied the whole town. They strolled over in groups, and gathered in thousands on the banks of the Ganges for the same learned culture. Thousands again flocked into the town daily from various places in the interior. They had always their books in their lefthands, and without *granthas* they could not step out of doors. Books were their ornaments, their sole companions, their dearest friends; and books alone were their source of comfort and real strength.

There were *toles* even in lanes and byelanes, and each such educational institution claimed thousands of students. They all met at the bathing-ghats where they held learned debates. The disciples of one Professor often quarrelled with those of another; and such contests, ending very often in hand-to-hand fights, would compel many to seek safety in swimming across the Ganges. The river would be all muddy at bathing times, in consequence of the splashing of waters by the students.

Many had only temporary lodgings at Nuddea. Some had arrived there for the education of their sons; some for their own mental culture, or perhaps only to see the town; others, again, to have a look at the famous Professors, or to give the finishing touch to their education at Nuddea; for, education was at best regarded as incomplete withot usome years of studentship at that great seat of learning. Any one, ranked newly amongst the learned, would come to Nuddea to secure a diploma or perhaps to conquer a compeer in some learned disputes. Nuddea at such time became all agitation.

Sree Gauranga was taken as *Avatar* of God when Nuddea was thus at its zenith of intellectual p osperity. A Hindu *savant* of such celebrity as Vashuedeva Sarvabhoum, who was a class-mate of Gauranga's father, not only worshipped him as God, but had his image painted on the Temple of Jugannath, which image still exists. The then independent and powerful Hindu sovereign of Orissa, Protap Rudra Gazapati, who worsted the Mussalmans in many a battle, and whose sway extended over Madras, also accepted Sree Gauranga as God himself. Indeed, in Orissa, Sree Gauranga was called "living," and Juggannath "lifeless" God. In other words, the place of Jugannath,—God of the Universe,—which even King Protap Rudra himself could not think of occupying, was allowed to be filled up by the Prophet of Nuddea!

A few years ago, very few people even in Bengal knew anything about the marvellous doings of Sree Gauranga and the religion of love that he gave to the world. Thanks to the Bengalee works of Babu Shishir Kumar Ghosh, there are now thousands amongst the English-educated Bengalees who worship Sree Gauranga as Incarnation of Sree Krishna. His Life of the great Prophet of Nuddea in English, entitled "Lord Gauranga or Salvation for all", is a gift which has also been accepted by many a Christian, Mussalman and Rationalist in that friendly spirit in which it has been offered to them by the author. There is not only a demand for the book from the English-knowing people in America and England, but even in France, Germany and Switzerland. It is expected that the teachings of the Prophet of Nuddea will have a humanizing effect upon all, and serve to extend the Kingdom of Heaven and secure the progress of mankind. The grand and wonderful life of Sree Gauranga, though it reads like a romance, is based upon stern, historical facts and incontrovertible testimony. The second volume of the Life of Lord Gauranga by Babu Shishir Kumar is in the press, and is likely to come out in the course of a few weeks. This volume contains the kernel, as it were, of what the *Avatar* of Nuddea taught and did. His *Sanyas* and unparalleled sacrifices for the spiritual elevation of the human race, are simply marvellous, and have been graphically described in the forthcoming volume.

FURTHER ANALYSIS OF SECTION 108.

WHEN you place a loaded gun in the hand of a man and he sees a number of birds sitting before him, he is tempted to shoot at them though they did him no harm. If he, however, feels some compunction in killing a harmless pigeon, he will not do so when he happens to bring down a "carrion kite" with his shot; for, is not the latter a very vicious and dirty bird? This is human nature. Are the District Magistrates passionless Sadhus and Yogis? They themselves, we think, will frankly acknowledge that they have not been able to conquer their passions, and that they are subject to all those prejudices and frailties which govern ordinary mortals. Armed with the beak and claws of the eagle by the proposed section 108 of the Criminal Procedure Code, who can therefore blame them if they are tempted to commit a dreadful havoc among the whole race of "carrion kites",—we mean the political agitators who, we were assured by Sir Alexander Ma ckenzie, had been hitherto treated with "silent contempt", but whose "irresponsible chatter" would no longer be ignored?

It is a pity that the whole country was engrossed with the amendments of section 124A of the Indian Penal Code; and section 108 of the Procedure Code Bill did not thus attract that public attention which it deserved. The Penal Code amendments are no doubt, very dangerous in their own way; indeed, in the hands of the authorities whose temper had been soured, these amendments might be used for the entrire destruction of freedom of speech and writing. But there are at least some safeguards, however slight against the abuse of section 124A. No prosecution is to be instituted without the previous sanction of the Local Government. And we agree with Sir Alexander Mackenzie, to a considerable extent, when he says that, "the journalists must trust to the commonsense and dignity of the Government which would only expose itself to well-merited ridicule if it showed undue sensitiveness to fair criticism." Then again, an appeal lies against the decision of the Magistrate when he tries a sedition case, instituted under section 124A. Section 108 of the Procedure Code, as it stands, takes away both these safeguards, and thus places public discussion and criticism under the absolute control of the District Magistrate.

We have already noticed some of the features of the proposed monstrous innovation in the Code of Criminal Procedure; we shall to-day point out a few more which, when fully realized, will, we doubt not, create a feeling of blank despair in the country. In the original Bill, the section provided that a Magistrate might call upon only such disseminator of seditious or defamatory matter to execute a bond, as resided "within the limits of his jurisdiction." But the clause, as recast by the Select Committee, has been widened so that others, residing beyond his jurisdiction, might also be brought within his clutches.

The original section was worded thus: "Whenever a Magistrate has information that there is within the limits of his jurisdiction any person who disseminates seditious matter, etc.;" as amended by the Select Committee, the section stands as follows: "Whenever a Magistrate has information that there is within the limits of his jurisdiction any person who, *within or without such limits*, disseminates seditious and defamatory matter, etc." The words italicised in the above have been added, and thus it has been made possible for a Punjab Magistrate to haul up a Calcutta man, if he happens to enter the limits of his jurisdiction on some business.

Babu A. is a resident of Calcutta, whose name is in the black book of the authorities for his well-known sympathy with the Congress movement He goes to Amritsar. Information is brought to the District Magistrate that Babu A., having disseminated sedition in Calcutta, has come to reside within his jurisdiction. The District Magistrate will be perfectly justified to proceed against Babu A. in spite of his protest that he is a stranger to the place, that his witnesses are in Calcutta, and that, if convicted, no one in the district is likely to stand security for him. The public will, of course, know very little of the trial, for, the proposed change dispenses with juries and assessors, and empowers the Magistrate to dispose of the matter in any way he likes.

But we have not yet touched the most important feature of the provision. The accused person, if convicted, shall have "to execute a bond, with or without sureties, for his good behaviour," for a period not exceeding one year. Now, the amount of sureties is not fixed. It may be twenty thousands, it may be fifty thousands, it may be a lakh of rupees. There are a good many pleaders in the Muffasil who are not in the good graces of the local authorities. An unscrupulous man, in order to curry favour with a District Magistrate, informs him that one of them has been disseminating seditious or defamatory matter. It so happens that the District Magistrate has a gurdge against the particular pleader. The official is but human; the object of his dislike or hatred is at his mercy; and he uses the powers, vested in him by section 108, sixteen annas. The pleader is ordered to execute a bond in his own name for Rs. 50,000. He complies with the order to save his skin immediately.

But, he is further required to find a surety to the extent of a lakh of rupees. None is, of course, forthcoming to stand security for him; for, who, with a head on his shoulder, will venture to make himself responsible for such a large sum for the good behaviour of his friend for full twelve months, and incur the displeasure of the Magistrate, to boot? For aught he knows, he may forfeit the entire amount of the surety, as the convicted pleader may be charged under the section over again and convicted of the same offence a second time.

So the result will be this. The convicted pleader will fail to furnish any security; and, on failing to do so, will be *rigorously* imprisoned for one year! This is the law which is going to be fastened upon the unfortunate people of India. The section does not breathe a word of fetters; it looks quite innocent in that respect; it is only a matter of bond and security, as far as the wording of the section goes. But any Magistrate may use it in such a way as to make it impossible for a person, accused of disseminating seditious and defamatory matter, to escape jail.

We have now to show the beauty of another clever arrangement in this connection. Like section 108, section 107 of the Procedure Code Bill also empowers the District Magistrate to require a person to execute a bond with sureties, when he is likely to commit a breach of the peace or disturb the public tranquillity. If he, however, fails to give security, he is, under clause (5) of section 123, to suffer *simple* imprisonment. But, under clause (6) of the same section, if a man, convicted under section 108, fail to furnish security, in his case, imprisonment will be simple or *rigorous*! According to our wise legislators, then, one that threatens to disturb the public tranquillity, is entitled to simple imprisonment, but one who merely disseminates any seditious or defamatory matter, without any incitement to violence, deserves to be consigned in jail with rigorous imprisonment.

We must confess, we are getting sick of criticising these measures, the sole object of which is to make the executive irresistible. By the way, has it occurred to the authorities that, by thus arming themselves with powers from head to foot, they are only proving that they are not as capable men as their predecessors were? Just see. They could do without a Sedition Law from 1860 to 1870, though the minds of the people had then been disturbed by a great mutiny. When the country had been settled in 1870, the necessity for the Sedition Law was first urged and then the measure thurst upon the people. There were, however, safeguards attached to section 124A so as to protect public discussion and criticism Twenty-eight years after, that is, in the year of grace 1898, when the whole nation has been almost emasculated and when it is impossible for them to live one day without British protection, the wise rulers come forward not only to discover sedition in every bush but proclaim it to the world to the topmost of their voice, to the delight of Russia and other enemies of England, and introduce a series of repressive measures, the like of which is perhaps to be found nowhere in the world. May we enquire, how did the early rulers manage without these powers, though the country was then not thoroughly subdued; and how is it that their successors absolutely need them, though the people have been disarmed and their martial spirit thoroughly crushed?

IT is a misfortune to the country that both the branches of the Natore Raj family are just now in a bad way. Rajah Jogendra Nath, the head of the junior branch, is noted for his patriotism and public spir from his very boyhood. It is an open secret that in consequence of his spirit of independence and utter contempt of *khairkhaism*, he has never been able to ingratiate himself with the authorities. Yet such of the officials as knew him intimately, could not but feel an admiration for his manly virtues and other noble qualities. When the Bengal Provincial Conference was held at Natore last year, he was offered, as his position suited him, the chairmanship of the Reception Committee; but, being a man of a retiring disposition, he proposed that Maharajah Jogodindra Nath, the head of the senior branch, should occupy the position. It is very well known that both Rajah Jogendra Nath and Maharajah Jogodindra Nath did their best to further the cause of the Conference, and that it was owing mainly to their joint exertions that it proved such a great [illegible]

The earthquake demolished the palati houses of Raja Jogendra Nath, and h came to reside in Calcutta with his so and other members of his family. As i luck would have it, the young Kumar, wh was a jewel of a young man of 25, g remittent fever and died in the course of few days, though he was placed under th treatment of the best physicians in the town The Rajah has no other son, and he wa deeply attached to him. The state of hi mind can thus better be imagined tha described. He has, however, borne th bereavement with his characteristic fortitude and, being a pious man, he is now passin his time in religious contemplation and i the study of Hindu Shastras.

As regards Maharaja Jogodindra Nath he is destined to be one of the foremost men in the country if Heaven keeps him in health. During the Conference at Natore, he worked so hard that it affected his health, and he has been since then—these eight months—suffering from a sort of a head disease. The Doctors have advised him not only complete rest, but to live in the N. W. Provinces and Simla for the next six or eight months. The reader is aware that the Maharajah was elected a member of the Bengal Council by the Rajshye Division. On a previous occasion also, he served as a member of the Council with great credit. This time, however, he could not attend the meeting of the Council which came off on the 26th ultimo; and there is no knowing when he will be in a position to do it again. He might have, however, yet stuck to his seat, as many others in his circumstance would have done. But, being a highly honourable man and a sincere well-wisher of the country, he has thought it proper to resign his seat, so that a competent person may fill up his place; for, it is detrimental to public interest that an absentee member should keep his appointment only for the sake of show. Besides, important measures are now before the Bengal Council, and more important ones are shortly coming before it; it is, therefore, desirable that a strong representative element should be fighting for the interests of the people, though, it may be, without any prospect of success. Considering all these circumstances, the Maharajah has acted like a true patriot by sending in his resignation. It is hardly necessary to say that, if health had permitted, the Maharajah would have done his duty at this juncture to the full satisfaction of his constituency. Indeed, very few noblemen have given such evidence of their willingness and capacity to serve the people as he. But, since his resignation has been tendered and accepted, it behoves the people of the Rajshahye Division to elect another equally competent member, so that the interests of the country may be properly protected by him. What we want is a strong and able man, a man of independence, experience and large sympathies with all classes of the people.

WE notice with very great regret that in filling up certain temporary vacancies in the rank of Commissioners of Divisions in Bengal, caused by officers proceeding on long furlough out of India, the Government has ignored the claims of a respected Indian member of the Covenanted Civil Service who has been always looked upon as a most capable administrator. We refer to Mr. Krishna Gobind Gupta, who is now an Excise Commissioner of Bengal, drawing the salary of a first-grade Magistrate. He came out to India in 1873, and is now forty-first on the seniority list. When in June last the Commissionership of the Dacca Division fell vacant temporarily, Mr. Launcelot Hare, standing forty-eighth, was appointed to fill up the post. We did not protest against the appointment, as we thought that in the that, state of unrest in the Backergunj district preference was given to Mr. Hare for his intimate knowledge of East Bengal. Now that, however, we understand that two more officers, Messrs. Manisty and Allen, below Mr. Hare are getting temporary steps, we feel bound to enter an emphatic protest against the arrangements.

IN the February number of the *Review of Reviews* just to hand,—in that portion of the *Review* which Mr. Stead invariably keeps sacred for his own pen alone,—the following appears under the head line "Gagging of the Press in India":

"And yet when we are smiling at the folly of the Kaiser, let us not forget that at this very moment the demented rulers of our Indian Empire are endeavouring to force into law a monstrous Sedition Bill which throws the enormity of the *lese majeste* law of Germany far into the shade. In this measure it is provided that any one who publishes any writing which excites contempt, ill-will or hatred against the Government, may be transported for life on a charge of sedition. Of course, such a Bill cuts up by the roots all semblance of a free press. It is a confession of weakness and of a timidity born of weakness, which does more to damage the Government of India than all the articles ever published in the Vernacular Press. The autocratic bureaucrats who rule India, will now be deprived of the only means by which they can obtain any genuine expression of opinion on the part of their subjects. It is suicidal policy to bandage your eyes and stop up your ears, merely because you prefer to dwell in a fool's paradise of your our imaginings. If Minis[illegible] do no veto this monstrous Bill, it w[illegible]

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printing of those comments which in India would qualify the writer to transportation for life. And we need not shrink from saying that we should in that case consider it a sacred duty to excite the uttermost contempt, ill-will or hatred against the criminal imbecility of an administration, whose wisdom is attested by the frontier war, whose morality is illustrated by the re-establishment of State-patronised prostitution, and whose courage is shown by a Press gag which deprives the victims, whom it misgoverns, even of the miserable satisfaction of proclaiming their grievances in the ears of their despots."

