

our hearts, we will get up a concert or a show, to advance the cause, and give as excuse that the people "must have something for their money." Could anything more emphatically condemn modern methods of Church finance?

### "THE RUIN OF INDIA" BY BRITISH RULE.

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(Conclusion.)

Professor Des Islets strangely regards the railways of India not as works of enlightened beneficence, but as only another illustration of the insatiate greed of the British Government. They act, he tells us, "as immense siphons to drain the resources of the country towards England." The truth, again, is the exact opposite. Even with the vast irrigation system, except for the railways little could be done to mitigate famine, simply for lack of transportation. Even since I first came to India, in 1865, there have been severe local famines which, had there only been railways in the affected districts, might have been immensely lightened through the prompt importation of food-grains from more favored districts. I remember being many years ago very much impressed with the blessing of these railways constructed by the British Government in mitigating the severity of famine. There was famine at that time in the province of Tirhut, where the rains had failed the previous year; and from my bungalow, which was near the great railway bridge by which the East Indian Railway crosses the Jumna at Allahabad, I saw day after day and week after week, as it were, an almost constant procession of long freight trains carrying grain from the more fortunate Panjab, 1,200 miles and more away, to the starving people of Tirhut. And yet the professor can only see in the railways of India another evidence of the greedy tyranny of its British rulers, and despite tens of thousands of miles of these railways and irrigation canals he can write: "The famine in India is a famine of which the English are the cause."

But what he calls "a proof of this" to one who knows anything of India is, if possible, more astounding than the original assertion; namely, that "the great native vassal states with 50,000,000 of population, do not suffer from famine." I never heard such a statement made before, and no wonder, for it is utterly incorrect. Given the same conditions of soil and climate, the native states suffer from famine precisely as do the contiguous British districts. But illustrations of the assertion are ventured. The native state of Travancore is instanced, among others, as a state where famine is unknown, although in exactly the same climatic conditions as the British territory which is contiguous." This is a mistake in physical geography. The climatic conditions in Travancore are diametrically opposite to those in the contiguous British territory. Lying as it does on the extreme southwest coast of India, with the range of the Ghats rising several thousand feet behind it, whatever watery vapor comes from the Indian ocean is precipitated at once on this truly favored province. On the other hand, let one cross this high range, a distance of less than a hundred miles, he comes out into a country which suffers from almost continual scarcity of rain. The Ghats, which arrest the rain clouds and pour their contents down on Travancore, except the monsoon be very strong, allow almost no clouds to pass into the interior British province. Yet even here the Madras Government, by a magnificent effort of engineering skill, tunnelling the mountain range, has within a year or two conducted the water from a river in Travancore State into the dry districts within the Ghats, and is thus again, as so often before in India, literally making "the desert to blossom as the rose." Only last winter I was in that part of India, but I did not learn that any one in those parts regarded this as a new instance of "frightful oppression," even though revenues derived from the people were taken and used for this purpose.

#### THE FAMINE.

Indeed, the assertion that the independent native states of India do not suffer from famine is utterly preposterous. Only within a few days I have had word, through two young missionary ladies laboring in British territory near the frontier of the independent State of Rewa, that although the famine has been terrible where they are, yet it is far worse

across the line in Rewa, where next to nothing is being done, in comparison, for the starving; and that thousands are crowding across the frontier into British territory where they know that at least all will be done that is possible to keep them from dying. In one of the most powerful and best-governed of the independent states, Rajputana, which I have visited, I could show Professor Des Islets large missionary orphanages which were first filled with children whose parents perished in a fearful famine which occurred in that great native state during the early years of my residence in India.

This assertion as to the non-occurrence of famines in the vassal native states was so extraordinary that I at once wrote regarding it to a missionary friend who has long labored in Indore, which is another of the states mentioned by the professor as an illustration of his statement as to the comparatively better condition of the people under native rule. This brother is a member of the Central India Famine Relief Committee, and so I asked the benefit of his own extensive observations. I quote from his letter of reply at some length. He writes:—

"It is true that we have never had any famine in this part of Malwa, but the same is true of the contiguous British territory, and it is due not to Maharaja Holkar, but to the mercy of a much higher Maharaja, who in mercy sends rains regularly, and has given a rich soil. It is not true that there have been no famines in the native states. Invariably, whenever there is any scarcity of rain, it is felt in the native states of Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand, and this year it has been very bad in those states in the immediate vicinity of Indore; almost every native state of Central India has been affected this year. A journey through the native states of Bhopal, Gwalior, would have shown how terrible was the condition of the people everywhere. Moreover, where British officials had charge of famine relief, it was much more carefully administered. I visited both the Central British Provinces and the native states, and saw enough to convince me that there was no comparison as to the methods of the latter as compared with those of the British officials."

... The statement to which you refer as to the condition of the people in the native states, that they are "much less wretched, etc.," has been made by some one who knows nothing about them. The difference between the native and the British rule is this, that in the native states they take all they can lay their fingers on, whereas in British territory the government takes a fixed sum, and leaves the rest. Where the British government takes Rs. 3 for land, for similiar land Holkar of Indore takes Rs. 5, etc., etc."

I could multiply testimony of this kind indefinitely, but I trust this will suffice. On this point, again, the professor's authorities, whoever they were, have grossly misled him. So far is it from being true that, as he tells his readers, "all this is thoroughly known to Lord Salisbury, the Duke of Devonshire and other members of the British Cabinet," that even we who live in India and have gone around everywhere among the people for years do not know it, any more than we know what we are elsewhere told, that "as a matter of fact, famine is permanent in British India!"

It is, indeed, true that a very large proportion of the people are distressingly poor; but there is only one sense in which it can be said with unqualified truth that this is due to the British domination. India is enormously overpopulated. In the Ganges valley the population ranges from 500 to 700 to the square mile. Before the British rule began almost incessant wars helped to keep the population down, and when famine or cholera or deadly fever would sweep through the country the native rulers as a rule did nothing to save life, millions perished and the congestion was relieved. But now it is different. The Pax Britannica has now long ruled; intestine wars are at an end.

If cholera appear the government immediately, so far as it has the men available, sends its physicians to deal with the epidemic, disinfects wells, etc., and distributes everywhere gratis or at a nominal price, the best remedies; and so epidemics are arrested or limited, and mortality reduced. Only lately, the government, which has established in South India cinchona plantations on a large scale, has ordered that quinine be kept in the country post-offices and distributed by the post masters to the poor villagers at a trifling price. Thus, again, the government is seeking on an enormous scale to reduce the mortality from malarial fever, which every year is greater than that from cholera. Again, when the rains fail and famine comes, taxes are remitted by the hundred thousands, and British officials are sent into