ON the afternoon of Friday the 18th February, in the House of Commons, Mr. Roberts moved his amendment to the Address; and the debate was still progressing as the mail closed. The full text of Mr. Roberts' speech will be found elsewhere. Our Londou correspondent sends us the following brief *resume* of Mr. Roberts' brilliant and memorable speech:—

Mr. Roberts commenced his speech with an eloquent appeal to the House to abandon those methods of controversy usually inevitable in political warfare, and to unite as those who are responsible for a great Empire, in considering the present Indian situation and in stating their views as to the wisdom of the present Home policy of the Indian Government. Mr. Roberts then dwelt with pathos on the disasters which have recently fallen upon India, and vividly put before the House the depth of feeling which has stirred the Oriental mind by the methods pursued in dealing with the plague, which, however necessary, had, by the unwise administration which had accompanied them, brought the people of India into a state of alarm and uncertainly, which had been further deepened and irritated by coercive measures and repressive legislation. Recently the feeling of alarm has become one of despair,—the inevitable result of this unwise and unsympathetic policy.

Mr. Roberts then proceeded to deal with the various points of his amendment, the first of which is the deportation and continued imprisonment, without trial, of British Indian subjects, the case in point being that of the Deccan Sirdars, the brothers Natu. He briefly re-capitulated the facts, and the pointed out that the Secretary of State for India in a debate in the House last August deliberately adopted the responsibility for these arrests and declared that his action would lead to the unravelling of the conspiracy which resulted in the Poona murders. He contended that the conviction of Damodar has completely exploded this notion, and proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that the Natus were in no way implicated in the plot; and yet they were still in prison with no prospect of release. Mr. Roberts contended that the House and the country has a right to learn from the Secretary of State whether he still maintains that the Natus were really implicated in the plot, and whether he holds the view that they are to be kept in confinement indefinitely without trial or opportuuity of proving their innocence of the charges, so specifically made by him on August last.

Mr. Roberts then quoted a series of questions and answers in the Bombay Legislative Council, to show that Lord Sandhurst was in agreement with Lord George Hamilton; and declared that the position, thus taken up, involves a principle of the highest importance, and is the outcome of a policy totally opposed to the principles of British rule in the past. He explained the origin of the powers under which the arrests were made, and protested vigorously against the unearthing of this rusty weapon of the past for the purpose of imprisoning, without trial, leading men of the present day, denouncing it as conduct wholly unworthy of the traditions of British rule in India.

He then went on to speak of the press prosecutions, and especially that of Mr. Tilak. He admitted that the case was closed by the decision of the Privy Council; but the influence of the conviction still operates adversely on the Indian mind, and the incident cannot be allowed to pass without some public demonstration of the policy which initiated the prosecution. What, demanded Mr. Roberts, are the main principles underlying this case? The freedom of the press in India has proved to be the bulwark of the Government. It enables them to know, and they have no other means of knowing, the feelings and views of the people of India with regard to the Government measures and administration. It is the means by which practical defects in measures are disclosed, and purifies Government by bringing the light of public opinion to bear on the action of its subordinate officials, and plays the part so far as it can played by the elected members of Parliament in democratic countries. Mr. Roberts then quoted, with fine effect, the opinions of Sir Richard Garth and Sir William Markby to show that enlightened Indian officials, students of the Indian press, share this view of their useful influences, and went on to urge that in face of tnis, to pursue the policy of criminal prosecution against Indian newspapers, can only have the effect of stopping the free expression of native opinion as to Indian administration and the grievances being unknown because unexpressed, will remain unredressed, leading to disastrous results. At present, the press is the only safety-valve for the feelings of the country, and it is both foolish and dangerous to close it and deliberately to remain ignorant

Mr. Roberts then discussed with great skill the changes which the Government of India propose to introduce into the law of sedition. He pointed out that the proposed new measure is not for the special *regulation* of the press, but will have the effect of modifying the general criminal law of India in a manner far more fatal to the interests of the press than Lord Lytton's Act, repealed by a Liberal Government, would ever have done. The results of the new law will be to open up an endless vista of prosecutions all over the country against newspapers whom the local Magistrates may suspect to be guilty of that vaguest of offences—"disaffection." The effect of this will be realized when it is considered that practically all the young civilians, after two or three years' experience in India, become first-class Magistrates.

Mr. Roberts then gave quotations to show that the views he expressed are fully corroborated by the representative press of India, giving special weight to those from the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, the *Stateman*, the *Indian Daily News*, the *Morning Post* the *Englishman* and the *Madras Standard*, winding up with a pregnant quotation from Sir William Markby to the effect that in this matter the Magistrate in India stands for the Government, the press for the Opposition and that the appeal to the High Court is the only protection which the press now has in India. It is idle, exclaimed Mr. Roberts, for the House of Commons to ignore the alarm created throughout India by all these combined causes. It is time for Parliament to express its judgment upon the policy of internal repression, pursued by the Government of India upon this important point of administration. The great principles upon which the Government of India has been carried on in the past; are being reversed; and the inevitable effect must be to produce discontent where it has never prevailed before, to produce the impression that the path of progress along which the Government has travelled upon Liberal principles in the past is to be abandoned, and to make it difficult for the people of India to look forward to attaining, upon constitutional lines, those reforms to which we have, by the lesson of English civilization, taught them to set their mind."

DURING the twenty-four hours ending six on Sunday morning there were 197 attacks and 169 deaths from plague in Bombay.

BHAI RAM SINGH, Vice-Principal of the Lahore School of Art, acts as Principal, during 13 months' furlough of Mr. Andrews.

CONFIRMATION of Ghulam Hyder's death at Asmar has not yet been received.

SIR WILLIAM LOCKHART has definitely decided not to take leave until the 26th instant.

IT is probable that the Stamp Bill will be held over, and the Post Office Bill will be passed this session.

THE Aka Khel section of the Afridis have practically complied with the terms of the Government of India.

THE *Indian Daily News* hears that the Hon'ble Mr. Chalmers will shortly proceed on three months' privilege leave.

THE Criminal Procedure Code Bill w come up for disposal at next Friday's meeting of the Supreme Legislative Council.

SIR ANTONY MACDONNELL leaves Bombay on May 7th. His Honour will resume charge on the first week of November.

THE head-quarters of the Collector of Military Accounts, Bengal Command, will shortly be removed from Calcutta to Lucknow.

SIR WILLIAM LOCKHART again interviewed the *jirgahs* at Jamrud on Friday when he was told that the Kambar and Kuki Khel representatives were assembled in Bara Valley ready to submit.

THE *Fort St.George Gazette* contains a notification, prescribing the measures to be taken, first, when plague immediately threatens a district; and, secondly, when it actually breaks out. In view of the gradual approach of plague in the Nizam's Dominions, this order has been brought into operation in the Bellary and Kurnool District.

ON the question of the substitution of the Nagri for the Persian character in courts and public offices in the North-Western Provinces, which was advocated the other day by a deputation to Sir Antony MacDonnell, His Honour replied that though much could be said in favour of the proposal in theory, it was surrounded by practical difficulties and could not be adopted without the most careful consideration.

SO far back as on the 29th October, the question of the permanent settlement of Tirah was decided by Lord Elgin wiring to the Secretary of State: "We do not contemplate, as basis of settlement to be made by Lockhart, the annexation or permanent occupation of Tirah." The Commander in-Chief, however, dissented from this decision. In the same breath, however, the Governor-General in Council recommended the levying of a tribute from the tribe.

A BOMBAY telegram says that on Saturday morning while a party, consisting of one of the Poona punitive police and some of the military were engaged in house-to-house visitation in one of the bye-lanes running off Null Bazar, some of the residents of the street objected to the party entering a house, and immediately a crowd of some four or five hundred persons, principally Borahs, assembled, and a disturbance was created. The policeman was roughly handled and some of the military were hustled An alarm was raised and the city police repaired to the spot and made some arrests. Four persons have been placed before the Police Magistrate.

WE hear that the defamation case against the "Hindi Bangabhashi's" Patna correspondent has ended in his conviction and imprisonment for fifteen days. An appeal has been preferred before the Sessions Judge and the accused has in the meanwhile been released on bail.

THE *Maharatta* of Poona, we see, has brought to light certain facts in connection with the Sinnar riot, which deserve serious attention of the local authorities. We learn from the Poona paper that when the plague broke out near Nasik, the Sinnar people made their own arrangements under the guidance of the Municipality When Sinnar itself was attacked, the people there tamely allowed themselves to be taken to the hospital and to the Seggregation Camp. At this time, a European doctor was sent there. He made himself unpopular owing to his not earing to respect the religious susceptiiblities of the people. It is alleged that on one of the early days of the plague regulations, a crowd had gatherd together, the people being rather excited at the doctor's entry into the temples. The doctor took the hint and relaxed the plague measurs so as to be agreeable to the people. Then came Dr. Gwyther. He reversed the old policy of sympathetic treatment and roused the wrath of the people once more. The late Mr. Raji, pleader and Chairman of the Municipality, got, associated with Dr. Gwyther, and the two together adopted stringent plague measures, as "making openings in an demolishing dwellings and making wholesale segregation without principle." This roused the ire of the rough people, and culminated in the riots. Of course, even if the facts as stated above be correct, the rioters had no justification for the horrible outrages committed. What we contend for is, the Bombay authorities should not lose their judicial frame of mind in view of the atrocity of the crime.

India and England.

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.]

LONDON, FEB. 18.

INDIA IN PARLIAMENT.

THE impeachment of the Government with egard to their Frontier policy, by Mr. Lawson Walton and the Front Opposition Bench, occupied the whole of Monday and Tuesday's sittings of the House. Mr. Walton did his work well, speaking for an hour with force and conviction. In a concise historical review, he justified the policy of the late Government in arriving at the conclusion that the pacific maintenance of the road was an impossibility, and that it was their duty not to initiate a new policy, but to adhere to the old policy that the British Resident and troops should be withdrawn from Chitral,—a policy completely reversed by the present Government. He argued that the Government had violated the essential principle of the policy of Lord Lawrence, which was to respect the maintenance of the freedom and independence of the frontier tribes, because they constituted the natural volunteer garrison of our Indian frontier.

Mr. Walton spoke, in quiet temperate tones, avoided all personalities, and confined himself to a close argument for and against the respective policies of the two Administrations. He spoke to a crowded House, which listened with deep attention to what was practically the maiden speech, in the House, of one of the most powerful minds at the English bar. He was subjected to frequent interruptions from Lord George Hamilton, which he met with keen and clever parries, in which the Secretary of State came off second best, and with increasing irritation of temper. Mr. Walton sat down amid the hearty plaudits of the Liberal party, and the warm congratulations of Mr. Morley, Mr. Asquith, Sir Henry Fowler and Sir William Harcourt. It was a brilliant and successful speech.

Lord George Hamilton rose at once to reply. The first few words of his speech shewed that he was in a very pretty temper, and the House settled itself for a little innocent enjoyment. He began by complimenting Mr. Walton on the excellence of his speech, and condoling with him on the badness of his brief,—a bit of questionable taste, suggesting that Mr. Walton knew nothing of the case but what had been drilled into him by his leaders, which was received with marked signs of disapproval by the whole House. Lord George then referred, in rancourous terms, to the platform speeches of the Opposition leaders, and, of Mr. Asquith in particular, speaking of them, amid bursts of laughter from the Opposition, as distorting, misleading, exaggerating, insinuating, romancing, a gigantic superstructure of innuendo, a monstrous abuse of platform license, and what not beside. He treated the House to ¾ hour of a tirade against the Opposition on the old line of the "breach of faith" controversy, finally condescending to a little argument towards the end of his speech, the gist of the whole being condensed into a few sentences of peroration. in which he said:

Is not this a favoura e opportunity of trying to see if we cannot come to some general agreement? Ever since I have been in the House, this question of frontier policy has been an everlasting source of partisan strife in this House; and worse still, the same division of opinion provails in India. The Sind authorities are ranged against the Punjab, the military authorities against the civil, and thus there is a frittering-away of individual ability, talent, and experience in controversy, and correspondence, which might be devoted to the prosecution of the common object of a settled interior policy. I want, if possible, to put an end to this state of things by an authoritative declaration of opinion that will be generally acceptable to the House. I want to clearly lay down for the future what can and what cannot be done. I want to tell the Forward men, "You may go so far and no farther." I want to tell those who hold other views, "You must come up to a certain line and there remain." If there is a desire on the part of right hon. gentlemen opposite to mark their participation in such a policy—I can hardly doubt a desire on their part to co-operate—now seems to me to be the time for them to give their assent to it. India has passed through a series of exceptional troubles and calamities. Some are ephemeral and are passing away; others are permanent. The frontier difficulty is permanent. We shall not conjure it away by our speeches. We have got to face it, to grapple with it, and to overcome it. It will always be—I care not what policy you may pursue—a certain source of danger. It may even be a drain on the Indian Exchequer from time to time; but the difficulty and risk of the position are largely enhanced by the differences of opinion which prevail at head-quarters. If those who speak after me, will only devote the main part of their attention to the future and not to the past—I do not think it is neccessary to be perpetually indulging in wranglings on the past—and if those who speak hereafter will devote their main attention to the policy to be pursued in the future, let us hope that the upshot of this debate may be that the country will know that, no matter what party may be in power, the same policy, the same principles, and the same methods will be applied with firmness towards the treatment of the various difficulties which from time to time arise in this most complicated and far-reaching problem.

The Opposition cheered with ironical delight Lord George's perfervid appeal to those speakers who might follow him to devote their attention mainly to the future rather than to the past. The whole speech was that of a man who had lost control of himself through anger, and it was all along in the style of Bombastes Furioso, until he reached the last quarter of an hour, when it was more in the style of a funeral sermon. I listened to the speech with close attention from first to last, and was filled with wonder how such a man has ever been able to attain to a Secretaryship of State. The House was contemptuous throughout, on both sides.

Then Sir Henry Fowler rose to reply, and soon made pie of the specious arguments and peevish criticisms to which the House had just been listening. In reply to his flimsy argument that the Liberals went first to Chitral, Sir Henry Fowler made a fine reply, cheered by the whole House. "Why did we go there?"—he cried. "To save an English Agent in peril, as I hope that every English Government would do to save their agents in Africa, Asia, or America! And how, going there, could we help building a road? How else could we take troops over two passes as high as Mont Blanc?" The real question, he justly urged, was not the paltry controversy as to who made a road, but whether that road should have been fortified and maintained, with a view to the retention of Chitral. He eloquently warned the House against the steadily-growing domination of the Military party in the Indian Government, declaring that what is wanted is a policy which will not be the policy of a Commander-in-Chief, but the policy of the British Parliament. The main object of this debate is, he urged, to elicit, as far as possible, from the Government their real views, as well as the views of Parliamenti

We want a policy of prudence and concentration. We want to elicit expressions of opinion from all parts of the House, not with reference to the past, but in order to lay down, in broad clear lines, what shall be the frontier policy of the future. Only one word in conclusion, to emphasize my strong desire for the defeat of this military policy, and what in my view is our best defence against aggression. I think we have made great progress with Russia, in the Pamir Agreement and in the Durand Agreement, and if we maintain peaceful relations with the tribes we shall make still further progress. What I would impress on the House and on the military party outside, is that India has three lines of defence, and only three. The first great line of defence is the fortifications which Nature has reared on the North-West Frontier; the second is the great Indian Army, composed not only of Scotchmen, Englishmen, and Irishmen, but of Gurkhas, Sikhs, and Afridis, and all the various tribes employed in the service of the Queen, especially the Imperial Service troops; and the third line of defence is the wise, just, and impartial Government of India, securing its peace and guarding the freedom, husbanding its revenues, and developing its resources. I am afraid that, if this last line of defence is ever sapped or undermined, our real hold of India is gone, and gone for ever, and it is because I am afraid of that last line of defence being endangered that I object to any sacrifice of any sort or kind to satisfy what I may call the insatiable claims of aggressive militarism, which I believe to be the greatest danger now menacing the North-West Frontier of India.

The general debate which followed these speeches of the leaders, did not make any striking contribution to its progress; it was continued on Tuesday, when Mr. Asquith led the attack upon the Government, with a weighty and powerful indictment of Lord George Hamilton. It is a long time since the House of Commons has been treated to such a masterly and withering piece of invective as that with which he disintegrated and pulverised the unhappy Secretary of State, on the question as to "who made the road to Chitral?" The entire House, Tory as well as Liberal, were completely carried away with it, and amid roars of laughter, varied by speechless interruptions from the raging and imptent victim, Mr. Asquith disposed of the matter in a few pungent sentences of good-natured ridicule. "Now", said Mr. Asquith, "I come to one of the most extraordinary developments in the history of this controversy which I think either I or anybody else in this House ever w.tnessed. I come to the question who it was who made the road. I do not wish to use disrespectful language, but of all the puerilities by which a serious topic of discussion has ever been overlaid, I tax my memory in vain to recall one which, in point of grotesque and irresponsible levity, can compare for an instant with the scholastic pleasantries of the noble lord on the subject of the making of the Chitral road. (Laughter and "Hear, hear.") The noble lord has been for two years—very nearly three—boasting in this House that he was the person who made the road. (Laugther.) Over and over again at least three times——"

Lord G. Hamilton.—Twice.

Mr. Asquith.—Well, twice; he has at that very box, speaking in all the plenitude of his authority as a Minister of the Crown and a man conscious of having rendered great services to his country, told us that he was the person who constructed the road. (Laughter.) I have really been obliged to investigate the antiquities of this question somewhat minutely, and I find as lately as November 10 last the noble lord, speaking at Acton, which I believe, is a place in his own constituency, and, therefore, where he is under peculiar responsibility to make statements which are accurate and historically true, informed his constituents that "I, the Secretary of State for India, on behalf of the Government, assented to the construction and maintenance of a road from Peshwar to Chitral." (A laugh.) We were all under the impression that this was an accurate statement of the case until very recently—namely, on January 26 of the present year, when the noble lord attended some kind of apparently festive function at Chiswick, and used this remarkable language:—"The Radical papers have for the last two years assumed that I am responsible for the construction of the road." (Laughter.) They believed, credulous simple-minded people as they are, those assurances given at the box there, on the floor of the House of Commons, and they also actually believed that the noble lord's statement was historically accurate! "They have assumed that I am responsible for the constrnction of the road but I have kept silent. (Laughter.) I like my opponents to commit themselves." (Renewed laughter.) That was at Chiswick, but last night the noble lord made another statement on the subject upon the floor of this House, and it appeared then as the latest and most revised version of this interesting historical problem, that it was only quite lately—I think after two years—that he had discovered what he had never suspected before - namely, that there were not two roads to Chitral but only one. (Laughter.) I do not know whether at this moment to admire his cleverness or sympathize with his credulity. Or are we to look upon him as a man who, having this card up his sleeve the whole time, knowing that we had made the road and he had not, came time after time and made these statements to the House of Commons with a self-control of almost preternatural astuteness, and then when the psychological moment came, with this Constitutional supper, somewhere in the region of Chiswick in the month of January, 1898, suddenly revealed to a startled and bewildered world the fact that all the time we had been living under a delusion, and that it was not he who made the road? (Laughter and cheers.) Of course, there is the other hypothesis. The noble lord may be the simple-minded and credulous person he depicted for us last night, and it may be that, until a few days ago, it never occurred to him to inquire how Sir Robert Low, in command, I think, of 15,000 men, managed to make his way across two rivers, over two passes of Alpine altitude, and through a long series of narrow and dangerous defiles for 180 miles from Peshawar to Chitral. Did he think Sir Robert Low did not go by road? Perhaps he went by balloon. (Laughter.) That is the only practical alternative. Really I do think for a Minister, at a crisis like this, with the heavy responsibilities that lie on the shoulders of the noble lord, and amidst these great and serious events, to come down and engage in this loe mtrifling, is not respectful to the House of Commons, and is certainly not conducive to a logical or reasonable threshing out of the serious question before us."

Mr. Asquith's more serious line of argument was that the largest contributive factor in bringing about the actual state of things on the frontier was the fatal policy adopted by the Government in the teeth of the decision arrived at by their predecessors, which they subverted with energetic promptitude on taking office. He called upon the House to assert not merely the comparative academical proposition with which the amendment concluded, but to declare that the occupation of Chitral and the maintenance of the fortified road were violations of every principle of sound policy and deserved the condemnation of Parliament. Mr. Asquith's speech stands boldly out of the debate, as by far the most brilliant and striking of all, and has enormously enhanced his already great Parliameatary reputation. In the lobby, when the speech was over, one overheard everywhere one member saying to another, that at last the Opposition has developed a great Parliamentary leader; there can be no doubt that the section of the Liberal party which believes that the future leadership cannot remain with Sir William Harcourt, but must revert to Lord Rosebery, has been enormously strengthed by the great powers developed during the recess, and crowned with this memorable speech by Mr. Asquith, who has always been looked upon as the possible leader of the House of Commons, most acceptable to Lord Rosebery.

But to return to our debate. Mr. Curzon rose to reply to Mr. Asquith in a quiet speech, moderate in tone, and conciliatory in argument, admitting that the policy of punitive expeditions, retaliation and retreat, had proved a failure. The Indian Government must, of necessity, enter into some sort of relation with the tribes, but all would admit that these relations ought to involve the irreducible minimum of interference with their independence and their lands, They must, however, control the main roads and passes and the foreign relations of the tribes, so that they could not, at any future time, combine with our enemies. These conditions could only be secured and maintained by entering into confidential relations with the tribes and by a judicious selection of Frontier officers, thoroughly acquainted with the people, and in full sympathy with their habits and desires. These gallant fighting tribes ought to stand in the front line of our defence in future. It was an excellent speech from the stand-point now taken up by the Indian Government, admirable in its temper and quite free from Curzonisms.

Two or three minor lights followed; and then, in the solemn solitudes of the dinner hour, arose—*Bhownuggree*! With one superb gesture of eloquence, he swept aside every other cause of the outbreak, which had been suggested by previous speakers, and in a voice, trembling with emotion, revealed the real cause of the whole frontier trouble. Shaking a forensic finger at the Speaker, and glaring at the three members present on the Opposition benches, he uttered these memorable words:—"If they were to trace cause and effect, he must say that the telegram of the 100 members of that House to the King of Greece, sympathising with him in his attack upon the Sultan of Turkey, was more responsible for the irritation caused among the hill tribes than our occupation of Chitral". After this, let Mr. D. E. Wacha hide his diminished head and never again dare suggest that Bhownuggree is not the greatest statesman India has ever produced.

Sir William Harcourt and Mr. Balfour closed the debate. Sir William carefully repeated the arguments and marshalled the historical facts which have formed the staple of the case for the Opposition. The best passage in his speech was his reference to the consequential evils falling upon India through this fatal and foolish frontier policy. He said:—

"In my opinion this war and this policy, whatever it be, has had most fatal consequences. There is the cost of the war. It is Rx. 4,000,000 levied upon the Indian people. I have seen an estimate of what this forward policy in the last 20 years; from the time of the invasion of Afghanistan cost, and it is put at 70 millions in addition to the enormously-increased cost of the armies you have to maintain in India. But it would be a very narrow view

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to confine the estimate simply to the military estimates. What does it cost the people of India in diverting such numbers of the population from productive industry? What has it cost in the loss of the animals necessary for the cultivation of their soil which have been used for military purposes and which have become useless? That is a far more serious cost even than the military cost. We have seen, unfortunately, year after year in the financial accounts of the people of India, the declaration that in consequence of the straitness of their finances they have been obliged to abandon works for the improvement of the people, railway productive works, and the famine fund; they have been obliged to call for contributions from the provinces also; and it is at this moment you are engaged in a contest of which we do not see the end, and, if the policy the right hon. gentleman has announced is pursued, it will be a long time before we see the end. I am sorry to hear it announced that the Government have decided that Great Britain should make no contribution to this cost. That, in my opinion, is not a just nor a generous thing to do. There is another great evil. I have heard from great Indian administrators that the absorption of the energies of the Indian Government in these frontier campaigns and policy has been very injurious to the general administration. I am convinced that the Government cannot be unconscious of the deep anxiety which this policy and its consequences have caused throughout the country. I am sure they cannot, and they do not, shut their ears to the opinion of the great Indian authorities, which are adverse to their policy in this matter."

The division then took place and its results are very significant. There were 208 for and 311 against the amendment, giving a majority of 103 for the Government. Their normal majority is 143, and on a deliberate vote of censure, such as this amendment to the Address undoubtedly is, they ought easily to have secured a full majority, if they had the hearty support of their party. As a matter of fact, only 7 Liberals were absent or impaired against 62 Tories. It is clear that at least 40 of their supporters refused to vote, and that in spite of the large concessions which have been made from the position taken up by Lord George Hamilton in the recess. The Government is seriously discredited, and their unhappy Secretary of State for India emerges from the struggle a limp and tattered personality, with what little reputation for statesmanship he had, rent away from him for good and all.

I think it is a fair conclusion to draw from the debate as a whole, that the future Frontier policy of the Government will be governed by the need of access to Afghanistan, and the Kandahar-Cabul line of defence against possible Russian invasion. The Khyber pass will be kept open at all cost, the policy of the disarmament of the tribes and the imposition of tribute will be abandoned and only such posts will be maintained as the military authorities declare to be absolutely and strategically necessary. Lord George Hamilton practically abandons his recess speeches, and tries to make out that this policy, established by Sir Henry Fowler with regard to Waziristan, has been all along the policy of the India Office. Well if this be their honest purpose, there is no need to wrangle over the past. It means, that the advocates of the Forward policy in the Cabinet are defeated and have surrendered; and that the Government, having tried to persuade the country to support the conquest and annexation of the Frontier tribes and their valleys, has signally failed, has fallen back upon the policy of their predecessors, and declared that it was delusion to suppose they ever meant anything else. The Liberal party is quite willing to let them evacuate with all the honours of war. The debate and division has given the final death-blow to the Forward policy, and it will be the duty of the Opposition to help the Government to bring forth works meet for the repentance they profess. I do not altogether despair of some just apportionment of the cost, by which the British Exchequer may take a part, at any rate, of the financial burden of the war.

SIR W. WEDDERBURN'S AMENDMENT.

Wednesday and the greater part of Thursday's sitting was taken up by a prolonged debate on the question of a Roman Catholic University for Ireland; but at a late hour on Thursday night, Sir William Wedderburn got in his amendment as follows:

"And we humbly pray that your Majesty, looking to the miseries patiently endured by the Indian people from famine, plague, poverty, and other afflictions during the past year, will graciously direct that special forbearance be shown towards them, and that careful inquiry be made into their present condition in order to restore confidence among the suffering masses, and thus prepare the way for healing measures tending to bring back peace and prosperity."

Sir William, in a studiously temperate speech, declared that the "Key of India" was not at Merv, Herat, Chitral or even London, but in the contentment and prosperity of the Indian people. That key had been securely held by Lord Ripon, but the hold had been loosened by more recent Administrations. He dwelt eloquently and pathetically upon the calamities which had fallen upon India, many of which had actually been aggravated by the very measures taken for their relief, by which the people had been almost driven from distraction to despair. He described and condemned the severe measures of repression which had been adopted by the Indian authorities, which, directed as they were against the educated classes who were our best friends, and most firmly attached to British overrule, could do our rule nothing but injury and permanent harm. He vindicated the loyalty of the Congress party, which strove only to inform the Government of the true feelings of the people, and to show the methods by which their affectionate loyalty could best be secured. He pleaded for the removal of the punitive police force at Poona, the mitigation of the fierce sentence on Mr. Tilak, the release of the Natus, and a postponement of the Press Act to quieter times. He closed a speech, admirable in tone, and most conciliatory in its temper, by an appeal for patience and forbearance on the part of the Government. Sir William's speech was admirably calculated to throw oil on the troubled waters and to give Lord George Hamilton a fine, opportunity for a few sympathetic utterances that would have been soothing and conciliatory without sacrificing any principle or conceding any position. But Lord George is not statesman enough for that, and his reply was in his very worst and most ill-tempered manner. Instead of this, he made a bitter and rancorous attack upon Sir William Wedderburn. His speech was so short, and dealt so exclusively with this personality, that it is worth quoting in its entirety as a sample of the sort of spirit in which unhappy India is now being governed. He said:—

There has been famine in India over an area inhabited by 24 millions of people, and plague has been rife in Bombay. But the hon. baronet's attention is directed only to Poona; and it is not for the people even there that he is concerned. It is for three or four friends of his with whom we have been compelled to deal. And why? Because they had done everything in their power to thwart and prevent the Government in their efforts to carry out their benevolent designs. There was undoubtedly a dangerous conspiracy at Poona, and the outcome of it unquestionably was the murder of Mr. Rand. The hon. baronet hopes that I shall be disposed to imitate the acts of Lord Ripon. I do not doubt Lord Ripon's good intentions, but no one who knows anything about India today would deny that Lord Ripon succeeded in raising a racial feeling in India; and from that time to this no question is India is judged on its merits, but simply as a question of race against race. One of the difficulties of the present Government is to allay the race-feeling which Lord Ripon aroused. The hon. baronet says that the educated classes in India are the best friends of British rule. That is true of them generally; but the leaders with whom the hon. baronet associates, are they so favourable to British rule? Do they show it by their words and their beliefs? There was recently a meeting in London connected with the movement of which the hon. baronet is the head, and a resolution, moved by an educated native, was passed, attributing all evils from which India had been suffering mainly to the unrighteous and iniquitous system of government. I do not understand how the hon. baronet, who has been a member of the Indian Civil Service, reconciles himself to language of that kind. And it is a certain class of educated natives, who make use of their position to instil such grotesque falsehoods into the rising generation who are doing so much mischief. The hon. baronet must assimilate his language inside the House to his language outside the House, or I must judge him by the words he uses outside. So far as the mass of the people of India are concerned, there is not that lack of confidence in the intentions of the Government with regard to the famine, which the hon. baronet suggests. I believe that by removing some of the malignant influences which aroused the people in opposition to our measures, by which alone can the plague be fought, those measures will be effective in Bombay. As regards the agricultural population, I have, in concert with the Viceroy, appointed a Commission who will go through the provinces, and I have no doubt will make a valuable report as to how far the people of India are now better or worse able than before to meet the famine. As regards legislation, the Government are only waiting for a quiet time to consider a number of proposals for the purpose of freeing the people, as far as possible, from the influence of the money-lenders. I hope we will be able to set up some system of local banks for the assistance of the natives, and we will also consider whether we cannot apply generally some principles by which the alienation of land will be made less easy than it is at present. I mention these matters to show that the Indian Government realise that it is desirable to look into the economic condition of the people and that they will not fail to do so. As regards Mr. Tilak I have been informed that his health is fairly good, that he is not put to hard labour, and that he receives a special diet. I have only to say, in conclusion, that I think I have shown that the Indian Government are prepared to associate, with an expression of sympathy with the sufferings of the mass of the people of India, acts which will be for the amelioration and the strengthening of their position to meet any difficulties which may arise in the future.

The speech was punctuated with Tory cheers, and underlined with Liberal jeers throughout. The moment Lord George sat down, a minute or two from midnight, when the proceedings closed, Mr. Morley sprang to his feet, pale with indignation, to protest against what he justly described as the "gratuitous, wanton and uncalled-for language" used by him towards Lord Ripon, which he declared, amid the cheers of the House, was not in the least relevant to the amendment, and ought only to have been brought forward in a deliberate manner, so that Lord Ripon might have been properly defended. (Here Lord George rudely interpolated a statement that Lord Ripon's conduct was the source of racial antagonism) which brought down upon him a scathing rebuke from Mr. Morley, who declared that if he dared to repeat that language in a full House and not at five minutes to twelve at night, he would find that he would not escape a punishment somewhat similar to that which he received on Tuesday night. Sir William Wedderburn then withdrew the amendment, upon which it was never intended to divide, but only to give Lord George the opportunity which he so lamentably failed to avail himself of.

ANOTHER EXPECTED DEBATE.

There will be another very important Indian debate on Tuesday next, as Mr. Samuel Smith has secured that day by ballot and will invite the House to pass a resolution in which he will call attention to the bad condition of the finances of India, the poverty of the people, the widespread discontent consequent upon this, and move that in the opinion of the House the heavy expenditure incurred in the Frontier campaigns ought not to be entirely charged upon the Revenues of India. Mr. Smith will certainly divide at the close of the debate, unless he gets clear assurance from the Government of their intention to revert to the just intentions expressed by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach in his famous Bristol speech. I should think it is certain that Mr. Smith will secure the support of the Front Opposition Bench to his motion. Lord George Hamilton estimates the cost of the Indian Frontier war up to date at £2,541,000. But there is no confidence felt anywhere with regard to his accuracy in this estimate, and one does not forget the optimistic estimate of the second Afghan war, which ultimately came out at twenty millions sterling. No one believes that this war will cost less than eight to ten millions, and Mr. Smith, who is a very experienced and successful business man, may be relied upon to bring out the real facts so far as they are known, and to expose the fatal effect upon Indian finance, if the whole of this Imperial expenditure is to be thrown upon it. Sir M. Hicks-Beach too can hardly be silent and I wait with interest the explanation to be given of the abandonment of his promised grant-in-aid.

AN ADMIRABLE CORRESPONDENCE.

You will probably reproduce in your columns, the admirable correspondence which Sir William Wedderburn has carried on, as Chairman of the Indian Parliamentary Committee, with the Secretary of State for India with reference to the continued detention of the Natu brothers. It appears in full in the columns of this week's "India." It has been circulated to the press of the country, which has commented freely upon its contents, and also to every member of Parliament in view of the debate and division on Mr. Herbert Roberts' amendment to-night. It is clear from this correspondence, and will be clear still from the impending discussion in the House, that the bitterness of the Indian Government towards Tilak and the Natus is as unreasonable and unabated as ever.

INTERVIEW WITH MR. STEAD,

I have this afternoon had a prolonged interview with Mr. W. T. Stead, the brilliant Editor of the "Review of Reviews", with the object if inducing him to devote a large amount of space in his magazine to Indian affairs. He encouraged me to hope that this would be the case in future; and if he can be induced to champion the cause of oppressed and persecuted Indian Editors in this country, their cause could not be in better or more capable hands. Mr. Stead enjoys the unique position, in British journalism, of possessing the confidence of politicians of every shade and party. I may illustrate this by the fact that this morning he breakfasted with Mr. Arthur Balfour, took tea this afternoon with Mr. John Morley, finding time between whiles to lunch with me and Mr. Dutt, C. I. E. for the purpose of discussing the new Indian press laws, and find out if he can be of any service. In the issue for February, published yesterday, he strikes a note which indicates the sort of tune he seems willing to play for his readers.

THE FRUIT-TRADE OF ENGLAND.

Is India going to compete with the coasts and islands of the Mediterranean for the fruit trade of this country? The *Globe* has been discussing the possibility of this in its columns this week, and sees no reason why the delicious oranges, mangoes and pomeloes of the Central Provinces and the Deccan, should not find their way to the fruit shops of London. It is a mere question of a little enterprise to make such a trade possible and successful, and the man to take it up is Mr. Jamsetjee N. Tata, of Bombay, who has done so much to improve the cultivation of Indian cotton and who is himself a very large and successful fruit-grower. Every year he is kind enough to send me a box of splendid mangoes, which arrive in perfect condition, simply because he, as an expert fruit-grower, knows exactly when to gather, and how to pack. These mangoes come by P. and O. in their cold storage room. I showed one of them to the principal fruiterer of London, and he told me that if he could put such a quality of mango in his shop window he could sell them for five shillings a piece. I remember too on embarking for England on one of my homeward voyages from India, Mr. P. B. Dantia of Bombay brought me a parting gift of a basket of fruit, oranges, plantains and pomeloes, the last of which I enjoyed thoroughly between Brindisi and London in the train. It is really quite possible for Indian fruit to be delivered in marketable condition in the London shops, and some Indian patriot like Mr. Tata should try what can be done to start it.

SIR L. GRIFFIN'S LETTER TO THE "TIMES."

Sir Lepel Griffin has added a fresh terror to Indian politics in a letter to the *Times* this week. Not content with having greatly helped by his able pen in destroying one Frontier question, he must needs set up an entirely new one While he rightly declares that Chitral is the key to no possible position, he terrifies us by saying that "the battle of Armageddon will probably be fought, not on the plains of the Punjab, but beneath the pagodas of Mandalay, where the hosts of China, disciplined, armed and led by Russia, will dispute the dominion of the Eastern world with the armies of England and India." Here is a new Russian bogy with a vengeance. However, we shall have a year or two in which to breathe and get ready, and if this new bogy helps to kill the old one, it is very welcome in the meantime. But the notion is a trifle "Bhownuggrean.

THE EXPENDITURE COMMISSION.

Some wonder is expressed in the lobby of the House of Commons as to what has become of the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure, which has not met for more than seven months. In reply to a question last Monday, Lord George Hamilton said that Lord Welby, the Chairman, was still engaged in the preparation of the draft report, and he could not say when the Commission was likely to be called together for its final consideration. This is not very creditably, for although I admit the mass of evidence is considerable, it is neither complex nor involved, and it should not have overtaxed the skill and unique experience of Lord Welby, to have had the draft ready for the assembly of Parliament, when all the Commissioners would be in London as a matter of course.

Mr. Caine on more than one occasion examined the expert witnesses before the Finance Commission on the possibility of resting entirely upon natives of India for the Cavalry Branch of the Army in India, and so save the enormous cost involved by British Cavalry. I cut the following paragraph from a leading article in one of the chief Service papers, *The Admiralty and Horse Guards Gazette*, which confirms the view taken by Mr. Caine, who received very little encouragement from Lord Wolsely or Lord Roberts when they appeared as witnesses before the Commission.

Some weeks ago we suggested a withdrawal of troops from Southern India, where we held present conditions could admit of considerable reductions being made for strengthening the frontier and central positions, where strategically troops are demanded, and we see Sir John Adye has advanced similar proposals. Of course, there are those who see in the step a retrograde and hazardous policy, but we confees we do not, and we doubt if dissentients sufficiently take into consideration the difference between now and then, the time when these dispositions were made, how the telegraphic system and a network of railways have facilitated mobilization and changed the whole aspect of affairs military. But admitting that a decrease of British infantry below the normal strength is a mistake, and one which no Commander-in-chief would approve of, except on compulsion, there seems no adequate reason why our cavalry, the most costly arm, cannot be safely diminished, and the Indian cavalry, whose gallantry, horsemanship and excellence are unquestioned, left to do all that is required from that branch of the Service. Naturally, opinions vary on the point, but though the matter has been discussed, it has not been carefully examined, and the present appears an admirable juncture for settling it. From an economical point of view there is no question; the only point is the military one. If India released three regiments of British Cavalry and received in return two battalions of infantry, she would obtain a better material for the work there is to do, while she would effect a distinct saving in her expenditure

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THE HIGH COURT.—Mr. G. S. Henderson's appointment to act as a Judge of the High Court in place of Mr. Justice Hill for five months and fourteen days, is gazetted.

CHAITANYA LIBRARY.—We are given to understand that at the next anniversary meeting of the Chaitanya Library, the Hon'ble Mr Justice Jenkins will give an address and the Chief Justice of Bengal will preside.

P. W. DEPARTMENT.—Mr. T. H. Clowes, Executive Engineer, 3rd grade, and Under Secretary to the Government of Bengal in the Public Works Department, has been placed in charge of the current duties of the office of Chief Engineer and Secretary to that Government, during the absence on privilege leave of Colonel A. D. McArthur, R. E.

A NOTIFICATION.—The Governor-General in Council has declared that the steam tramways between Howrah and Amta, and Howrah and Sheakhalla, and between Ranaghat and Krishnagar shall, for the purposes of Article 93 of Schedule IV of the Indian Tariff Act (VIII of 1894), as amended by Acts XVI of 1894 and III of 1896, be included in the term "railway" as used in the said Article.

OBITUARY.—We regret to have record the death on Friday last of Rai Krishna Chandra Rai Bahadur, of Manikgunj, at his residence 12 Nebutola lane. He was for 25 years a Deputy Magistrate and Collector and served the Government faithfully for more than 40 years. In recognition of his long and meritorious service, he was on his retirement made a Rai Bahadur and an Honorary Presidency Magistrate for the town of Calcutta. He was Vice-President of the East Bengal Association and took the keenest interest in the popular movements of the day. His death at the age of 75, is mourned by a very large circle of friends and relations.

ALLEGED INSTIGATION TO MURDER.—The trial of a very sensational murder case, transferred from Chupra to Arrah, commenced before Mr. Harding, the Sessions Judge, on the 3rd. The facts of the case are: that in June, 1886, Babu Chuni Lal, a wealthy Marwari of Chupra, was murdered. The actual murderer, Moti Singh, was convicted and hanged in 1886. The present accused Girdhari, another Marwari of the same place, is said to have instigated the murder, and to have been present at the time the deed was committed. Girdhari was arrested in Jeypore territory. The Government Pleader of Arrah is prosecuting, and Mr. Hasan Imam, Barrrister-at-Law, is defending.

FRONTIER AFFAIRS.

FIVE Zakka Khel deserters from the Khyber Rifles have reached Landi Kotal with their rifles, *en route* to Jamrud. One Yakhur Khan, a sepoy of the 12th Bengal Infantry, who was carried off by the Afridis while proceeding from Shinawari on convoy duty, has also been brought in from Dakka. He states that his rifle and accoutrements were confiscated by the Afridis and he himself was taken to Tirah and thence to Ningrahar.

A PESHWAR telegram, dated the 6th instant, says:—The Aka Khels have made a substantial payment of rifles at Mamani. This augurs well, as the Aka and Zakka Khel are so closely allied in their several interests. It is anticipated that the submissive action of the former will be imitated by the Maidan, Bara, and Bazar Zakkas. If they demur it is thought that the Akas will bring pressure upon them. The attitude of the Kambar Khels is still most unsatisfactory. Native reports had it that their Jirga, with large portion of their fine in rifles and specie, was at Chura two days ago, but no news of their arrival has yet been received. Once the Kambar Khels have begun to comply in the surrender of rifles the situation, it may be said, will be past the hostility stage, and will be succeeded by the indemnity period, but with the Kambar Khels still holding aloof the situation has many possibilities. The Khyber Zakkas are of less account, for with the Khyber occupied their status is little removed from that of the Jowaki Adam Khels. There promises to be some activity in the Khyber this week if matters have not mended when General Lockhart meets the jirga at Jamrud tomorrow.

THE Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab left Bannu for the Tochi Valley yesterday. His Honor goes up only as far as Maran Shah, and will be back at Bannu again on Friday and Saturday.

Never Knew It To Fail

MR. R. JOHNSTON, Rawalpindi, says: "I have personally tried Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera, and Diarrhoea remedy, and have given it to travellers who were passing through a hotel I managed, and I must say I never knew it to fail, and is all it is supposed to be in its effects. It is a medicine I can recommend, and one that everybody should keep.

CHAMBERLAIN'S Colic, Cholera, and Diarrhoea emedy is the most successful medicine in use for rysentery, Diarrhoea, Colic, Cholera-Morbus and Dolera, and is for sale everywhere. Price Re. 1 h Rs. 2.

AMENDMENT TO THE ADDRESS.

MR. ROBERTS' SPEECH IN THE COMMONS.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS, M. P., moved the following amendment to the Address in the House of Commons on the 18th February last:

"Humbly to assure Your Majesty that this House regards with grave concern the policy of internal repression, lately adopted by the Government of India, and especially the deportation and continued imprisonment of British Indian subjects without trial, the recent series of Press prosecutions, and the present proposals to increase the severity of the Law relating to sedition in India."

The following is the full text of Mr. Roberts' speech on the amendment:

In moving this amendment I feel that there is no apology needed for bringing the questions to which it refers, before the House at the earliest possible opportunity. It is known to all and admitted in every quarter that India has during the past few months passed through a grave crisis. When such a calamitous state of things arises in any porion of Her Majesty's dominion, it is clearly the duty of the House of Commons, which is ultimately responsible for the administration of the Empire, to give these matters serious consideration. Never was there a time, I think, when it was more needful for the special attention of this House to be given both to the policy adopted by the Government of India and to the serious position of the Indian people.

I disclaim any desire to discuss the issues raised in my amendment in a party spirit or from a political standpoint, and would rather urge that the nature and extent of the appalling calamities which have recently befallen India, require us to make a determined effort to abandon the methods of controversy, usually inevitable in political warfare, and to unite as those who are responsible for a great Empire and not as party politicians, in considering the present Indian situation and in stating our views as to the wisdom of the present Home policy of the Government of India.

I have referred to the misfortunes of India. Her calamities are unprecedented in their severity. The famine, in regard to the area affected, has been worse than any famine previously known. The plague has half depopulated the largest cities of the Western Presidency, and in spite of all the measures taken, seems to be growing worse and to be spreading to the Deccan and the Punjab. The earthquake in Assam and Bengal has resulted in the loss of thousands of lives. All these things have unsettled the mind of the Indian people. The steps taken during the plague for segregating Zenana women, however necessary in themselves, and other methods adopted for medical purposes have stirred the Oriental mind to an extent not known within recent times in India. Under all the circumstances, therefore, we find the people of India in a state of alarm and uncertainty, and it would obviously be the wise policy to soothe the mind of the country rather than irritate it by coercive measures and repressive legislation. From the reports received from India, it is plain also that the feeling of alarm is becoming one of despair, and it is inevitable that this should be so, when, in addition to the calamities referred to, the Indian people are made the victims of an unwise and unsympathetic Government policy.

I submit that, whatever be the merits or the demerits of this policy, this is a singularly inopportune time to enforce it. But, sir, I ask the House, in my amendment, to condemn this policy of internal repression in India, and will now briefly state the facts and give the reasons which, in my opinion, fully justify the position I have taken. I have referred to three specific points as embodying, in the main, the repressive policy of the Government of India, and I will deal with them in the order set down on the Paper.

The first point is the deportation and continued imprisonment without trial of British Indian subjects. The case in point, as the House well knows, is the imprisonment without trial of the Natu brothers. The facts are not disputed. These men were suddenly, in July last, arrested in their house at Poona. They belong to a highly-respected family whose ancestors rendered important services to the Government in the past, and one of them is a first-class Sirdar of the Deccan. The main point, however, is their arrest, deportation and continued imprisonment without a charge being made or trial allowed. The Secretary of State for India, in a debate in this House in August last, took upon himself the responsibility of this step, and further intimated that this action would lead to the unravelling of the conspiracy which resulted in the lamented loss of the lives of Mr. Rand and Lieutenant Ayerst. In the meantime, another man, Chapekar, has confessed his guilt in this matter, and has, according to a telegram appearing in the papers, been comdemned to death. This fanatic's evidence clearly proves that the Natu brothers were not in any way implicated in the plot, and yet they are still imprisoned.

I think the House and the country have a right to learn from the Secretary of State for India whether he still maintains that the Natu brothers were implicated in the plot, and whether he holds the view that they are to be kept in confinement indefinitely without trial or opportunity of proving their innocence of the charges made. As to the attitude of the Government of India, we already know their view. Questions as to the position of the Natu case, were recently addressed by the Bombay Legislative Council to the Governor of Bombay:

The following are the questions put, and answers given, in the Bombay Legislative Council, relating to the detention of the Natu brothers:

"(*a*) Will Government be pleased to state the grounds which led to the arrest and imprisonment of the two Natu brothers under Regulation 25 of 1827?"

In reply His Excellency the Governor said:

"(*a*) The persons referred to, were placed under restraint for reasons of State touching the security of a portion of the British dominions from internal commotion."

"(*b*) Will Government be pleased to state whether they intend to put them on their trial, and, if so, when?"

"(*b*) Action under the law in question im[illegible] that, in the language of the Regul[illegible] judicial proceedings are either not

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to the nature of the case, or are unadvisable or improper."

"(c) If Government do not propose to put them on their trial, will they be pleased to state how long they propose to detain them in prison?"

"(c) The first part of this question is covered by the preceding answer. The answer to the second part depends on considerations alluded to in the answer to the first question and upon eventualities not yet determined."

We have, therefore, the opinion of the Secretary of State for India and that of the Governor of Bombay upon the case, and the object of this amendment is to lay the position before the House of Commons, because it involves a principle of the highest importance and is an outcome of a policy totally opposed to the principles of British rule in India in the past. But it may be said that this imprisonment without trial was ordered under a recognized Act, that of 1827, passed more than seventy years ago It will be plain to all that that Act was passed to meet a condition of things wholly different from the present state of India. We were then engaged in taking possession of India, when the loyalty of those districts, which had accepted our rule, was essential, not only to our future success, but our hold upon the country. It was not unnatural that the Indian Government of that day should ask for powers to imprison and deport those suspected of betraying their interests to their foes. But who will contend that this rusty weapon should be unearthed from the past and used for the purpose of imprisoning without trial leading men of the present day? The contention cannot be upheld for a moment, and I cannot but regard the action of the Government as unworthy of the traditions o British rule in India.

The next doint referred to in the amendment, is the action of the Indian Government in reference to Press prosecutions. There have been several prosecutions, but one of them, that of Tilak, the editor of the "Kesari," has attracted unusual attention The case has been before the Privy Council, and, so far as the judgment given is concerned, is closed; but the influence of the conviction still operates upon the mind of India, and we cannot allow the incident to pass without calling attention to what, in our opinion, is the unwisdom, to say the least, of the policy which initiated the prosecution. What are the main principles underlying this case? The freedom of the press in India, as elsewhere, has proved to be the bulwark of the Government. It enables them to know (and they have no other means of knowing) the feelings and views of the people of India with regard to the Government measures and administration It is the means by which practical defects in measures are disclosed, and it also serves to purify Government by bringing the light of public opinion to bear upon the action of the subordinate officials. The peculiar condition of India renders this freedom of Press criticism all the more valuable. In India, without representative Government, it plays the part, so far as it can do so, played by the elected members of Parliament in other countries. And it is admitted every day that the Government of India is better for the help of the native Press. The character and favourable influence of Native papers generally are shown by the opinions expressed by high retired Indian officials who still read in this country the Indian papers.

I will only refer to the views expressed by two experienced Indian officials upon this point.

Take the judgment of men like Sir Richard Garth and Sir William Markby—the one, a former Chief Justice of Bengal, the other, a former Judge of the Calcutta High Court. "I can only say," wrote Sir Richard Garth, in February, 1895, "I read native papers myself, week after week, and never see anything there at all approaching sedition or even disloyalty or disrespect to English rule. What I do find there, and what I rejoice to find, is thoroughly well-deserved censure of the arbitrary conduct of many of the Government officials. I am afraid this is exactly what the Government would wish to repress." Similarly, Sir William Markby wrote last July: "I should like to add one word on behalf of the native Indian Press, which is, I think, just now getting more abuse than it deserves. I have for years read regularly extracts from large number of native newspapers. The criticisms I have met with, are sometimes severe, but for the most part respectful. There is occasionally strong 'disapprobation' but very rarely 'disaffection.'"

This being the case, to pursue a policy of criminal prosecution against Indian newspapers can only have the effect of stopping the free expression of native opinion as to Indian administration, and the grievances will remain unknown and unredressed. This is bound, if the policy be persisted in, to lead to undesirable results. At present, the press is the only safety-valve for the feelings of the country, and it is unwise, it is dangerous, to close it, and deliberately to remain ignorant of the sentiments of the people.

Before concluding, I have a word to say as to the changes which the Government of India propose to introduce into the law of sedition. In July last, as the House will remember, the Leader of the Opposition asked the Secretary of State for India, if he would give the House an opportunity of considering and of discussing any alteration in the Indian Press Law before it was passed. The reply was that the Indian Government was responsible for the maintenance of law and order ot the country, that the Government must have the initiation of Indian measures, but that could be reviewed by Parliament afterwards. What has been done? It has not been the revival of the Press Act of Lord Lytton which gave the Government the power to stop any newspaper which, in their opinion, misbehaved itself. The House will remember that this Act was almost immediately repealed by the Liberal Government. The proposed new measure is not for the special regulation of the Press, but will have the effect of modifying the general criminal law of India in a manner far more fatal, in the opinion of the Indian papers, to the interests of the Press than Lord Lytton's Act would have done. The result of the new law, if passed, will be to open up an endless vista of prosecutions all over the country against newspapers whom the local Magistrates may suspect to be guilty of the very vague offence of "disaffection". It would be manifestly out of place for me to refer in any detail to the legal aspect of the proposed changes; but I will put before the House very shortly the main considerations involved. The Bill has been before a Select Committee, and I do not think its final form has been definitely decided. Practically then, the proposals of the Indian Government mean, first, that the salutary Explanation, drawn up by Sir Fitzjames Stephen as to what constituted "disaffection" within the meaning of section 124 A of the Penal Code, has been expunged, and another Explanation inserted, giving a new meaning to the word "disaffection" and leaving it dangerously vague. And secondly, that offences under this section are in future to be triable, not, as at present, only by Court of Sessions or High Court, but by all Magistrates of the first class. The effect of this new provision will be realized when it is considered that practically all the young Civilians, after two or three years' experience in India, become first-class Magistrates.

Another drastic change proposed by the Government, is that Section 109 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which gives Presidency Magistrates, District Magistrates, and Magistrates of the first class, the power to demand from loafers, intending criminals and suspicious characters, a bond with sureties for good behaviour for a period not exceeding six months, is to be extended to those who are suspected of attempting to disseminate seditious matter. The effect of this, if carried, will be to place the editors of the newspapers of India at the mercy of the local Magistrates, and to class them in the eyes of the people with bad characters and intending offenders. A greater blow could not be struck to the prestige and independence of the Press.

The views I have endeavoured to express, are fully corroborated by the Press of India, both English and Native. I will only trouble the House with one or two quotations, bearing this out.

The Indian journals received by the last mail, are full of discussion of the proposed new law of sedition for India. The "Statesman", of Calcutta (edited by an Englishman), condemns in the strongest terms the proposed extension of Section 109 of the Criminal Procedure Code (hitherto applied to professional thieves and robbers) to editors of newspapers: "It would place in the hands of the executive an engine of control over the press of the most formidable description, and one which in many cases might be so used as completely to stifle free discussion."

Again. The "Indian Daily News," a Calcutta journal conducted by an Englishman, exposes in a vigorous article the fallacy committed by the member of Council who introducted the Bill. The "Morning Post," also edited by an Englishman, has some remarks which deserves to be quoted:—"We hope the Government's proposal to throttle the press, as disclosed in our Calcutta correspondent's telegram to-day, will be appreciated by those of our contemporaries who, with the Viceroy and his advisers, have lost their heads over the vagaries of a few of the native papers. If this fantastic so-called amendment of the law of sedition ever comes into force, it will be practically impossible to conduct a newspaper in India on anything approaching journalistic lines. We are face to face with what in effect, is a Press Stifling Act, and we trust there will be a prompt and universal awakening to this very evident fact."

The "Hindu Patriot" of Calcutta, one of the most influential and loyal journals in India, writes: "If the object of the proposed legislation is to strike terror into the hearts of Indian journalists, then we can assure Government that that object has already been attained. We are now passing through a very critical time when coolness is wanted at the helm. But the action of Government has already caused something bordering on a panic in the native community."

A Central News telegram, dated Caicutta January 26, appeared as follows:

"The new Government Bill designed to repress seditious writings in the Indian Press is meeting with strong and remarkably general hostility."

The "Englishman," the leading Anglo-Indian journal, which was at first a warm supporter of the Bill, has turned right round, and has even outdone the rest of the newspapers by publishing to-day a strongly-worded leading article on the subject.

"The forward policy," the "Englishman" declares, "persisted in despite every dissuasion and culminating in disaster and ridicule, exhausted public patience, and neither Lord Salisbury nor Lord Elgin can afford another blunder, or overlook the cry that repressive and unnecessary legislation is being countenanced here." Considerable significance and importance is attached to this article.

In the same connexion I may cite a portion of the valuable letter which Sir William Markby (whom I have previously quoted) wrote to last Saturday's "Spectator," with reference to the proposal to empower Magistrates to dispose summarily of offences under Sec-tion 124A: Two things must be borne in mind—first, that the Magistrate in India is also in reality one of the heads of the police; secondly, that the Magistrate in India represents the Government, and the native Press "the Opposition.

Sir William Markby added that the appeal to the High Courrt "is, I fear, the only protection which the Press now has in India."

I contend that the evidence, I have adduced, of the feeling of the Press in India, is one of the greatest alarm in view of the proposed legislation, and it is idle for the House of Commons to ignore this. I say again that it is time for Parliament to express its judgment upon the policy of internal repression, pursued by the Government of India upon the important points of administation I have referred to. The great principles upon which the Government of India has been carried on in the past, are being reversed; and the effect of this will be to produce discontent where discontent has not previously prevailed,—to produce the impression that the path of progress along which the Government has travelled up on liberal principles in the past, is to be abandoned,—and to make it difficult for the people of India to look forward to attaining upon constitutional lines, those reforms on which we have, by the lesson of English civilization, taught them to set their mind.

POWERS OF A DISTRICT MAGISTRATE.

MR. C. R. DAS moved on behalf of Jagobundhu Bhutacharjee and twelve others for a rule to show cause why the order of the Sub-divisional Magistrate or Madaripur binding the petitioners down under section 107, Cr. P. C., should not be set aside. It appears that there were continual civil disputes between the petitioners and Rai Abhay Charan Mitter with regard to the possession of a *chur*. On a report by the local police stating that there was a likelihood of a breach of the peace between the parties as Rai Abhay Charau Mitter's party were making an attempt to erect a cutchery on the disputed land the Sub-divisional Officer initiated proceedings against both the parties. while of these proceedings were pending Rai Abhay Charan's party erected the cutchery and as it was alleged that the petitioners assembled armed when the cutchery was being built and that they could only be dispersed be police force, the Sub-divisional Officer bound boty the parties down. Thereupon the petitioners went th the District Magistrate who modified but refused to set aside the order. Mr. Das contended that the order of the District Magistrate was without jurisdiction as he could either cancel the order of the Sub-divisional Officer under section 125 Cr. P. C. or referred the matter to the High Court under section 438 Cr. P. C. He had no power to deal with it in any other way.

Their Lordships granted a rule in the terms of the petition.

THE DEPORTATION OF THE NATU BROTHERS.

(*India.*)

THE following correspondence has passed between Sir W. Wedderburn, M. P; and Lord George Hamilton, M. P; Secretary of State for India:...

To the Right Hon. Lord George Hamilton, M P;
Secretary of State for India in Council,
Whitehall, S. W.

My Lord,

I have been requested to ascertain, if possible, what are the intentions of Government with reference to the Sirdar brothers Natu of Poona, now imprisoned under Bombay Regulation 25 of 1827. As Parliament is not sitting, I am unable to obtain this information by means of a question in the House of Commons. But as these two Sardars have now been in custody for about four months, and as their families are suffering much distress and anxiety on their account, I have the honour to point out that as yet no charge has been formulated against them, and to request that, if compatible with public interests, I may be informed whether it is proposed to bring them to trial; and, If not, upon what grounds their continued detention in prison is considered necessary?

His the connexion I have the honour to bring to your notice the enclosed copy of correspondence between Sirdar B. R. Natu and Mr. Lamb, the District Magistrate of Poona, which appeared in the November number of "India." From this correspondence it appears that during the month of March Sirdar Natu, in his capacity of a Municipal Commissioner of Poona, was at the request of his Excellency the Governor, assisting as a volunteer at the plague operations, and that on the 30th of that month he prayed Mr. Lamb to make personal enquiry into certain alleged irregularities in the sergregaion work, such irregularities involving unncessary hardship to individuals, disregard for religious and social prejudices, and needless destruction of property. The letter further complains that the advice and protests of the Native gentlemen acting as volunteers were disregarded, and gives the names of certain European officers and Indian gentlemen of position as witnesses to the facts. I shall esteem it a favour if I may be informed whether this correspondence has been correctly reproduced, and whether it is in connexion witht these matters that Sirdar Natu is now detained in custody. The correspondence seems to show that Sirdar Natu was only attempting, as good citizen to perform a useful and dangerous duty assigned to him by the Government, and that he was doing his best to keep the chief magisterial authority informed regarding the proceedings in the city, and "the great amount of unrest among the general populace," which existed as early as March 30.

I am further desired to bring to your notice that an attachment has been placed by the Bombay Government upon a large amount of valuable personal property belonging to the Natu family. Under Regulation 25 of 1827 an attachment may, under certain circumstances, be placed on land and other immoveable (real) property, but no power is given to seize personal effects. The present attachment therefore appears to be unwarranted by law; and as grave inconvenience is thereby caused to the numerous members and dependents of the family, I am desired to enquire whether you will be so good as to direct the attachment to be removed, and the personal property restored to the custody of those from whose possession it was taken.

I have, etc.
(Signed) W. Wedderburn.

House of Commons,,
November 4, 1897.

India Office,
November 11, 1897.

Sir,

I am directed by the Secretary of State for India to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant on the subject of the detention of Sirdar B. R Natu and his brother, a copy of which will be forwarded to the Government of Bombay for such observetions as they may desire to make upon it.

On the arrival of their reply a further communication will be addressed to you.

I am, etc.,
(Signed) A. Godley.

Sir W. Wedderburn, Bart., M.P.

To the Right Hon. Lord George Hamilton, M.P
Secretary of State for India in Council,
Whitehall, S. W.

My Lord,

Referring to my letter of November 4 last, I shall esteem it a favour if you will inform me when I may expect the further communication on the subject of Sirdar B. R. Natu and his brother, promised in paragraph two of your reply of November 11.

I beg to point out that the brothers have now been in custody for about six months, and that two months have elapsed since my letter was addressed to you regarding their detention in prison without trial.

I have, etc.,
(Signed) W. Wedderburn.

Meredith, Gloucester,
January 5, 1898.

India Office,
January 11, 1898.

Sir,

I am directed by Lord George Hamilton to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 5th instant, and to inform you that the observations of the Government of Bombay on your letter of November 4 have not yet been received, but that it is understood that they may shortly be expected.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
(Signed) A. Godley.

Sir W. Wedderburn, Bart., M.P.

India Office,
February 8, 1898.

Sir,

In continuation of my letter of November 11, I am directed by Lord George Hamilton to reply to your letter of November 4 on the subject of the confinement of the Natus.

2. You are no doubt aware that the Regulation under which Sirdar B. R. Natu and his brother are detained, for the reasons of State specified in the preamble, can only be put in force as regards "individuals against whom there may not be sufficient ground to institute any judicial proceedings, or when such proceeding may not be adopted to the nature of the case, or may for other reasons be inadvisable or improper."

The Government of Bombay, therefore, by putting the regulation in force against the brothers Natu, have clearly indicated the view which they take as to the advisability of instituting judicial proceedings against them; and I am to inform you in reply to your question, that there is no present intention of bringing them to trial.

3. As regards the grounds on which Sirdar B. R. Natu and his brother are detained, I am ditected to inform you that they have no relevancy whatever to the correspondence mentioned in your letter. The Goverment of Bombay are in possession of information which has convinced them that such detention is necessary in order to secure her Majesty's dominions from internal commotion, and that it must, in the opinion of that Government, be continued until they are satisfied that the public tranquillity would not be endangered by the release of the brothers Natu.

4. Finally, you represent that Regulation XXV of 1827 gives no power to attach the personal effects of persons detained under its provisions. On this pinto the Government of Bombay has taken legal advice and has issued orders for the release of such tems in the list of property attached as cannot legally be dealt with under the Regulation.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
(Signed) Arthur Godley.

Sir William Wedderburn, Bart., M.P.

To the Right Hon. Lord George Hamilton, M.P.
Secretary of State for India in Council,
Whitehall, S. W.

My Lord,

In acknowledging reciept of your letter of the 8th instant, I must express my profound regret that there is no present intention of bringing the brothers Natu to trial, although they have now been in confinement for more than six months, and, so far as the public are aware, no charge has been formulated nor any evidence adduced against them.

May I remind you that on the 5th of August last you said in the House of Commons: "I believe that the authorities at Bombay are within their rights in the action which they have taken and that the result of the proceedings will be to unravel the plot which has been formed."

The matter then under discussion was the deplorable assassination of Lieut. Ayerst and Mr. Rand; and as your words referred to that revolting crime, I beg to point out that an individual, Damodar Chapekar Deccani, has confessed to the assassinations, and has been found guilty and sentenced to death. But neither during that trial, nor during other prosecutions, does any evidence appear to have been adduced to show that the assassinations were anything but an isolated act of fanaticism. No widespread plot was suggested in the evldence. Far less was there anything to connect the brothers Natu with such a plot.

Under these circumstances, and looking to the long detention already suffered by these gentlemen, I trust you will see your way to terminate proceedings which are causing much distress to the public mind in India, and which are of quite an exceptional kind, looking to the ordinary course of British justice.

I observe with satisfaction that, after taking legal advice, orders have been issued for the release of such items in the list of property attached as cannot be legally dealt with under the regulation.

I propose to hand this correspondence to the Press.

I have, etc.,
(Signed) W. Wedderburn.

House of Commons,
February 15, 1898.

THE Hon'ble Mr. H. P. Hodgson has been re-appointed an Additional Member of the Madras Legislative Council.

THE Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras notifies in the *Gazette* that the additional police quartered in Kalugumalai in the Tinnevelly District for two years will be retained for a further period of one year.

ON Sunday night a fire occurred in a hut in the health camp near the Police Court in Bombay. It caused a great deal of excitement, but was put out without much damage being done.

MESSRS. V. I. KESHAVA Pallai and C. M. Madhavan Pillai have been appointed Deputy Peishcars by His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore.

MR. F. C. HARRISON, Accountant General, Madras, is granted furlough for eighteen months, with effect from the 9th April, 1898. Mr. T. H. Biggs, Officiating Accountant General, Bengal, is appointed to officiate as Accountant General, Madras, Mr. W. L. Harvey is, on return from privilege leave, is appointed to officiate as Accountant General, Bengal.

Telegrams.

(INDIAN TELEGRAM.)

BOMBAY, MAR. 5.

Chapekar's execution is fixed on the morning of 18th at Reay Market, Poona. He will not be allowed to make a speech from the scaffold. He appeals to the Governor for clemency.

India publishes a correspondence between Sir W. Wedderburn and Lord George Hamilton regarding the release of the Natus after public tranquillity has been secured.

PUBNA, MAR 6.

Memorials have been posted to the Governor of Bombay, to the Viceroy and to Her Majesty the Empress for mercy to Chapekar praying for the stay of execution.

MUKTAGACHA, MAR. 6

There was a grand demonstration yesterday at Muktagacha in honor of Maharaja Surjya Kanta's arrival after the investiture of the title of Maharaja. The town presented its gayest appearance, being tastefully decorated with big rows of plantain trees, arches, garlands and flags. At about 4 o'clock a deputation from the Reception Committee consisting of Babus Borada Kissore, Tarakdas, Brojendra Narayan and Girish Kishore Acharyya Chowdhurys, drove half way to receive the Maharaja. 101 bombs were fired. On his arrival at the gate he was received by the Vice-Chairman of the Municipality and other *elite* of the town. They conducted him to the shamianah in and around which there was an ocean of eager and lively faces. The proceedings of the meeting commenced with a song by the local ameteur club. Babu Barada Kishore Acharyya Chowdhury, president, opened the meeting with an eloquent speech eulogizing Maharaja's public and private character and characterized him as the glory of their family, when his voice was drowned by the deafening cheers of all his brother zemindars and the public at large. Some validictory addresses were read by pandits, students and the local harishabha. Several speakers then followed and offered the Maharaja a hearty welcome. They congratulated both the Government and the Maharaja for the great honor bestowed on such a worthy personage. The Maharaja replied in a suitable speech thanking his brother zemindars for their kindness and love towards him. He seemed moved at this unique demonstration of friendly feeling which "touched his heart." The meeting dispersed with a vote of thanks to the chair and cheers for the Empress and the Maharaja. Innumerable bonquets of flowers were presented to him.

[FOREIGN TELEGRAMS.]

LONDON, MAR. 4.

The elections for London County Council resulted in a return of about 71 Progressists and 47 Moderates. This is regarded as a great Radical victory, the main issue being the Government scheme of small Municipalities.

Her Majesty's cruiser Bonaventure has been commissioned to replace the cruiser Rainbow on the China station. It is stated that the cruiser St. George and Hermione are also going to China.

The *Times'* Peking correspondent states hat in the event of a revision of the Chinese traiff the loan will be the first charge on the increased revenues collected.

LONDON, MAR. 5.

The whole of Italy is celebrating the Jubilee of the promulgation of the Constitution. King Humbert, replying to addresses, dwelt upon the accomplishment of Italian unity, and declared that Rome was inviolable.

LONDON, MAR. 5.

Further news states that fighting has taken place in the Sierra Leone Hinterland between the natives and the police, under Major Tarbet. All trade with the coast is stopped.

LONDON, MAR. 5.

The *Times'* Cairo correspondent telegraphs that three British battalions have reached Athara, and that Sirdar Kitchener now commands fourteen thousand men.

LONDON, MAR. 5.

Reuter wires from Peking that the Emperor of China has ratified the new loan.

LONDON, MAR. 5.

Lord Salisbury goes to the Riviera to recruit his health.

LONDON, MAR. 5.

The illness of the French delegates is retarding the Niger negotiations.

(LATER.)

Lord Salisbury is progressing, but is extremely weak.

LONDON, MAR. 5.

Major Lugard left Liverpool to-day to assume the post of Commissioner and Commandant of the Lago Hinterland

Colonel Piquart and Colonel Henry fought a duel with swords in Paris to-day arising out of the Zola trial. Colonel Henry was wounded in the forearm.

The battleship Victorious, which, it appears, grounded at Port Said and not at Suez, has safely passed the Canal, and left Suez, for China on the 2nd instant.

LONDON, MAR. 6.

Spain has requested the United States Government to recall Mr. Lee, American Consul-General at Havana, and also to substitue merchant ships for warships in conveying relief to the distressed Cubans. The United States Government has declined to accede to this request under the present circumstances.

The Niger Company has despatched a force to Sokoto to help the Sultan, should the French refuse to recross the river Niger.

Reuter wires from Pekin that Russia and France have protested against the Anglo-German loan to China, and have each dmanded compensation. Japan has demanded that a signed assurance be given her for the payment of the war indemnity by China in May next.

The Chinese Minister at St. Petersburg has urged the evacuation by the Russians of Port Arthur. Russia has deferred her decision in the matter stating that the presence of the Russians there is beneficial to China and favourable to peace.

LONDON, MAR. 6.

A Quarantine Board has recommended the Egyptian Government to prohibit the pilgrimage to Mecca owing to the plague.

RUSSIA'S LATEST MOVE.

Reuter wires from Pekin that Russia is negotiating to leave Port Arthur.

Re commended by A Medical Friend

THIS is how MR. J. SHAIL, the well-known Manager of LAURIE'S HOTEL, AGRA, commenced to use Chamberlain's Cough Remedy.

Says he: "About six months ago I was sufferin severely from a bad cough and cold, and a medic friend recommended Chamberlain's Cough Remed to me. I bought one bottle and it effected a comple cure. Since that time, whenever I have the land cough, I procure Chamberlain's Cough Ready lees results are always satisfactory."

CHAMBERLAIN'S COUGH REMEDY is sold ve Price Re. 1 and Rs. 2.

I HAD the rheumatism so badly that I could no get my hand to my head. I tried the doctor's medicine without the least benefit. At last I thought of Chamberlain's Pain Balm; the first bottle relieved pain, and one half of the second bottle effected a complete cure.—W. J HOLLAND, Holland, Va. Chamberlain's Pain Balm is equally good for sprains, swellings and lameness, as wel as burns, cuts and bruises, for sale at all drug store Price Re. 1 and Rs. 2.

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Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta

N.-W. P. HIGH COURT.

CRIMINAL SESSIONS.

THE CHARGE OF MURDER AGAINST A SOLDIER.

THE hearing of evidence in the case in which a soldier named Anthony Doyle, a private in the Royal Irish Regiment, is charged with murdering a woman, named Musamat Chutia, at Jubbulpore, on January 5th, has been continued in the High Court thoughout the week. The evidence for the defence commenced on Thursday evening, last one witness being called, and on Friday, several others, all of them soldiers in the prisoner's regiment, were called by Mr. Alston.

The evidence of these men went to show that the prisoner was a quiet, good tempered man, not at all the kind of man who would lose control of himself in a moment and strike such a blow as killed the woman. The prisoner wears two good conduct stripes, proof that he has never been on the regimental books during six years' continuous service. The most important portion of the defence evidence was the time at which the prisoner left the barracks on the night in question. The women swore positively that the man who visited their house entered the house just as the clock struck ten; all the defence witnesses declared that the prisoner, most unusually for him, as he had a permanent pass, answered the roll-call in the barracks about a mile away from the Sadar Bazar at about 9-45, and two or three witnesses swore that he was with them at 10-15 P.M., when "Lights out" was sounded. Further the women had declared that the man who visited them had been in the military police and that they had frequently seen him about the bazaar in that capacity; the soldiers one and all declared that the prisoner had never been either in the military or the garrison police during the time the regiment had been at Jubbulpore. The women had declared that they knew no English, but Lance-Corporal Butter, who saw them in the kotwali after the prisoner had been arrested, said he spoke to the older of the two women about what had happened. She replied in English, speaking nearly as well as he could himself. She told him that her daughter had been beaten by a soldier, and she further said that while the man was in the house another soldier came and knocked at the door and that she went out and spoke to him. This had been denied by the woman Waziran when giving evidence.

In addressing the jury for the defence, Mr. Alston said they had to ask themselves whether there was anything very improbable in the prisoner's story. Was it inherently improbable that a man who had run away with a good start should on a not particularly light moonlight night get out of sight of his pursuers, and that they should have lighted upon another soldier in the road and jumped to the conclusion that he was the one they wanted. They must remember there were only two persons who could have any actual knowledge as to the soldier who was wanted, they were the two women, and they might take it for granted that the women were not in the first flight of the pursuers. The probability was that they stopped at the police *chauki* when they saw others taking up the pursuit, and the suggestion that all those following were within a few yards of the man when he was arrested was palpably absurd. When the man was brought to the *chauki*, the natural assumption of the only two persons who could identify him would be that this was the man, and they would at once say so, and having identified him would stick to their story even if on thinking it over they were sure he was not the man. The real issue was whether the man running away got such a start that he was lost to the sight of his pursuers, and he (Mr. Alston) contended it was not improbable. There was only one material point in the story of the pursuers upon which there could be any discrepancy, the account of what happened when the prisoner was arrested. In their account of what happened the story of the witnesses for the prosecution varied very considerably, and he contended that if they had actually seen what they related, there would have been no room for such discrepancies. It was part of the story for the prosecution that the prisoner was quite sober, but he (Mr. Alston) contended that no man would have committed this crime if he had not been very drunk. It had been sworn over and over again by the prosecution witnesses that the prisoner was the only soldier in the bazaar that night, yet they had it in evidence that there were at least four soldiers there. But whatever the jury thought of these discrepancies, if they believed the evidence for the defence the prisoner had established a complete *alibi*. They might be asked to believe the evidence for the defence was a lie from beginning to end, or that at least the statement that the prisoner was at No. I bungalow at 10-15 was untrue. Or again, the learned counsel for the prosecution might admit the truth of the story told for the defence, and go on to assert that even so the prisoner might have committed the crime. It was true he might have done so, having regard to the hour at which he was caught. But if that argument were put before them he asked them to remember that the women swore positively that the clock struck 10 as the man entered the house. Why should they allow the prosecution to pick and choose among the evidence it had offered and say, you may accept this, but you must throw aside that. No witnesses could be more positive than both these women had been as to the time the prisoner entered their house, or as to the statement that he had been in the military police. Yet it was proved that he was in barracks at the time stated and that he had never been in the military police. If they believed the evidence for the defence on these two points they had no option but to acquit the prisoner.

Mr. Ryves, Officiating Government Advocate, said the defence admitted the deceased woman was killed in the manner described by some soldier. The question was whether the prisoner was the man. The prisoner admitted being caught within a few paces of where the prosecution witnesses said he was seized, and he (Mr. Ryves) contended that it was a physical impossibility that in a race of 200 yards, for some of the pursuers ran no more than that, active men like the prosecution witnesses should have been so far behind as to lose light of the man they were chasing. The prisoner said he was not the man, but that he had seen a man run by just before he was caught. If that was so, where did the man go to? It was a perfectly level road, with no trees or shrubs behind which he could hide, and it was a bright crepancies in the evidence as to the exact way in which the man was arrested, but he had regarded those discrepancies as the very strongest confirmation of the general truth of the story told by the witnesses. It was the men who were lying, who all rolled off a glib story exact in every detail, different men giving an account of the same occurrence as it appeared to them were bound to differ as to details. Mr. Ryves called attention to the different statements made by the prisoner, particularly the one before the Magistrate, in which he said he was walking along towards the Sadar Bazar about 10-35 when he was arrested, and that 11 o'clock struck while he was in the chauki. He pointed out that these times were obviously wrong, and suggested prisoner gave them because he knew it was necessary for him to make the time as early as possible. His learned friend had spoken of the discrepancy of time, and that was a question for the jury to decide. The two women were the only persons who were in a position to know the time, and they were anxious to make out that the cause of the quarrel was the long time the prisoner had been at the house. It was for the jury to decide whether the time 10 o'clock was absolutely known to the women, or whether it was a statement made to bear out the story of the cause of the quarrel. There was, it must be remembered, the evidence of the man Salf Ali who declared that he left the house in company with the woman Rahiman "about 10 o'clock," that they went into the bazaar together, and that he returned in about half an hour. It was not necessary for him to suggest that the evidence for the defence was false. The prisoner might easily have left the barracks at 10-15 and yet have been in the Sadar Bazaar by 10-30. There was in fact no *alibi*. In reply to a remark of his learned friend he contended it was a sheer impossibility for the man to have run 300 yards if he had been very drunk. He must have been sober.

The Government Advocate having touched on the legal aspect of the case, Mr. Justice Aikman said he would sum up the following morning. *Pioneer*

A FIRE-PROOF CITY.

THE more the American methods for dealing with fire are examined, the more the conviction is brought home that a great deal could be done to give London greater immunity from such outbreaks as occurred the other day. In respect of fire-alarms we are deplorably behind such a city, for instance, as Rochester. Most of the business houses in that city are connected directly by a system of circuit wires with the Fire Brigade stations and the police stations. In case of fire you touch a button on the wall, and the alarm immediately flies to the nearest Fire Brigade station. The number of the street or block is also automatically registered at the station when the pressure on the button has sent the current going. There is some talk of this system being established in London. The insurance experts declare that it will save fifty per cent of the fires. And this is not improbable when we consider that if the engines had been given immediate warning of the Cripplegate fire the outbreak might at once have been snuffed out.

INDIAN NEWS.

A DETACHMENT of fifty men of the Marine Battalion, under a Native Officer, had left to Kurrachee *en route* to Galag.

FAIR progress was made with the Nichugard-Manipur cart road, during the past year. In the Naga Hills Division the road is estimated to cost Rs 10,91,687, the total expenditure to the end of 1896-97 being Rs. 10,66, 89. This section extends from Nichugard to Kohima. On Section II. from Kohima to Mao Thana, the estimate is Rs. 3,66,662, the expenditure to the end of the year in question amounting to Rs. 3,76,311. From Mao Thana to Manipur the amount of the estimate is Rs. 12,56,246, and the expenditure to the end of 1896-97 Rs. 12,14,452. The work of substituting permanent stone structures for the temporary bridges originally built was carried on during the year. As soon as the bridge over the Barak at Karong, which it is estimated can be built for Rs. 50,000, is finished, and one over the Kuki near Nichugard, there will be an uninterrupted line of communication for cart traffic from the Assam-Bengal Railway at Dimapur to Manipur.

THE Government report of the administration of the Indo-European Telegraph Department for 1896-97 shows that the earnings amounted to Rs. 14, 84,507, or a decrease of Rs. 1,85,574, as compared with 1895-96, when the sum realised was Rs. 16,70,081. The expenditure during the year was Rs. 7,71,477, against Rs. 8,17,450 in the past year, or a decrease of Rs. 45,973. The net result is a profit of Rs. 7,13,030 on the year's working, against that of Rs. 8,52,631 in 1895-96, a falling off of Rs. 1,39,601. This has been the first falling-off on earnings since 1889-90. The number of words carried between Europe and India or Trans-India, and vice versa, during the year by the three Administrations (viz., the Eastern Telegraph Company, the Indo-European Telegraph Company, and the Indo-European Telegraph Department) rose from 5,954,751¼ to 6,157,208¼, showing an increase of 202,457, while the net value also shows an increase of £20,030 16s. 1d.

THE case in which Abdulla Hajee Miya Ahmed Khandwani charges Hakeem Mahomed Abdul Hameed Furrukh, Proprietor and Editor of the Urdu publications *Sultan-ul-Akbar* and *Bombay Punch Bahadur* with defamation, was resumed before Mr. Sanders-Slater, Chief Presidency Magistrate, at the Esplanade Police Court. Mr. Lawndes, instructed by Messrs. Bicknel, Merwanjee and Motilal, appeared for the complainant, the defendant being represented by Mr. Roughton, of Messrs. Roughton and Byrne. Hajee Abdulla Satar was called for the defence, but did not appear, Mahomed Ebrahim Toongayherand Azamtulla Khan Resildar, brother of the A.-D.-C. to the Governor, were next examined by Mr. Roughton, the evidence of the last witness went to show that complainant was antagonistic to the plague measures organised by General Gatacre and had taken active steps in gat ating opposition to them among the Miahomedans. The further hearing has been

DAMODAR CHAPEKAR'S APPEAL.

SENTENCE CONFIRMED.

THE Hon. Mr. Justice Parsons and the Hon. Mr. Justice Ranade heard the arguments on appeal made by Damodar Hari Chapekar from a decision of the Hon. Mr. Crowe, Sessions Judge of Poona, who on the 3rd February last convicted the accused of the murder of Mr. Rand and Lieutenant Ayerst and sentenced him to death.

Mr. Branson, with Mr. S. R. Bakhle appeared for the accused, and Mr. Anderson with the Government Pleader appeared for the Crown.

Mr. Branson said that he did not know what his learned friend had to say, but he would submit that this being a confirmation case, their Lordships were bound to go into the whole of the evidence. He would deal with the evidence shortly, but he would have to speak at some length on the confession on which the whole case for the prosecution was based.

Though the confession was corroborated in several particulars which form the fringe, when they came to consider it in detail it appeared worthless from beginning to end. The details of the confession showed that the accused was telling a story invented by him for the purpose of shielding the real offenders. When the accused had made the statement the general features were known to everybody and it was clear that the accused had led the prosecution to believe what he said for the purpose of screening the real offenders and had actually succeeded in deceiving the Government.

Mr. Branson said that it was idle to suppose that the accused did not know at least something in regard to the murders. On the 30th of September the prisoner actually came forward to give information to the police of the murders. The statements appear to be concoctious. Their Lordships will ask him, concoction by whom, and he would say that the statement was a concoction by the accused himself. This man was not kept in the place where he ought to have been kept as an under-trial prisoner, but in the Farashkhana, and it was evident from what he says now that he was visited by several persons and he (Mr. Branson) submitted that between the 30th of September and the 8th of October the accused was asked by some one not to disclose the whole truth. The confession was concoc ed as appeared from the way in which it was made. The accused in this case has taken upon himself the whole of the crimes committed and undetected during the last five years. Mr. Crowe and others connected with the prosecution were led away by the prisoner in materially misdirecting the jury. In the first instance the jury had found the prisoner guilty of abetment but not of murder. This showed that the jury had only come to the conclusion that the prisoner was only present with others at the time of the murders.

The jury, Mr. Branson submitted, was misdirected, and the Judge and all connected with the case for the prosecution were led away by the security of the confession. Mr. Branson next showed to their Lordships the hood of the gharry and showed other gunshot marks, and suggested that the shot marks might have come from the opposite side. Mr. Branson said that the first theory for the murders was that Lieut. Ayerst was first shot and Mr. Rand was shot after him. The learned counsel next laid great stress on the discrepancies found in the statements at the inquest and the confession of the accused, and said it was the duty of the prosecution to have made further inquiries to clear the points. It was evident that if the statement at the inquest was true the confession of the prisoner that he first shot Mr. Rand and his brother shot Lieutenant Ayerst was absolutely untrue. After describing the position of the wound on Mr. Rand, Mr. Branson submitted that it was impossible for the accused to have inflicted the wound in the place where he is said to have wounded Mr. Rand. After referring to the various discrepancies in the confession the learned counsel said that if the accuracy of the statement was doubtful the inference was that the prisoner was not in the place where he is shown to have been on his own confession. In conclusion, Mr. Branson said that several points were not cleared, and their Lordships were bound under section 375 of the Criminal Procedure Code to direct further enquiry into the matter. On the other hand, if their Lordships were satisfied that there were elements of suspicion in the statement made by the accused their lordships would acquit him.

Mr. Anderson in support of the conviction said that the case was clearly proved. The confession was clear, and the prisoner not only implicated himself in the crime but involved his brother also. The purport of his learned friend's suggestion, Mr. Anderson understood, to be that the accused knew by whom, when and how the murders were committed, and though he was morally guilty he was not guilty in the eyes of the law. Mr. Anderson said that it was impossible for the accused not to have known Mr. Hamilton to be a Magistrate. There was no doubt that Mr. Rand was shot in his carriage and Lieutenant Ayerst was shot in his carriage, and that Mr. Rand was shot first and that Lieutenant Ayerst was shot a little afterwards. The only question was, by whom were they shot?

Mr. Anderson, continuing his address after tiffin, said: With regard to the inquest proceedings it was suggested that the first theory for the prosecution was that Lieutenant Ayerst was shot first and Mr. Rand was shot afterwards, and that the evidence was made to fit the confession. In regard to the suggestion he would only point to the evidence of Mrs. Ayrest, which was the most natural. With regard to the hood, Mr. Anderson said that the evidence was that the hood was down. Lieut. Ayerst was supposed to be lying on his back with the hood down and the wound was consistent with the firing of the shot as stated in the confession of the accused. Mr. Anderson submitted that there were a number of circumstances in the confession which showed clearly that it was made by a person who knew how the act had been committed. It was perfectly obvious that Mr. Rand was murdered because he was the head of the Plague Committee and the accused had given his reasons in his confession for the murder of Mr. Rand. In conclusion Mr. Anderson said that the evidence in the case was most conclusive and there was no misdirection to the jury as suggested by Mr. Branson.

Mr. Anderson having concluded his remarks, Mr. Bakhle rose to reply.

On the conclusion of Mr. Bhakle's evidence Justice Parsons delivered judgment, confirming the sentence.—*Advocate of India.*

NEWS from Mombassa states that while a company of the 27th Baluchis was proceeding to Kibwaron the 23rd of February a Subadar was shot apparently by one of the Sepoys.

THE military operations on the Mekram Coast being now practically at an end, arrangements are being made for the disposal of the force which has been employed. The cavalry and guns and one hundred infantry will accompany Lieutenant Knox, who marches right across the country to Kalat, some three hundred and fifty miles from Mand, which has recently been visited. The remainder of the force embarks at Ormara when the work is finished. Lieutenant Knox's march would be a trying one at any season of the year, more especially so at the beginning of the hot weather, when the barren hills of Beluchistan will be parched up. No opposition, however, is likely to be

SOBHABAZAR BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

ANNUAL MEETING.

THE fourteenth annual meeting of the Sobhabazar Benevolent Society was held on Saturday evening at the residence of Raja Benoy Krishna, No. 106, Grey Street, Calcutta, before a fairly largeand distinguished assembly. Mr. W. C. Bon-nerjee presided.

The chairman stated that letters regretting inability to attend the meeting had been received from His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir John Woodburn, the Hon'ble C. C. Stevens, Mr. A. F. M. Abdur Rahman and Babu Ram Charan Gupta.

Dr. Chuni Lal Bose, Honorary Secretary of the Society, then read the report for the past year, which showed that the total receipts for the year 1897-98 amounted to Rs. 3,350 and total expenditure Rs. 3,582. Of this Rs. 2,818 were distributed in monthly allowances to the poor, and Rs. 100 in donation to Chittagong Cyclone Fund.

During the year, plague and famine have been prevalent to an alarming extent, in large tracts of India, and naturally the calls upon the supporters of this institution and the charitable public in general have been more varied and greater than at ordinary times. It would not have been surprising therefore if contributors to a society founded to alleviate distress in general, had been divided to meet the specially urgent claims which had arisen, but the Committee are glad to say, they have been enabled to aid in the general contributions which a public calamity has called forth and at the same time to carry on the work with which they are more particularly identified.

The total receipts for the year 1897-98 have amounted to Rs. 3,350-10-9 against Rs. 4,112-0-9 in 1896-97. Of this sum Rs. 2,576-4-0 were received from members by way of subscription; Rs. 540-11-3 as donations from the public; Rs. 123-11-6 represent interest on Government Securities and Municipal Debentures; Rs. 110-0-0 represent discount received on account of purchase of Government Security for Rs 1,000. The total expenditure amounted to Rs. 3,582-15-9. Of which Rs. 2,818-8-0 were distributed in monthly allowances to the poor; Rs. 100 in donation to Chittagong Cyclone Relief Fund; Rs. 150-0-0 in feeding the poor; Rs. 20-0-0 in aid of the Calcutta Deaf and Dum School; Rs. 78-14-0 in printing charges; Rs. 132-6-6 in contingent expenses including Registration fees for change of address, etc. Rs. 264-0-0 in establishment charges; Rs. 19-3-3 in premium, &c.; paid for Government Securities for Rs. 1,200. At the end of the year 1896-97 the balance in the hands of the Society was Rs. 4,029-13-11 and after deducting the expenditure for the year 1897-98, there now remains in the hands of the society a balance of Rs. 3,797-8-11 which consist of Rs. 3,700-0-0 in Government Securities, and Municipal Debentures and a cash balance of Rs. 97-8-11. The Auditor's report and accounts will be found in Appendices A and B.

During the year under review the number of persons in receipt of monthly grants was 216, against 224 in 1896-97. Of the former number 125 were widows, 63 students and 28 invalids. The amount expended was Rs. 2818-8-0 against Rs. 2,919-0-0 in 1896-97. Most of the widow recipients belong to respectable families of Calcutta or different districts of Bengal, their need is none the less real because of the hesitation with which it is acknowledged, but in very case assistance is given only after careful inquiry. Nearly all the poor students who have been helped are graduates or undergraduates of the University, and it is keenly felt that if the funds were only larger many deserving cases would not be left unaided. It is a matter of sincere gratification, that since the establishment of this society more than one hundred poor students have been enabled to qualify for the Government service or independent professions and to be bread-winners for families on whom they were dependents. Equally gratifying is it to record that not a few of those who have been enabled to bestir themselves now help the society with monthly subscriptions as valuable members.

The Famine Relief Committee of the society formed on the 14th January, 1897, were able to raise during the year Rs. 1,817-10-0. From that amount 1,050-0-0 were paid to the Secretary of the Bengal Branch of the Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund; Rs. 200-0-0 to the Magistrate of the 24-Pergunnahs; Rs. 100-0-0 to the Magistrate of Rajshahye; Rs. 100-0-0 to the Magistrate of Nuddea; Rs. 100-0-0 to the Secretary, N. W. P. and Oudh Famine Relief Fund; Rs. 100-0-0 to the Secretary, Central Provinces Famine Relief Fund, Nagpur; Rs. 100-0-0 to Mahamahopadhyaya Pundit Mahesa Chandra Nayaratna, C. I. E., Honorary Secretary, Bengaleetolla Famine Relief Fund, Benares; Rs. 30-0-0 to the Honorary Secretary, Santipur Bandhu Sabha Famine Relief Fund and Rs. 132-8-0 to thirteen zenana widows of Calcutta and the Suburbs. The Committee are glad to state, that in 1896-97 and 1897-98 the Famine Relief Committee of the society, collected a total of Rs. 4108-6-0. Of which a sum of Rs. 3050-0-0 was forwarded to Mr. E. N. Baker, Secretary, Indian Famine Charitable Relief Fund, Bengal Branch.

On the 16th November, 1897, a Sub-Committee were formed and the Society was enabled by their exertion, to pay Rs. 100 to the President of the Chittagong Association, for affording relief to the distressed people. A donation of 60 pieces of clothing from the Mohabodhi Society for distribution amongst poor Hindu widows and invalids is thankfully acknowledged.

On the motion of Babu Benode Behari Mullick seconded by Babu Saroda Prosad Roy, the report was adopted.

Babu Mohini Mohan Chatterjee suggested that the aims and objects of the society should be more widely advertised in order to secure greater co-operation from the public.

The Hon'ble Kali Churn Banerjee was glad that the society made no distinction as regards the nationality of its recipients of help. He begged to differ from Babu Bhupendra Nath Bose with reference to his remarks that students should not be helped by the society. By helping the students and by thus making them useful members of society, the object of the Benevolent Society would be gained to a considerable extent.

The Chairman now announced that Her Highness Nawab Begum of Moorshedabad had just sent to the society a donation of Rs. 100 through Mr. Shujlat Ali for which the

Moulvi Abdul Hafiz was glad to see that all classes of people received help from the society. He would ask the society to try to get co-operation from the Mahomedan community and he would urge his Mahomedan brethren to join a society like this with benefit to them.

With the usual vote of thanks to the chair the meeting separated.

CALCUTTA MUNICIPAL ELECTION.

THE fourth general election of the Calcutta Municipality will take place on the 12th instant. The following is a list of candidates.

Ward No. 1—Babus Bhupendro Nath Basu and Pashupati Nath Bosu; Ward No. 2—Babu Chundilal Sinha, and Mr. N. N. Ghose; Ward No. 3.—Babus Kally Nath Mitter and Akshoy Chunder Bose; Ward No 4—Kumar Monmotha Nath Mitter Bahadoor and Babu Nolin Bihari Sircar; Ward No. 5—Kumar Dinendro Narain, Babu Lalbehary Bysack, Dr. Amrita Lal Mukerji and Babu Jogendra Nath Das; Ward No. 6. Babu Radha Churn Pal, Dr. Bhoobun Mohun Sircar, Babu Amarendra Nath Chatterji, and Babu Rakhaldas Banerji; Ward No. 7.—Babu Huravram Goenka, Babu Naraindas Khannah and Mr. S. Mahboob Ally; Ward No. 8.—Moulvie Budruddin Haider, Khan Bahadoor, Babu Sreenath Dutt; Ward No. 9.—Babu Debendra Nath Dutt and Lalvihrri Mitra, Hon'ble Norendro Nath Sen, and Dr. Zahiruddin Ahmed; Ward No. 10.—Babus Soorendro Nath Das, and Raj Chunder Chunder; Ward No. 11.—Babu Devaprosad Sarvadhikary and Dr. Jogendra Nath Ghose; Ward No. 12.—Mr. H. A. Ballin, Mr. E. M. D. Cohen, and Babu Nobin Chand Boral; Ward No. 13.—Moulive Fuzlar Rahman Khan, Babus Benode Behary Banerjee and Mohiney Mohan Chatterjee; Ward No. 14.—Moulvie Ahmud, Khan Bahadoor, and Honble Surendra Nath Banerjee; Ward No. 15.—Moulvie Aga Mahomed Musaf and Moulvie Syed Shams-ul-Huda; Ward No. 16.—Mr. J. G. Apcar, and Babu Rajani Mohan Chatterjee; Ward No. 17.—Mr. J. Ghosal and Babu Satis Chunder Ghose; Ward No. 18.—Mr. C. F. Deefholts, and Mr. A. J. Wilson; Ward No. 19—Babus Amirto Lal Ghose, and Sagere Lal Palit, Moulvie Saadut Hossain and Rev. Charles Jordan; Ward No. 20—Moulvie Abdul Jawad, Babu Jyoti Prokash Ganguly, and Moulvie Aga Mahomed Isa; Ward No. 21.—Dr. S. Bachoo, Babu Kanty Chunder Banerjee, Dr. Ram Moy Ray and Mr. W. J. Collins; Ward No. 22 Babus Priya Nath Mullick, Jogendro Chunder Ghose, and Surendro Chunder Bose; Ward No. 23—Babus Ramratan Banerjee, Amuliadhan Addy, and Annoda Prosad Mukerji; Ward No. 24.—Mr. R. Braunfeld, Kumar Satyamohun Ghosal, Kumar Satyabadee Ghosal, Babu Soorendro Nath Roy and Mr. J. McMinn; Ward No. 25.—Babu Satis Chunder Ghosal and Babu Money Lall Banerjee.

Correspondence.

THE BENGAL CENTRAL RAILWAY.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,—Allow me through the medium of your paper to enmerate the following grievances of those who travel by the B. C. Railway: (1) Collisions and derailments have become rather frequent, of late. (2) All the trains, up and down, are late and unpunctual, and the business men, especially the daily passengers, are put to great inconvenience. (3) The alterations of the trains have been made in the timing of some local trains which the public could not approve. (4) The checking system of the tickets at the gate of the platforms of the Sealdah Station is a most shocking and shameless thing after all for the respectable females, i. e. for the "purdahnashin" ladies. (5) The rough behaviour of the Eurasian ticket checkers at the gate towards the poor moffussil passengers.

R. C. B.

Mofussil News.

DOMJURR, MAR. 3.

THE murder of one Behary Lall Kaur has caused a considerable sensation in the village. The police Sub-Inspector is trying his best to detect the culprit.—Messrs Martin and Co., had done much good to the public by opening the Howrah-Amta Tramway Line through this village; there are already 10 daily passengers from this place to Calcutta. The only grievance of the passengers is the want of latrine in Telkulghat station. We hope Mr. Adie will consider the matter and have a latrine erected to remove the inconvenience.—Water scarcity will be severely felt this year; almost all the ponds have already dried up.

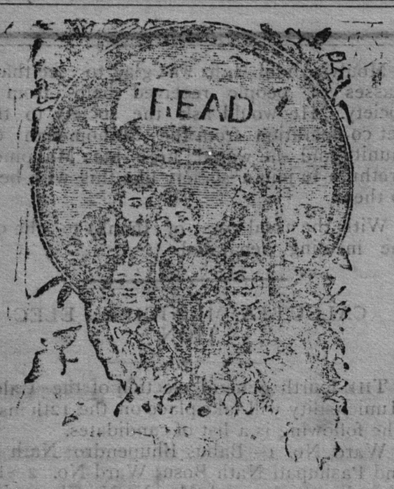
SENHATI, MAR. 5.

CASES of petty theft are again disturbing the peace of the village. Recently one night a band of "Badmashes" entered into the house of one Aghore Nath Dutt; some of them; held down young Aghore Nath and one of them made a deep cut by a knife on his throat. He gave a scream, upon which the neighbours collected, and the "Badmashes" instantly fled. The case is still under police enquiry. We beseech the authorities to find out the culprits and punish them property. Such like incidents are not uncommon in the village.—19 boys have been sent up to the ensuing Entrance Examination from the local H. E. School.—General health of the village, on the whole, is good. Rice sells here at Rs. 3 to 3-4 per maund.

MALDA, MAR. 3.

THE appeal preferred by the Mahomedan who was convicted by Babu R. K. Bannerjea, Deputy Magistrate, for house-breaking by night and outraging the modesty of a Brahmin girl and sentenced to 2 years' rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 100, has been dismissed by the Sessions Judge.—The first criminal sessions of Malda for 1898 commenced to sit from Saturday last. A rape case and a burglary case have already been disposed of, resulting in the conviction of the accused. A big case of rioting and murder is being heard at present. Mr P. Mitter, Barrister-at-law has been engaged to defend the accused. Mr Muhamed Eusaf took charge of the [illegible] on Monday last from Mr. Lea, who le[illegible]

Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta



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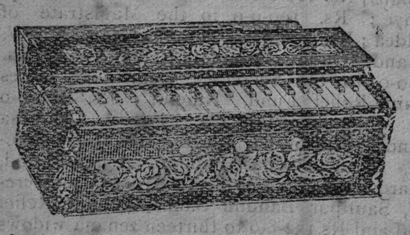

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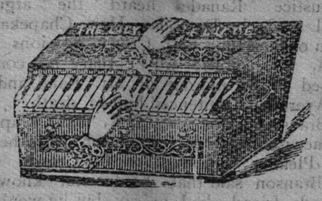

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